



# Prince William Forest Park

## Long-Range Interpretive Plan





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March 2009  
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Triangle, VA 22172

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Cover Photo: Rangers show a group of Junior Rangers the broad green canopy along the Piedmont Forest Trail. **NPS Photo.**

Right Photo: In the 1950s, a Park Ranger takes a group of children out for an interpretive walk in Prince William Forest Park. **NPS Photo.**



# Contents

## **Introduction 02**

Introduction 02  
The Planning Process 03

## **Executive Summary 04**

## **Planning Foundation 08**

Background for Planning 08  
Related Planning Documents 08  
Pending Legislation 08  
Legislative & Related Background 09  
Purpose and Significance 12  
Interpretive Themes 14  
Visitor Experience Goals 16

## **Existing Conditions 17**

Visitor & Audience Profiles 17  
Facilities 19  
Interpretive Media 29  
Personal Services 31  
Partnerships 34  
Issues and Influences 35

## **Recommendations 37**

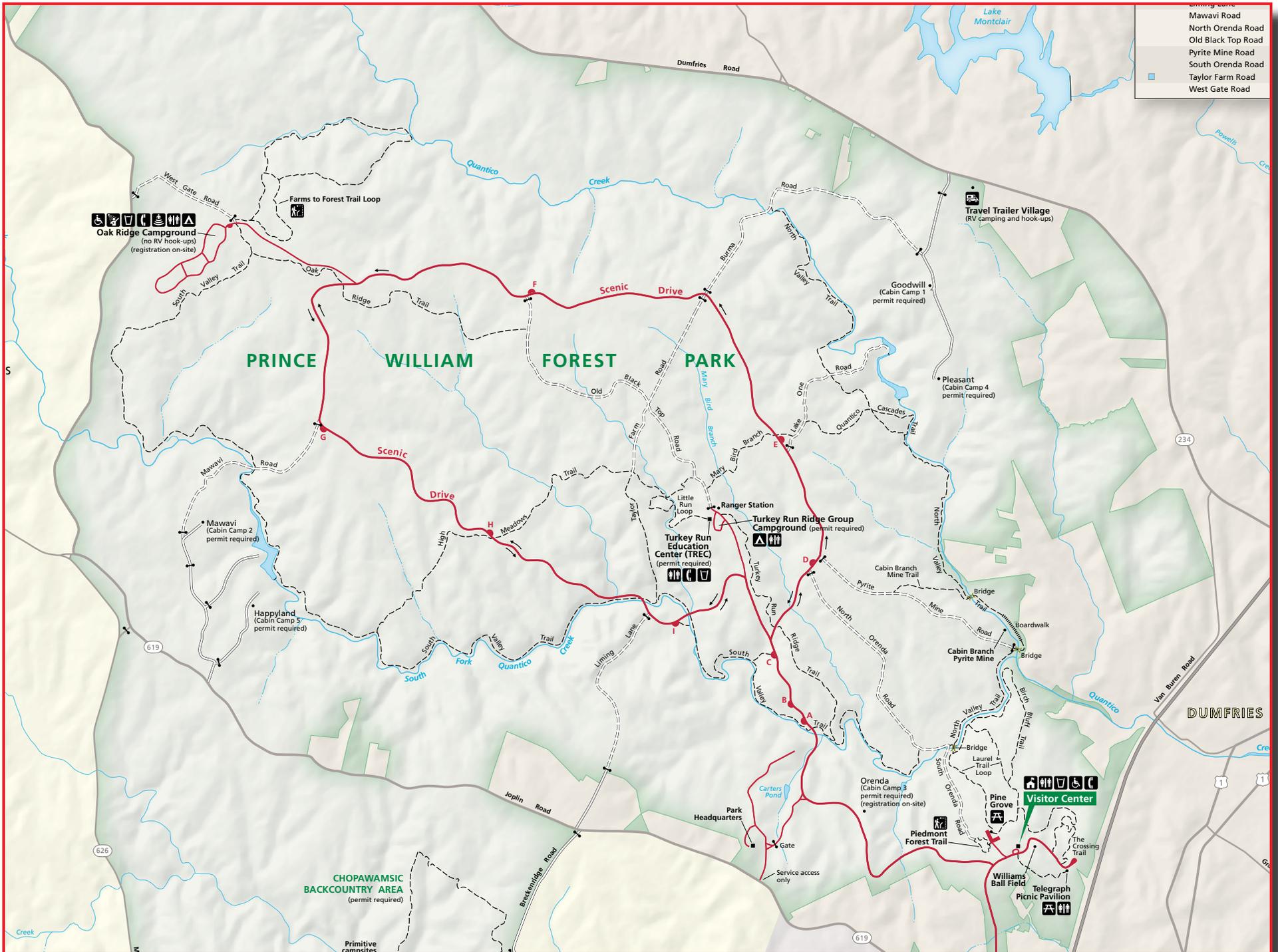
Previsit 37  
Facilities 38  
Interpretive Media 47  
Personal Services 49  
Future Studies Needed 54  
Partnerships 56

## **Appendices 58**

Appendix A: The Planning Team 58  
Appendix B: Significant Periods of Use 59  
Appendix C: Site Bulletins 60  
Appendix D: Background for Audiovisual  
Recommendations 61  
Appendix E: Accessibility 62  
Appendix F: References 63  
Appendix G: Implementation Plan 64  
Appendix H: End Notes 65



Young campers in the 1930s prepare their turtles for their upcoming race. **NPS Photo.**



# Introduction

Prince William Forest Park is a secret worth sharing: a 15,000+ acre national park unit in the greater Washington, DC metropolitan area, where nature, history, and recreation unite.

The National Park Service manages the park as part of the fourteen parks that constitute the National Capital Region. Prince William Forest Park is located 32-miles south of Washington, DC near the community of Triangle, in Prince William County, Virginia. Park visitation averages 250,000 annually.

The origin of the park came through sweeping “New Deal” legislation crafted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s administration to help bring the nation and its citizens through the Great Depression. First known as “Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area,” the park was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) with the intent of exposing impoverished youth in the District of Columbia to camping and the great outdoors. The Recreational Demonstration Area program recognized the important contribution of natural and recreational areas to public health and social welfare.

Chopawamsic became a model camp for 44 Recreational Demonstration Areas (RDA) throughout the United States. In 1936, the lands that comprised Chopawamsic RDA were transferred to the National Park Service; and, Chopawamsic opened its doors to campers. However, when the War Department requested the use of the park to meet homeland security needs during WWII, Chopawamsic RDA was permitted for use to the War Department in 1943 for the duration of the War -- on the caveat that it be returned to the National Park Service (NPS) in the condition it was given. Chopawamsic’s facilities became the training ground for future intelligence officers working for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) – the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency\*.

Following WWII, the NPS continued to operate Chopawamsic RDA. In 1948, legislation transferred 4,000+ acres of the park to the Department of the Navy for the United States Marine Corps Base Quantico. With the land transfer, the park

retained only a small amount of land in the Chopawamsic watershed, and was renamed Prince William Forest Park in honor of the County of Virginia in which it is located.

Today, Prince William Forest Park contains the largest example of piedmont forest in the National Park System, as well as habitat for diverse plant & animal species in two geological provinces – the coastal plain and the piedmont province. The forest canopy shelters a fascinating history. Evidence of human use includes Native American hunting camps; a portion of the wagon road that General George Washington’s Army traveled to win the battle of Yorktown; the remnants of a “poor house” that aided the poor and sickly from 1795-1925; and, over forty cemeteries and structural ruins tell the story of the white and African American families who farmed, harvested tobacco and timber for hundreds of years and of miners digging for “fool’s gold” at the Cabin Branch Pyrite Mine (1889 – 1920).

Park recreational opportunities include camping, fishing, hiking, biking, exercise, picnicking, and nature study/ observation. The park has 37 miles of trails, 25 miles of streams, five ponds and lakes, four picnic areas, one 100-site family tent/RV campground, one 170-person group tent campground, one 79-site RV campground (concessionaire operated), a designated backcountry area with eight campsites, and five cabin camps with a total capacity of 890 persons.

During fiscal year 2002, Prince William Forest Park received Servicewide funding to initiate a Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) with the National Park Service’s Media Design Center in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. During project scoping in May 2002, four areas were identified as critical elements of the future plan. Including:

- Updating the park’s purpose, significance, and theme statements with the input of scholars. The park’s approved 1999 General Management Plan focused on the settlement of

*Although, the permit issued by the NPS to the War Department is dated 1943; the OSS actually began using the camps for training in April 1942.*

key lands issues and future facilities; leaving the development of the park's planning foundation to this planning process.

- Making recommendations to improve the operation of the visitor center. The construction of Interstate 95 in the 1950s and 1960s forced the park to move its main entrance from Rte. 1 in Dumfries to the location now near Interstate 95/Exit 150, along Virginia Rte. 619. The current visitor center is the rehabilitated "old park headquarters". Unfortunately the building location is on a spur road and many visitors do not stop there.
- Exploring how to improve interpretation out in the park where people are recreating. Staff members feel that the current interpretive media is insufficient. While visitors appreciate recreating beneath the forest canopy, few are aware of the significance of the park's natural and cultural features.
- Suggesting ways that the park can build recognition of the park's National Park Service identity to visitors, park neighbors, and residents in the greater Washington DC metropolitan area. It is felt by all staff members that the national significance of the park is lost on most.

In October 2002, park staff, friends, and stakeholders met to develop the foundation elements for this plan including: the park purpose and significance statements, interpretive themes, and visitor experience goals. The park requested a delay in the LRIP, so the plan could incorporate the finding of three important studies: Core Operations Analysis, the Business Plan, and a study to determine whether or not to provide access to the park from Virginia Route 234. Two additional LRIP workshops were held in August 2005 and October 2007; the purpose of these workshops was to analyze existing conditions and make recommendations to address program deficiencies.

This LRIP is concurrent with all park planning documents and is a direct result of the aforementioned workshops. The plan outlines recommendations for the next decade. Recommendations address future interpretive services, facilities, interpretive media and the partnerships that support

the delivery of the interpretive program. Park staff, partners, stakeholders, historians, archeologists, scientists and media specialists worked together to develop this plan. The intended audience for the LRIP includes park and Regional Office staff, partners, stakeholders, media specialists and future contractors. The goal of this plan is to protect park resources by fostering in park visitors important connections to the meanings inherent in the resources where they are recreating; and, for the staff that serves the public and communicates park values a strong foundation to provide excellence in interpretation, environmental leadership and stewardship values.

### The Planning Process

The goal of the interpretive planning process is not the creation of a plan. The ultimate goal is the development of a cost-effective, tightly focused, high quality park interpretive program that effectively addresses all audiences and achieves management goals.

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) recommends actions that should occur over the next 8-10 years. It identifies park themes, describes visitor experience goals, and recommends a wide array of interpretive services, media, programs, and outreach activities to communicate the park's mission, significance, themes, and values. It will join the park-produced Annual Interpretive Plan and Interpretive Database to make up the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP) for Prince William Forest Park.

Barring legislative changes or major new research, the planning foundation expressed in this LRIP – purpose, significance, themes, and visitor experience goals – will remain constant over the life of this plan. Specific recommendations about media and programs may require updating as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change. Further design documents will need to be prepared to implement some of the goals and recommendations in this plan.

# Executive Summary

Prince William Forest Park (PRWI) is located 32-miles south of Washington, DC near the community of Triangle, in Prince William County, Virginia. The National Park Service manages this 15,000+ acre park as part of the fourteen parks that constitute the National Capital Region. The park received Servicewide funding to initiate a Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) with the National Park Service's Media Design Center in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. During a series of three workshops park staff and partners worked together to develop this plan.

Following an examination of existing conditions, there were several areas consistently identified as the areas requiring the most significant emphasis during plan implementation over the next decade, including:

- While the park hosts over 250,000 visitors annually, most visitors are unaware of its National Park Service (NPS) identity.
- The visitor center is a key facility to the overall park visitor experience; its location is problematic and needs to be addressed. The construction of Interstate 95 in the 1950s and 1960s forced the park to move its main entrance from Route

1 in Dumfries, VA to its present location near Interstate 95/ Exit 150, along Virginia Route 619. The current visitor center is the rehabilitated “old park headquarters”. Unfortunately the building location is on a spur road and many visitors do not stop there.

- The relationship of the park entrance fee to specific facility use fees is confusing and creates public relations problems for park staff and partners. The current fee policy places the PRWI staff at a disadvantage from the very audiences they are seeking to reach and convey important stewardship messages.

- While interpretation should be site specific, at PRWI it is compartmentalized. Visitor access to key interpretive themes and visitor experience opportunities depends upon how visitors access and utilize the park.

LRIP recommendations are a direct result of the aforementioned workshops and are consistent with all park planning documents. Recommendations address future interpretive services, facilities, interpretive media, and partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive program – critical elements that shape the visitor experience at Prince William Forest Park (PRWI).



The original entrance sign to Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area, circa 1936. NPS Photo.



Turkey Run Ridge Group Campground is one of 4 campgrounds in Prince William Forest Park where further interpretation is needed. NPS Photo.

The intended audience for this plan includes park and NPS Regional Office staff, partners, stakeholders, media specialists and future contractors. Achievement of Long-Range Interpretive Plan recommendations outlined in this Executive Summary (and other recommendations discussed in depth within this LRIP) is based on the receipt of funding and coordinated efforts with present and future park partners.

This plan recommends:

1. Change the park name so that “national” appears in the park’s official name designation, in order to build and reinforce the park’s identity as a National Park in a region surrounded with many local, county and state parks.
2. Strengthen Prince William Forest Park’s National Park Service identity in all programming and interpretive media.
3. Implement the short and long-term strategy developed during this LRIP planning process to improve the visitor center operation. This strategy includes funding requests to address immediate deficiencies, planning money for visitor

assessment and value analysis, and to construct a new visitor center at the intersection of the Park Entrance Road and the Scenic Drive, one-quarter mile west-southwest of the current visitor center. The new facility would provide increased space for exhibits, AV programs, an all-purpose room for group programs and meetings, and an outdoor amphitheater.

4. Consult with the Regional Fee and Concession Program Managers to develop a more holistic approach to the current park fee program structure. Determine what additional amount should be charged to individuals and groups that pay campground user fees that would also cover the park entrance fee.
5. Develop and implement parkwide information and orientation at all campgrounds, so campers have the opportunity to discover what other opportunities the park offers beyond the campground experience. A much stronger connection to park visitors must be made at all campgrounds through media and personal services.



Destinations, like this waterfall at parking lot "I," will be identified for visitors via the 'hub' approach to visitor center interpretation. NPS Photo.



Right Photo: The current park entrance. NPS Photo.

6. Expand visitor access to portions of the historic Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) constructed cabin camps that in the past have only been available through a camping permit or a park sponsored special program. The future interpretive program includes ranger-led guided tours, historically furnished exhibits and waysides in Cabin Camps 3 and 4.

7. Change the focus and function of new visitor center exhibits. Future interpretive media in the VC will be established as a gateway service highlighting the park's three primary themes and encouraging visitors to go out to explore the natural, cultural and recreational resource features where more in-depth interpretation will occur in the park. The visitor center will function like a "hub" providing introduction to broad park themes versus the present treatment of intricate exhibits detailing all of the park stories. Visitors will discover more in depth interpretive opportunities out in the park where these significant features are located.

8. Support the development of recommended media, including:

a. Research: effective interpretation is based on sound and current research. The "Future Studies Needed" section of this document outlines recommended research projects that will inform the ongoing implementation of the interpretive program and future facility and media development.

b. A parkwide sign plan: this plan would identify required signs and include a cost estimate to implement the Servicewide Uniguide program.

c. New exhibits for the visitor center; Cabin Camp 3, Cabin Camp 4, and wayside exhibits throughout the park.

d. New audio and video programs. The "Interpretive Media" section of this document includes specific AV recommendations and detailed treatment information written by media specialists with the NPS' Media Design Center.



Ranger Laura takes two children on an exploratory journey through life in the piedmont forest. NPS Photo.

9. Rebuild and restructure permanent staffing levels to provide year-round, daily coverage of interpretive facilities and expanded programming. Seek funding to add three positions to the interpretive staff: one GS-9 park ranger and two GS 5 subject to furlough visitor use assistants.

10. Strengthen existing partnerships and seek new and innovative partners to support the delivery of the interpretive, education and visitor services program.

### In Summary

The 1999 General Management Plan identified the need to expand interpretation and visitor services. The Prince William Forest Park Interpretive staff serves as the primary communications branch of the park. Current and future programming will communicate park values, facilitate civic engagement and strengthen relationships with park partners, the local community and stakeholders.

The park's long-range vision regarding where the park wants to be in the next decade -- by 2020, was defined during the LRIP process:

*Prince William Forest Park is recognized as a national park with unique natural, cultural and recreational values. As leaders in environmental stewardship and resource-based educational programming, park staff and partners foster life-long learning and support for the park and the National Park Service.*

*--Prince William Forest Park long range vision, 1999 GMP.*

We embrace this vision: excellence in interpretation will help to achieve it.

*The Prince William Forest Park Interpretive Program will foster deep and abiding connections between the park and the visitor. Through our 'visitor comes first' approach and intricate knowledge of the park's natural, cultural, and recreational resources, we will help visitors create enduring memories in Prince William Forest Park that connect them to this place forever. In order to encourage public support and stewardship, the interpretive staff, volunteers and interpretive media will play a key role in the discovery and dissemination of knowledge about the park and its resources. Interpretation will act as a conduit for community outreach, civic engagement, partnerships and as a representative of the visitor's voice within the park management team.*

*--Vision for Interpretation, Education and Visitor Services*



The park Scenic Drive in fall. NPS Photo.

# Planning Foundation

## Background for Planning

Intense development within Prince William County has occurred along the park's eastern and northern boundary paralleling VA Route 234. The population of Prince William County grew 30% from 1990 to 2000. The county now makes up 4% of the population of Virginia. The Triangle area has experienced a 16% increase in population during the same time period. The staff anticipates that visitation will increase dramatically as urban development and a variety of other planned recreational facilities are built in nearby communities.

The entrance to Prince William Forest Park (PRWI) off of Interstate 95 at Route 619 is adjacent to the United States Marine Corps Base (USMCB) at Quantico. The base supports a community of approximately 14,000 civilian and military personnel. An additional 3,000 workers are expected to be employed at USMCB Quantico by 2011 due to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) procedures. Ft. Belvoir, (approximately 15 miles north of the park) is expected to see an increase of 21,000 personnel.

## Related Planning Documents

The approved 1999 General Management Plan calls for the expansion of the park's visitor center, education program, and visitor support facilities. It also outlined the need for access to the park along VA Route 234 on the northern boundary. In 2006, park management finalized and approved an Environmental Assessment (EA) supporting the construction of a parking lot and multi-use trail access into the park from Route 234 near Waterway Drive.

The 2005 Prince William Forest Park Business Plan suggests highlighting the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) built cabin camps and the role of the CCC in developing Recreational Demonstration Areas throughout the country. The Business Plan also suggests rerouting visitors to an improved visitor center and providing visitor access to Cabin Camp 3 as an example of CCC workmanship and programs.

The Prince William County Trails and Greenway plan proposes the development of an extension of the Potomac

Heritage National Scenic Trail, which would tie the park to an extensive hiking/biking regional trail system on the Route 234 side of the park.

## Pending Legislation

At this writing, the Washington/Rochambeau Revolutionary Route (W3R) is not an official trail (Senate Bill 686). The W3R study surveyed the east coast to determine what elements of this historic Revolutionary era trace survive, to consider its eligibility as a federally designated trail/historic site. This study indicates that PRWI may have the largest surviving portion (.5 miles) of this American Revolutionary era trace. The study also suggests that the section located in PRWI may be the largest remaining portion in Prince William County, VA and the NPS. The Rochambeau Trail Study outlined recommendations for trace preservation for land managers. As a direct result of these recommendations, the park removed trees and roots from the trace to reduce trace impairment by vegetation. Until fairly recently it was extremely difficult for anyone to visually locate the historic trace.

The trace is located near the Telegraph Area Picnic Pavilion – a day-use fee area. It can also be accessed via the park's "Crossing Trail"; along the Crossing Trail an interpretive wayside panel is ground oriented to draw visitors' attention to the trace – now, much more easily seen due to the trail preservation project.

The trace needs further research – the park has requested assistance from the Regional Historian and Archeologist. One problem the W3R study points out is that in this phase of the research it is unclear if the trace remnants within the park boundary is the primary trace – or a secondary trace where the military equipment, cannons and supplies traveled with contingents of the Continental Army enroute to Yorktown, VA – the last battle of the American Revolution. More research is needed. Planning questions to consider:

1. Should the park interpret the trace as the Potomac Path/Rochambeau Trail if the documentation has not confirmed what specifically the surviving resource represents?





George Washington as painted by C.W. Peale. NPS Photo..

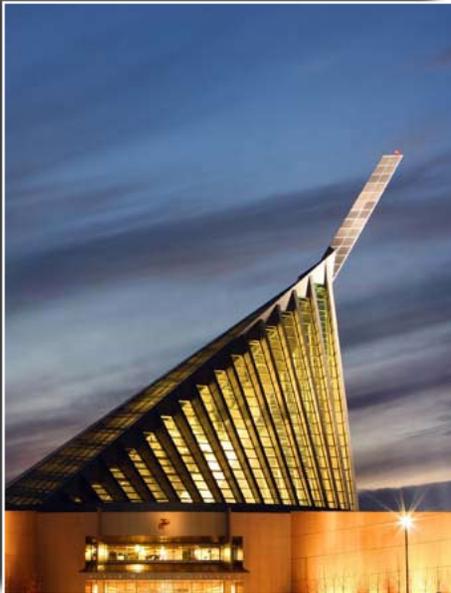
2. What interpretive emphasis does this area need, considering park themes?
3. Should individuals be allowed to hike the trace directly?
4. Or, should the park provide access via another trail with a destination overlook similar to the structure on the Piedmont Forest Trail?

#### Nearby Heritage, Natural and Recreational Facilities

The park is located in a county with a tremendous variety of parks, museums, and tourism facilities:

- Nearby Leesylvania State Park is part of the award winning Virginia state park system.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers the Potomac River Complex consisting of Belmont Bay, Featherstone, and Mason Neck Wildlife Refuge.
- Less than a mile away from the park boundary, Locust Shade County Park offers more sports-related recreational opportunities including batting cages, paddleboats, miniature golf, driving range, and an 18-hole golf course (Forest Greens).
- The communities of Manassas, Occoquan, and Dumfries, VA and Prince William County all operate museums that interpret local history. These facilities include the Weems-Botts Museum in Dumfries and the Mill House Museum in Occoquan. The Manassas City Museum operates seven historical properties. The Freedom Museum, a Smithsonian Institution Affiliate is located at the Manassas Regional Airport; and, the Ben Lomond Historic Site and Rippon Lodge are operated by Prince William County.

- The United States Marine Corps Heritage Center and National Museum of the Marine Corps opened in November 2006. The museum is free to visitors and includes a 95-seat auditorium, gift shop, restaurants, interactive exhibits and more.



The National Marine Corps Museum, located less than 1 mile from the main entrance to Prince William Forest Park. Photo Credit: National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC).

Planning is also underway for several major museum facilities:

- The Science Museum of Virginia, located in Richmond, VA plans to construct a research/educational facility off Route 1, along the Potomac River at Belmont Bay, near the community of Occoquan, VA.
- The National Museum of the United States Army will locate at Fort Belvoir, VA in 2013.
- Fundraising and planning are underway for the Cold War Museum to be located in Lorton, VA, south of Ft. Belvoir. The expected opening date is undetermined; the date is contingent on the approval by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on the building location site and funding.

The increasing number of museum and tourism facilities in the rapidly-developing Washington, DC area may impact future visitor expectations and experiences at Prince William Forest Park. The variety of museums and entertainment in and around Washington, DC create a high-level of competition for visitor time and attention.

Prince William Forest Park has a significant role to play in the community. Park managers work closely with local civic leaders, other area park managers, and museum and tourism professionals to discuss mutual interests and future tourism opportunities.

The proximity of the park to the communities of Woodbridge, Stafford, Dumfries, and Triangle, Virginia and the United States Marine Corps Base at Quantico, Virginia, provide many opportunities for future partnership efforts.

#### Legislation and Related Administrative History

The National Park Service manages Prince William Forest Park as part of the fourteen parks that comprise the National Capital Region. The park's legislative history is complex and sometimes confusing. While the origin of the park begins with the Resettlement Administration under the authority of the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act, the National Park Service was involved with the planning and oversight

of Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area (now Prince William Forest Park) from the beginning. The NPS coordinated work with the Civilian Conservation Corps and other organizations that were involved in the planning, construction and operation of Chopawamsic.

Later executive orders and legislation clarified and expanded the NPS' role and responsibilities for the development and operation of Chopawamsic RDA. On June 22, 1948 Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area was renamed Prince William Forest Park in Public Law 736. Below is a brief summary of the park's legislative history and significant NPS administrative actions.

**1933:** The Resettlement Administration (under the authority of the National Industrial Recovery Act) was given authority to acquire nearly 17,000 acres of land, which became the Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA).

President Franklin Roosevelt signs the Emergency Conservation Works Act, creating the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The CCC was given responsibility for constructing recreational facilities.

**1935:** Spring: CCC Company 1374 arrives at Chopawamsic to create SP-22 at the present day ball field at Cabin Camp1.

**July 23:** CCC Company 2349 arrives in Chopawamsic and creates SP-25 & SP-26 (in 1939 these areas are designated NP-16) where the gravel road forks between the current cabin camps 2 & 5. Company 2349 would later move to a new location (today: the site of the park's "lower maintenance area") and form Camp SP-26 with members of Company 2383.

*Historical footnote:* During the planning and design phase of any RDA, camps were designated by the initials of the agency it was believed would administer the areas when they were ready for public use. Future State park areas under development were designated by a State park-number (example SP-22); while areas to be operated by the National Park Service were designated as NP-number (example NP-16).

**1936:** Department of Interior (DOI) published "Recreational Demonstration Projects as Illustrated by Chopawamsic, Virginia", solidifying Chopawamsic RDA's place as the model for the 44 RDAs in the program.

**November 14:** Executive Order 7496 turned the land over to the National Park Service (NPS).

**August 12, 1938:** DOI issued a permit (upon request of the Department of the Navy) for construction of a concrete dam on Chopawamsic Creek on NPS lands, to provide a water source for the United States Marine Corps Base Quantico. (This action created Breckenridge Reservoir).

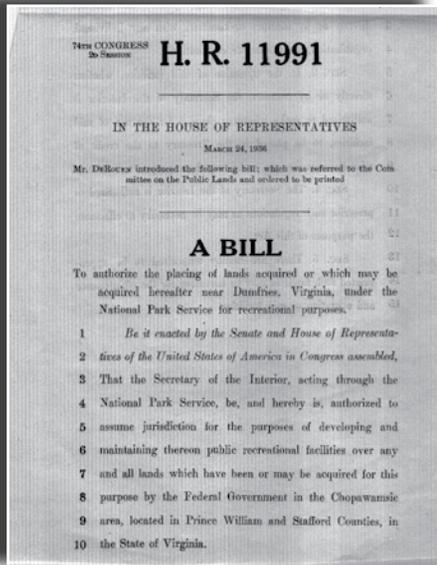
**August 13, 1940:** Congressional Act 54 Statute 785 provided that Chopawamsic RDA be administered as part of the National Capital Park system to provide recreational opportunities for visitors to the nation's capital.

**June 13, 1942:** President Franklin Roosevelt signed an executive order creating the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). This top-secret intelligence unit used Chopawamsic RDA's Camps to train agents during World War II. An executive order signed by President Harry Truman on October 1, 1945 disbanded this unit. Today the OSS is recognized as the predecessor of the Central Intelligence Agency.

**June 12, 1943:** - the Secretary of the Navy requested use of 4, 862 acres for training purposes for the duration of the "emergency" (WWII), and 6 months thereafter. The Secretary of the Interior responded that it would be agreeable if the Navy agreed to purchase lands north of 619 to round out the boundaries of the park.

**June 22, 1948:** Public Law 736 authorized the transfer of approximately 4, 862 acres of National Park Service land to the Department of the Navy with the following stipulations:

a. The Secretary of the Navy would guarantee the potability and undamaged source of water of the Quantico Creek east of Virginia Route 619.



**Photo: The original house bill to authorize Recreational Demonstration Areas in 1936. Credit: National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).**

b. The Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of the Interior would purchase all lands north of Virginia Route 619 to round out the boundaries of the park, not to exceed 1,500 acres.

c. \$10,000 would be allocated to acquire the land.

d. Surplus Navy lands (about 1,100 acres) would be transferred to the National Park Service.

This law stated that Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area was renamed Prince William Forest Park, primarily because the park would no longer retain lands in the Chopawamsic watershed after the transfer of the 4,862 acres to the Department of the Navy.

1950: Public Law 640 authorized the Secretary of the Interior to make land exchanges with Recreational Demonstration Area lands.

June 12, 1989: Four of the five historic CCC-era cabin camps were listed in the National Register of Historic Places as “historic districts”.

February 11, 1999: The National Capital Regional Director, NPS approved the General Management Plan.

2002: Legislation, HR 4546, Sec. 2835 was signed by the President authorizing the land exchange outlined in the 1998 Memorandum of Understanding between the park and Marine Corps Base Quantico. The park regained land within the Chopawamsic watershed in the land exchange.

December: Cabin Branch Pyrite Mine listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



A scaled-down replica of the Marine Corps War Memorial sits outside of the the front gate to the Marine Corps Base at Quantico Virginia. Credit: United States Marine Corps (USMC).

### Purpose and Significance

The NPS Organic Act of 1916 states that the purpose of the National Park Service is “to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

Planning focuses first on why a park was established and what conditions should exist there before delving into details about specific actions. Park purpose statements are based on legislation and legislative history, other special designations, and NPS policies. Purpose statements provide the foundation for park management and use.

Park significance statements capture the essence of the park’s importance to the nation’s natural and cultural heritage. Significance statements do not inventory park resources; rather they describe the park’s distinctiveness and help to place the park within its regional, national, and international contexts. They are the basis for the development of the park’s primary themes and program.

### Purpose

The purpose of Prince William Forest Park, a unit of the National Park Service is:

- To protect the natural features of the park and preserve the integrity of the Quantico Creek watershed in order to contribute to the improvement of water quality in the Potomac River basin, and the Chesapeake Bay;
- To preserve the park’s cultural and historical resources and archeological sites – including the historic Civilian Conservation Corps constructed cabin camps.
- To provide resource-based educational, recreational, and stewardship opportunities; and
- To actively connect with citizens at the local, regional, and national levels to preserve park features and NPS values for the enjoyment of present and future generations.



The CCC boys get to work on building one of the 150+ structures they built in Prince William Forest Park from 1935-1942). NPS Photo.

### Significance

Prince William Forest Park:

- Protects the largest expanse of piedmont forest in the NPS and a majority of the Quantico Creek watershed. These high quality resources protect ecologically sensitive areas, diverse habitats, and threatened or endangered flora and fauna along the geological fall-line and North/South climate transition zones. It is an important resource for scientific research and ecological monitoring.
- Previously named the Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA), it was a model for the RDA program and was one of only a few RDAs transferred to the NPS in the 1930s - all other RDAs went to state or local agencies. The RDA program recognized the important contribution of natural and recreational areas to public health and social welfare. National parks were no longer only for those who could afford a train ticket to Yellowstone or

**The Office of Strategic Services employed many current and former military men as instructors in its schools, including USMC Reservist Maj. Albert Jenkins, shown below instructing trainees in the use of the .45 caliber pistol. Photo courtesy: NARA.**



Yosemite; Prince William Forest Park was legislated so that the underprivileged could experience the healthy benefits of being out-of-doors, thus opening national parks for the common man.

- Contains five cabin camp recreational facilities built by Civilian Conservation Corps enrollees, including 158 structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These cabin camps are still used by large groups of visitors and some individuals seeking to enjoy recreational experiences in an outdoor setting with a link to the past.
- Spans two geological provinces, approximately two-thirds of the park are in the piedmont and one-third is the coastal plain. Outcrops of folded and faulted rock are scattered throughout the park. Many of these rocks represent the fall line, the geologic meeting place of the piedmont and coastal plain physiologic zones. Petrified wood has been found in and immediately adjacent to the park boundary, serving as a fossilized memory of the areas geologic and ecologic past. The park area has large mineral deposits, including pyrite, which was mined in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- Has been shaped by its diverse historical land uses, including Native American encampments, European settlement, plantations, farms, mills, mineral mining operations, recreation demonstration projects, and military operations. Many of these sites, such as the Cabin Camps, Pyrite Mine, and Poor Farm are listed in and/or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. (Significant periods of use and related documented sites are outlined in Appendix B.)
- Is the largest green space in the metropolitan Washington, DC area. The park offers a diverse, resource-based outdoor experience including hiking, biking, orienteering, and camping.
- Is one of only two World War II Office of Strategic Services (OSS) training camps in the National Park Service. The OSS was the predecessor of today's Central Intelligence Agency.



The Miller Farm, during the initial site survey, 1934. NPS Photo.

### Interpretive Themes

Primary interpretive themes are those ideas or concepts that every visitor should understand. They are the key ideas through which the park's nationally significant resource meanings and values are conveyed to the public. These themes provide the foundation for interpretive programs and media at the park. The themes do not include everything we interpret at the park, but rather the ideas that are critical to a visitor's understanding of the park's significance. All interpretive efforts should relate to one or more of the themes and each theme should be addressed in the overall interpretive program. The themes are listed in no particular order.

Prince William Forest Park attracts people of diverse backgrounds and invites all visitors to explore various points of view, and seek personal connections and meanings through planned park experiences guided by the following themes:

#### 1. Recreational Demonstration Area

As a model camp for the nationwide Recreational Demonstration Area Program (RDA), Chopawamsic RDA (now Prince William Forest Park) tells the story of sweeping New Deal programmatic reform aimed at providing economic

relief to farmers, training and jobs to the unemployed, and a memorable summer camp experience for economically deprived youth from Washington, DC.

#### Sub-themes:

1a: Prince William Forest Park, during its years as an RDA, exemplifies the often conflicting legacy of public programming. Lands set aside for recreation to alleviate suffering during the Depression were forfeited by those that loved and lived on the land, including some members of a long-standing African American community. In some cases this "heartbroken time" caused great pain and suffering for those families. In other cases, the resettlement was their golden ticket to a new life. Their farmlands became home to Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) boys who gained employment, and enjoyed the camaraderie, education and job training while transforming the land into a RDA. From 1937 to the present, urban youth and families enjoyed the fruits of CCC labor and benefited from the sacrifice of the landowners.

1b: The Recreational Demonstration Area program, exemplified by Prince William Forest Park, offered a second chance for families suffering from the great depression



The men of CCC Company 2349 at Chopawamsic RDA circa 1938. Photo Courtesy: NARA.



Right Photo: Young 'tots' from Family Services Administration use Cabin Camp 3 in 1938. NPS Photo.

(landowners, CCC enrollees, and urban youth) and for the land. The reforestation by the CCC and the transfer of the land to the protection of the NPS has ensured a second chance for the land and the preservation of the stories of its past inhabitants.

1c: The five cabin camps represent the legacy of the CCC and the RDA program. This program created state and local parks throughout the nation, and the structures and recreational opportunities created by the CCC remain today for the benefit of all Americans.

### 2. Opportunities for Resource Stewardship

The oasis of protected land within Prince William Forest Park preserves irreplaceable habitats for plant and animal communities of the piedmont ecosystem and Quantico Creek watershed. In a sea of suburban sprawl, the park serves as an outdoor laboratory for scientific research and environmental education and as a gateway for all visitors to develop a conservation and preservation stewardship ethic.

### 3. Human Relationships with the Landscape

The lands of Prince William Forest Park preserve a record of diverse relationships between humans and the environment from pre-historic times to the present day. People shaped the landscape and in turn are shaped by the landscape.

3a: The Native, European and African Americans interacted with the land, undertaking a wide range of activities including: hunting-gathering, quarrying, farming, logging, and recreation. Traces of their activities remain and remind us of the impact of their choices. These traces can be found at places such as the Potomac Path/Washington-Rochambeau Route, the Poor Farm, the Pyrite Mine, Hickory Ridge, Batestown, Joplin, CCC Camps, numerous farmsteads and OSS training sites.

3b: Prince William Forest Park's 15,000+ acres provide an extensive array of recreational opportunities and a chance to learn about the park's resources while renewing the human spirit.



A 19th century wagon wheel found amongst the ferns. NPS Photo.

### Visitor Experience Goals

Visitor experience goals describe what opportunities for physical, intellectual, and emotional experiences should be available for visitors to Prince William Forest Park. These experiences will be available to visitors of all abilities, including those with visual, auditory, mobility, or cognitive impairments.

Visitors to Prince William Forest Park will have opportunities to:

- Contemplate, relax, and enjoy park resources safely and without pressure.
- Have their necessary comfort needs met.
- Acquire information and material to help them learn about themes before, during and after their visit.
- Experience the park resources regardless of physical ability.
- Find their way around the park without the need for personal assistance.
- Interact with the park staff informally and formally in a way that respects their personal and civil rights and their expectation to receive courteous treatment and factual information.
- Learn the mission of the National Park System and have the opportunity to become engaged in the preservation of the park through stewardship projects sponsored by the park's the Friends Group, park partners or Volunteer-In-Parks (VIP) opportunities.
- Connect to the natural environment and human experiences illustrated in the park represented by the Potomac Path/ Washington-Rochambeau Route, the Poor house, farms and homesteads, the CCC, early camp users, the OSS, Batestown, and use by Native Americans.

- Experience the cultural landscape as an active place, not as sanitized and sterile; and, develop an appreciation for how human choices have shaped and continue to shape the environment.
- Recognize their relationship to the environment and learn the importance of minimizing their impact on the natural and cultural resources.
- Experience resource-compatible recreation in a natural setting including: hiking through the eastern Piedmont hardwood and Coastal Plain forest, camping in a natural setting, learning about land navigation (orienteering), biking in the park, exploring backcountry areas, and observing nature.
- Use the park as an educational resource to understand that the Quantico Creek and its watershed as part of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
- Know the difference between native and non-native plant and animal species, and invasive and non-invasive species and their effects on natural and cultural resources.
- Learn and connect to the piedmont and coastal plain geophysical zones and their respective ecosystems.



Right Photo: Bridge over South Fork Quantico Creek from the Laurel Trail Loop. NPS Photo.

# Existing Conditions



The trails in Prince William Forest Park are enjoyed by both four-legged and two-legged visitors. NPS Photo.

## Visitor and Audience Profiles

Prince William Forest Park visitors have a wide range of interests, expectations and abilities, and use the park for a variety of activities. The park received 211,000 visitors in 2006. This park is generally not a destination site for out-of-town visitors, but rather one of many destinations within metropolitan Washington, D.C. Most Prince William Forest Park visitors are local, recreation-oriented visitors. Frequently they are associated with school, camping or cabin camping groups, or come individually to exercise, hike, bike, picnic, or walk their dogs. Park visitors may stop at the visitor center or attend a ranger program, but not all visitors come to the park with a specific educational objective in mind. Many visitors learn something about the park from the many wayside exhibits along the Scenic Drive, Piedmont Forest Trail, and the Crossing Trail, and through other interpretive media available.

June is the busiest month, followed by August and September. Visitation at the park is very weather dependent and fluctuates widely with day-to-day weather patterns.

In 2006, as part of the “Environmental Assessment/ New Access Entrance on VA 234”, the Department of Forestry, College of Natural Resources, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University conducted a visitor and neighborhood survey. Earlier, the Visitor Services Project Cooperative Park Studies Unit of the University of Idaho conducted a visitor study of Prince William Forest Park in 1996. The results of these surveys have been blended with staff observations to provide a visitor profile for planning purposes. The statements about park visitors are generalizations and are meant only to give an idea about park visitors.

**Campers** use the varied camping resources of the park, which include family camping, cabin camping in the CCC era cabins, backcountry camping at Chopawamsic, group camping at Turkey Run Group Campground and the Travel Trailer Village (a concession operated facility with RV hook-ups). Many users of the Oak Ridge Campground tent sites and Travel Trailer Village RV site use the park as a base of operations to visit other sites in the Washington D.C. area. The cabin camp facilities are one of the few areas of the park that draws

minority visitors. During the summer months when the campgrounds are full the park hosts over 1,000 overnight visitors per night. The park staff feels that most visitors that utilize the cabin camps do not come with a knowledge or understanding of National Park Service identity and values. Ironically, it is in this section of the park where the NPS and park resource messages have been the least visible. The staff that administers the cabin camps has indicated that frequently these groups request ranger programs; however, current staffing levels often do not permit this level of programming.

**Families** come from all over, but mostly are from the region and local area. These visitors spend anywhere from several hours to most of a day recreating in the park. Favorite activities include picnicking, hiking, biking, dog walking, and camping. Some also come to attend ranger programs when advertised in the local media.

**Incidental visitors** often see the signs on Interstate 95 and recognize the NPS arrowhead, or hear the AM broadcast Traveler Information Service (TIS) and stop in to check out the park. A number of visitors come to the park looking for camping or RV trailer sites while visiting tourist attractions in Washington D.C. Sometimes heavy traffic congestion on I-95 causes many incidental visitors to stop in the park to take a break and/or use the restroom facilities.

Incidental visitors also include users that access the park from the north side along Virginia Route 234; these visitors may or may not be aware they are in a national park. This user group has repeated contact with park law enforcement rangers for a variety of issues and legal infractions. During the last decade, there has been significant development of new neighborhoods just outside the park boundary.

**Local residents** make up the majority of the park’s visitors. Many come for recreational activities. These activities include picnicking, hiking, biking, dog walking, exercising, and camping. Some local residents use park facilities for group picnics and meetings. Though the African American population in Prince William County has more than doubled

from 1990 to 2000 and the Hispanic population has nearly tripled in the same time span, the park receives very few minority visitors. The 2006 Prince William Forest Park Visitor and Neighborhood Resident Survey shows that approximately 90% of park visitors consider themselves to be white.

**Regional visitors** often come for a day or weekend. Many bring out-of-town guests or friends.

**School Groups** visit the park mostly in late spring and early fall, but a shoulder season includes summer use by camps, scouting groups and home school groups. Most groups are from local schools within Prince William and Stafford Counties -- the two counties bordering the park. Generally, these groups spend 2-4 hours in the park participating in the education program and picnicking.

**Subject matter enthusiasts** come to the park because they have a special interest or connection to the CCC, OSS, or other park features such as wildflowers, geology, or birding.

**Virtual visitors** may never physically visit Prince William Forest Park for economic, accessibility or other reasons. However, they still have an interest in the park and may wish to learn about park features or enjoy “armchair” visits to the park. The park had 185,000 virtual visitor contacts in fiscal year 2002.

**Under represented visitors**, those who are not frequent park users have also been identified by staff observations. These groups include senior citizens, minorities, and “special needs” visitors – individuals with physical or cognitive impairments. Possible reasons vary for the lack of minority visitation: many local minority residents’ families sold their land when the park was created; this may be an emotional barrier for some. The entrance fee may be an economic hardship for others. Facility planning for mobility impaired and senior audiences are a critical future need, as is the continued inclusion of all communities surrounding the park in future planning endeavors.



The Montclair development sits just above the park's northern boundary. NPS Photo.



The visitor center, then park headquarters, in 1956. NPS Photo.



The visitor center, then park headquarters, in 1983. NPS Photo.



The visitor center in 2008. NPS Photo.

## Facilities

### Visitor Contact Stations

#### The Entrance Station

The first facility a visitor encounters when arriving at the park's main entrance is the entrance station where staff members collect entrance fee and provide general information. The entrance station is open daily as staffing permits June – September, and on weekends April, May, and October; it is closed November through March. Opening times vary and not all desired days are covered due to staffing levels.

#### Visitor Center

The visitor center includes an information desk, exhibit space, a sales outlet, and a small multi-purpose room. Here visitors can obtain backcountry passes, trail guides, and information about the variety of recreational opportunities to enjoy. The visitor center also serves as the fee collection station during regular operating hours when the entrance station is not open. Exhibits include a timeline of history, taxidermy wildlife, and basic information about park geology. The ten-minute orientation slide show “Prince William Forest: A Secret Worth Sharing” is offered in the multipurpose room upon request; this space accommodates 20 – 25 people. Videos and films are also available on a wide range of theme related topics and are most often used during environmental education programs.

The building accommodates a maximum of forty people at a time, if twenty visitors are placed in the theater, then the other half of the group views the exhibits. When a group of this size arrives, it is very difficult to serve other visitors not associated with the group. While the building is ADA compliant, the exhibits are not accessible. The slideshow does have captions.

#### Future plans:

- A new visitor center or rehabilitation and expansion of the old visitor center has been identified as a future priority.
- The 2006 'Environmental Assessment/New Access on VA 234' study's preferred alternative includes installing a parking lot and trail access into the park from VA Route 234. This will require planning for visitor orientation, interpretation and fee collection.

- The park may use fee demonstration money to produce a new film that highlights key park messages and meets ADA requirements for visual and hearing impaired visitors.

#### Analysis of the Visitor Center Location

The construction of Interstate 95 in the 1950s and 1960s forced the park to move its main entrance from Rte 1 in Dumfries to the current location near Interstate 95/Exit 150, along Virginia Route 619. This change meant that the visitor center would no longer be on the direct route to the park's principal tour road, the “Scenic Drive”. The effectiveness of the visitor center is greatly diminished by this spur road alignment away from the main driving route. Ideally, visitors should come to the visitor center before exploring the park so they can take advantage of all the orientation assistance available there—rangers, publications, wayside exhibits, museum exhibits, and AV programs.

Even though the visitor center is only about a quarter mile off the main road, the left-hand turn directing them to the Scenic Drive is enough to prevent many from stopping at the visitor center.

If visitors do not go to the visitor center, then they gain no value from its interpretive or informational programs or media. Funding is needed to rehabilitate/redesign and/or relocate the visitor center.

The planning team applauds the park for a clean, orderly, and well-maintained visitor center experience. The approach to the building is uncluttered. The building harmonizes with the forest landscape. Benches near the front door are a welcome convenience for visitors, and provide a place for people to peruse park brochures and interpretive materials. The three-sided orientation wayside contains valuable information, and is positioned in a good place to serve visitors going to or returning from the rest rooms and parking area. Graphics are attractive.

The parking options in front of the building and in the larger lot to the west are confusing and should be clarified through redesign of signs in the area.



In the visitor center lobby the expected services and functions are clearly organized and recognizable—information desk, passport station, sales displays, and donation box. A flat version of the park brochure is mounted on the wall beside the information desk, but is smaller than it should be for a group to use it for planning their visit. The acrylic site bulletin/rack card display is capable of offering up to 24 titles, and is located where rangers can assist visitors in finding what they need. It is recommended that the display be moved up higher to be accessible to more visitors. Some site bulletins might be more effective in rack card format; the park should continue work on this.



Visitor center exhibits, though installed as temporary exhibits in the 1990s, are shown here in 2008. NPS Photo.

The main exhibit room contains a wealth of images and text on a broad range of subjects, and includes a number of fine interactive elements such as the bird calls exhibit and the lift-panel exhibit with questions about National Parks. It's great to make a connection between the park and the National Park System. Any new exhibits should include something that achieves the same purpose.

The existing exhibits were installed about ten years ago, and were developed principally in-house using available staff and resources. Over time additional units have been added, such as the panel on the Friends group and the geology discovery drawers. Because the exhibits were developed in this way, rather than at one time as part of a comprehensive project, it is apparent that not all the pieces fit together in a coordinated and coherent way.

The defining spatial element of the exhibition is a large L-shaped console which occupies the center of the room and which is the primary carrier structure for images, text, and objects. Walls and corners provide mounting spaces for the balance of the exhibit elements. While this arrangement creates many spaces for display, it has a number of significant disadvantages: 1) it fills the room to the point that circulation space is uncomfortably restricted; 2) it restricts the range of motion needed for visitors with disability impairments; 3) many display elements are too high to be accessible; 4) the height of the console visually separates visitors from their partners—including parents from children; 5) the large size

of the exhibit masks the otherwise pleasing and rustic nature of the room with its fireplace and windows to the forest; 6) the console approach tends to limit the size of display items to smaller items—for example, lots of little pictures near the same size; and 7) the exhibit attempts to present more static content than the space can accommodate.

The exhibit in general is well lit, which strengthens the power of graphics and objects. However, the white track lighting system, combined with the office-like acoustical tiles, detracts from the charm of what looks on the outside like an historic forest cabin or ranger station.

There is a bit of a home-made look to the exhibit structures and materials, which is not altogether inappropriate in a forest setting. For example, some text or photo panels are fastened to their substrates with surfaced-mounted and plainly visible screws. However, the use of a more professional design, while still retaining the look and feel of the forest, might give an impression of higher quality, and lend more strength to the content being presented. Having the multi-million dollar U.S. Marine Corps Museum a few minutes away, with its high production levels, underscores the contrast. While Prince William cannot match the Marine museum in scope, square footage, and electronics, it is entirely feasible for the park to produce fine interpretive exhibits with award-winning designs that provide enjoyable, educational, and memorable experiences for visitors.

Exhibit content units have small titles. Main labels, secondary labels, and captions are not distinctly layered, so visitors have to read through most of the text to get the main ideas, and they cannot glance around the room at titles to get a clear overview of the exhibition content.

A contributing factor to the overload of the exhibit gallery space is that there are currently no other equivalent exhibit areas in other park buildings. For example, there are no Office of Strategic Services (OSS) exhibits in any park structure associated with the history of the OSS.

## Audiovisual Programs in the Visitor Center

### What's Working?

- The 16mm film “The Human Crop” on the Recreational Demonstration Program and Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area (now PRWI) is priceless. However, the sound quality is not great and needs to be addressed – several technical adjustments are needed.
- The new flat screen, DVD player and surround sound are welcome improvements to the visitor center operation.

### What's Not Working?

- Look at current signage to better direct visitors back to the audiovisual (AV) space and inform them of AV program options.
- “A Secret Worth Sharing” is essentially a slide show converted to DVD and offers information about the park’s history and resources. It was never intended as the park’s introductory or orientation video. However, because the park does not have an orientation or introductory movie, they have used it in this capacity. While this video is clean in its presentation, it lacks a professional narrator, the photographs look dated and lack vibrancy, and the video is more informational than interpretive in style.

### Future Possibilities

There are other future film clip possibilities to consider:

1. An Office of Strategic Services (OSS) training film developed by John Chambers: “House of Horrors” – the Spy Museum features a portion of this movie when discussing the history of the OSS,
2. Six park related National Archives films are planned to be copied,
3. An Alan Ladd film.



The park bookstore in 2008. NPS Photo.

### In Summary

What struck the planning team regarding the current audiovisual program and exhibits is that while the elements of the park may be there, the people and their voices are missing. Their faces may be present in some exhibit photographs, but they are not brought to the fore. Audiovisual products can help bring these two-dimensional materials to life. Even if a visitor’s primary purpose in coming to the park is to recreate, more engaging exhibits with audiovisual components will help to plant a seed that there are voices and faces that can be seen and heard throughout the park’s history and within the natural environments they will experience.

### **Cooperating Association Bookstore**

Eastern National (EN), a non-profit park partner manages the park’s sales outlet. EN took over operations from the Parks and History Association in June 2004. Located in the visitor center, the outlet offers a variety of theme-related sales materials. Proceeds come directly back to benefit the interpretive programming in the park. The park interpretive staff is responsible for day-to-day sales, stocking, inventorying, and accountability of funds and monthly reporting. In FY 2006, the EN bookstore had a 7% increase in sales over FY05 and a 61% profit margin.

### Analysis:

- When the entrance station operations begin in the spring, EN sales drop due to a decrease in visitor center traffic.
- Space is extremely limited which limits both sales (front-facing books sell 20 to 1 to spine-showing books) and display opportunities.
- Some park visitors never utilize the bookstore because they turn directly onto the Scenic Drive after paying their entrance fee. It would be advantageous to consider placing a satellite outlet(s) in additional locations where visitors are gathering and recreating in the park.

### Turkey Run Education Center (TREC)

This facility provides a classroom environment that is used primarily for professional meetings and ranger programs requiring a classroom setup with tables and chairs. It is also used for TEL satellite broadcasts for NPS training opportunities. The classroom comfortably seats 24 people and has microscopes and other equipment for class study as well as a TV/VCR set up. This area is located near a beaver dam and creek and the Orienteering Course. The orienteering program is one of the most popular programs in the park.

#### Analysis:

- The focus of educational programs for school groups is to explore the park. This facility is used only in the event of inclement weather.
- The Turkey Run Education Center also houses some of the interpretive staff's offices – including the Chief of Interpretation. Traveling back and forth between the visitor center and TREC is time consuming; and, having staff office

The Turkey Run Education Center before and after its renovation in 2009. NPS Photo.



space split between two facilities does not promote ease of communication or a team-building environment. The staff is considering starting more programs from this site to better utilize this facility and ease congestion at the visitor center.

- For the general public, the TREC classroom is used on an occasional basis. Outside groups use TREC mainly for business and training purposes. The 2005 Park Business Plans suggests repurposing TREC as a fee generator by charging non-NPS groups for use of the space. The park has requested project funding to repair and update the facilities. A complete analysis of rental rates and usage is needed to evaluate whether TREC is more useful for internal park use or as a designated meeting space for outside groups.

### Campgrounds

There are five campground facilities: the five historic cabin camps, Oak Ridge Campground, Turkey Run Ridge Group Campground, Chopawamsic Backcountry, and Travel Trailer Village. A description of each facility is provided below.

#### Cabin Camps

The five historic cabin camps are rented to large groups and individuals. Cabin Camps One through Four are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, while Cabin Camp Five has modern buildings with heat thus making it the only winter use cabin camp. Group use is available on a reservation basis, at all five cabin camps, while a section of Cabin Camp Three is rented to individuals April through October. Group reservations are made for different times of the year during specific “window” periods within which applications are accepted. The cabin camp user fee does not include the park entrance fee.

The cabin camps are popular sites for organized groups such as scout and church groups, clubs, weddings, and family reunions. Most users find out about the cabin camps either by “word of mouth” from previous users or via the Internet.

To date, non-personal interpretation at the camps has consisted of bulletin board use mostly dedicated to camp regulations and safety information. New bulletin boards



Individually rented units in Cabin Camp 3 in fall. NPS Photo.



A Camp 3 individually rented unit in summer. NPS Photo.



Inside of an individual unit at Camp 3. NPS Photo.

were installed in all of the dining halls in 2003 to be shortly teamed with an interpretive wayside panel on the Civilian Conservation Corps and cabin camp history.

The 2005 PRWI Business Plan recommends using a portion of Camp 3, located along the Scenic Drive to interpret both the construction of the camps by the CCC and the camper experience, immediately preceding and following WWII.

General Analysis of Cabin Camps:

• The cabin camps are the most significant remaining historical resource. However most of the surviving 158 structures are not available or viewable to most park visitors – unless the cabin or camp facility is not rented. Current park policy defines public access to the camps exclusively to permit holders, in order to insure the privacy of groups or individuals renting the cabins. While this is understandable and certainly ideal for campers, it withdraws the opportunity from most visitors to see and experience these structures and the many experiences they provided across the decades.

• There are very serious and continuing problems with graffiti and vandalism from cabin users.

• The planning team believes that:

1. The omission of this key visitor experience opportunity as part of the overall park visitor experience is a significant contributing factor to why many visitors do not seem to appreciate the park for its cultural values;

2. The park’s historic structures and collection items need to be interpreted; and

3. The park needs to explore how to provide access to the general visitor and maintain the privacy desired by campers who come to the park to escape the fast paced world and seek a sense of solitude or connection with nature.

• The current administrative practice of naming the cabin camps is somewhat confusing – in some publications they are

referred to by number, in other publications they are referred to by name. Camp numbers were the official government designation. While camp names were given to the cabin camp areas rented or administered by the groups using the facilities. And, sometimes users changed facilities but kept the same camp name. When interpreting the camps, using camp names can be confusing across historical time periods.

Analysis of Cabin Camp Programming and Personal Services:

• Groups that reserve the cabin camps consistently request ranger provided programs. The park is unable to meet this request with current staff levels.

• The historic cabin camps require significant money, materials, and staff resources to preserve and are therefore heavily rented (mostly on weekends) to provide revenue for their upkeep. This use conflicts with the ability of interpretation to provide tours and interpretive programs in the cabin camps which would provide for a greater visitor connection to this resource.

• The cabin camps are under-utilized Monday – Friday; on weekends the cabin camps are booked to capacity. In the past, long-term user groups occupied the camps for extended time frames on a weekly basis. These groups have not reserved the camps for several years. The park is exploring marketing strategies and considering a variety of programming options.

**Chopawamsic Backcountry**

The Chopawamsic Backcountry area offers the visitors an opportunity for a “leave no trace,” experience. With eight campsites off the beaten path, it allows the visitor to enjoy a “backcountry” experience without traveling long distances. Users of the area obtain a free backcountry permit either to hike in the area for the day or to camp overnight. This is the only non-fee overnight camping facility within the park. Plans to relocate the existing entrance will also include a new wayside exhibit panel and parking lot.



Scout troops often camp at Turkey Run Ridge Group Campground. NPS Photo.

### Oak Ridge Campground, Amphitheater and Nearby Trail

This campground has 100 sites, bathrooms with flush toilets, showers, grills and picnic tables. Hiking is located nearby and there is an amphitheater, where evening ranger programs are offered in the summer season. Oak Ridge Campground can accommodate tents, tent trailers, and RV's of 27' and 32' respectively. This campground is available through self-registration and usually has a volunteer host on site. Sites are cycled in and out of service to address site rehabilitation needs, including dealing with soil compaction. Family movies are shown on Friday night. The park pays a licensing fee to show movies – but due to licensing requirements can't advertise programs beyond the park.

#### Analysis:

- The Oak Ridge Amphitheater does not work well as a program site for the general public for several reasons:

1. Law enforcement: bringing visitors in to an area designated for campers can be problematic; and
2. This facility is a 20 minute drive from the park entrance, when visitors come to programs they arrive late because they haven't planned for the additional travel time from the entrance.

- Needed: a new structure to protect all of the high tech projection equipment recently purchased and a shed for campfire program firewood

- More kid/family focused interactive activities and interpretive media are needed at this site. Some ideas discussed:

1. Consider developing an interpretive trail here along the nearby "Farms to Forest Trail"; include waysides that have touchable elements – animal tracks, etc.
2. A tree ID trail or interactive family media experiences to share NPS values.
3. A universally accessible trail might work well here

### Turkey Run Ridge Group Campground

This camp area is for groups of six or more persons and contains six sites having access to bathrooms, picnic tables, grills and a central fire ring/amphitheater. The sites vary in maximum capacity from 25 to 40 persons and are regularly in use from the spring through fall, especially on weekends. Winter use is also available. Groups using the fire ring amphitheater usually present a specific program that they have developed themselves.

### Travel Trailer Village

The Travel Trailer Village (TTV) is a concessionaire-operated, full service RV/trailer site offering full hookups in the park. Other services include propane sales, a laundry, swimming pool, showers, and a dump station. The fee charged to park users that stay at TTV does not include the park entrance fee.

Visitors come to this facility directly off VA Route 234. TTV is not connected to the remainder of the park via internal paved roads. Most TTV users are unaware that they are in a national park and using a facility administered by an NPS concessionaire. Some TTV visitors enter the park from this campground through "social" trails along Pleasant Road.

#### Analysis:

- Park orientation and interpretive signs are limited. The planning team did not observe information explaining that the facility is operated by a NPS concessionaire and that the TTV user fee does not include the park entrance fee. In addition, since direct access to this facility is provided via the local road system, there is no need for this visitor group to come to the main park entrance. When TTV visitors find their way into the remainder of the park, via social trails, most do not pay an entrance fee.

### General Analysis for All Campgrounds:

- Because the fee charged to park users that stay in the cabin camps and the "Travel Trailer Village" does not include the park entrance fee, this policy sometimes creates unnecessary confusion for TTV and cabin campers that decide to explore the park more extensively on their own. Currently during random checks for park passes, if these campers encounter



The Oak Ridge Campground Amphitheater. NPS Photo.



The entrance to Travel Trailer Village. NPS Photo.

a law enforcement ranger while out enjoying park facilities and trails (beyond the boundaries of the camp); or, when they meet an interpretive ranger at the entrance station or at visitor center and the conversation reveals that this visitor/visitor group cannot produce a park pass, the subsequent discussions related to the need to pay the entrance fee can be confusing, awkward and may be perceived by visitors as confrontational. This current fee policy places the PRWI staff at a disadvantage from the very audience they are seeking to reach and convey important stewardship messages.

- A much stronger connection to park visitors must be made at all campgrounds with both media (non-personal) and personal services. There is a lack of basic information and orientation to the rest of the park in the campgrounds. It is possible to camp in the park without knowing about other recreational opportunities. In the case of the outlying Cabin Camps and Travel Trailer Village, visitors may not even know that they are in a unit of the NPS.
- Although there are facilities for ranger programs in TTV and the cabin camps, current staffing levels do not allow for this level of personal service.

### Trails and Roads

The park offers approximately thirty-seven miles of hiking and nine miles of mountain biking roads and trails. Trails vary in length and difficulty from short easy self-guided walks to long and arduous all day loops and trips. These trails encourage visitors to experience the quiet streams, glimpses of the park's early history, opportunities for viewing nature, and for reflection and solitude. The Roads and Trails staff, and volunteers, work constantly to clear downed limbs and trees that block trails, and will temporarily close paths that have been impacted by flooding.

### Piedmont Forest Trail

The Piedmont Forest Trail is a self-guided trail that offers explanations about the forest ecology through wayside exhibits. Rainbow Turf™ is a trail material made from recycled tires. At the end of the trail there is a large platform deck overlooking the forest; it is pleasantly-situated and provides a wonderful setting for nature observation, impromptu picnicking and ranger programs. At the time of this plan, park staff members are working with an eagle scout to identify various tree species along this trail to allow for a future 'self-guided' trail experience. There are already three waysides along this trail that interpret the levels of the forest – groundcover, understory, and canopy.



Campers enjoy Oak Ridge Campground in the 1950s. NPS Photo



The canopy along Farms to Forest Trail. NPS Photo.



Geologic Formations once described in the "Geology Trail" now largely go uninterpreted. NPS Photo.

## Interpretive Trails

The 2006 visitor survey indicated that 58% of visitors surveyed were “very interested” in self-guided trails in the park. The park has three designated “interpretive hiking trails” where in-depth information is provided along the way through either wayside exhibits or a corresponding brochure tied to numbered posts in the ground. The existing trails are discussed in detail below. Evaluation by park staff indicates that each interpretive trail needs attention.

### 1. Farms to Forest Trail

This interpretive trail was established many years ago to provide visitors an opportunity to explore first-hand the natural succession of the forest found near the Oak Ridge Campground. The planned trail experience included a 1-mile or 2-mile version with an accompanying brochure.

Forest succession is now complete in this area. Most of the information provided in the original self-guiding brochure is obsolete. While the publication is no longer available for individual use, at the trailhead a laminated copy of the brochure is provided.

#### Analysis:

- Another look at resources and park themes is required to determine the most appropriate interpretive focus for this trail.
- The laminated brochure is often removed from the site, requiring constant upkeep. Despite the lack of direct connection to existing trail features, home school leaders and some teachers request copies of the information and graphics provided on the brochure. When a new thematic approach and media is developed for this area, it is recommended that the information in the current brochure be reformatted and become a handout available at the visitor center.

### 2. A Walk Back in Time

This trail is a remnant of a 4-mile interpretive geology trail where originally numbered posts and a corresponding site bulletin provided more in depth interpretation related to the park's 570 million+ years of geology. For visitors' with a geology background, natural features along the trail easily

convey this "deep-time" history. However, for the random hiker or the novice visitor interested in learning about the park's geological story, the trail markers and corresponding site bulletin provided basic information and orientation (access) to this story.

- This park feature is no longer promoted as the "geology trail"; and the corresponding site bulletin is no longer produced due to cost savings measures taken by park staff. Instead four waysides are placed along the trail to interpret key features.
- The title of the first exhibit at the trailhead "A Walk Back in Time" has been taken by the staff and applied to the trail -- now an informal-in house trail name.
- Some numbered posts from the "geology trail" remain --this can be a point of confusion for visitors who believe they are missing something.

#### Analysis:

- Remove numbered posts along trail relating to the old "Geology Trail" site bulletin.
- An inter-disciplinary park team needs to look at this interpretive trail. This trail is part of a larger trail system. Naming a trail “an interpretive trail” sets visitor expectations.

Providing “interpretive trails” (by pointing out key features that help to illustrate a specific theme/value along the trail route) can potentially add value to the visitor experience.

During future planning for an “interpretive trail” some topics to discuss include:

- a) Does this portion of the parkwide trail system represent an important visitor experience where a designation of an “interpretive trail” (with companion future interpretation provided) significantly enhance the visitor experience -- beyond hiking and visual enjoyment of natural features?

b) Do features along the trail offer the opportunity to promote/interpret specific park values; or, require interpretation to be protected, understood or appreciated?

c) Is the current experience --a segment of the park's trail system with several interpretive signs along the way -- sufficient?

d) Or do the features and/or potential visitor experience warrant the designation of an interpretive trail -- named, signed and interpreted? If the answer is yes; and the park staff decides to create/designate an advertised visitor experience -- as "an interpretive trail", determining how that interpretation will occur ("24/7") without staff, is an important next step.

e) The choice of interpretive media: (1) waysides in ground available 24-hours daily or trail posts with a companion site bulletin is a park decision. (The choice to provide numbered trail posts with a companion brochure/site bulletin implies a staff commitment to keep the brochure stocked at the trailhead and in the visitor center; and, a commitment to provide the requisite funds to keep the brochure in supply.)

Note: some parks begin with the trail post/brochure option as a first step: to provide interpretation, evaluate visitor interest/interpretive effectiveness and then assess if use of waysides to replace the numbered posts and the corresponding brochure is a valid next step. In other instances, retaining the numbered posts and site bulletin may be the more cost-effective choice considering the number of facility users and the replacement costs of the brochure.

f.) Staff discussions will guide the planning, implementation and evaluation of a future interpretive trail experience at this location.

### 3. Telegraph Area Trail

The Telegraph Picnic area offers a self-guided trail with waysides to tell the story of the historic road also known as the "Potomac Path". Many used this path including Native Americans, Colonial troops to reach the Battle of Yorktown during the American Revolutionary War, and early settlers and

farmers in the area. The origin of the Telegraph Road name is from its former use as the main north/south thoroughfare in the 18th and 19th centuries. At the end of the 19th century, it was lined with telegraph wires and poles (many of which can still be found along the path today) for the transfer of telegraph signals. This section of the park may be designated part of the Washington-Rochambeau National Scenic Trail, if approved by congress. This area of the park has considerable 21st century highway traffic noise from I-95.

#### Analysis:

- The 'self-guided' "Telegraph Area Trail Brochure" is no longer published. Two waysides along 'the Crossing' trail provide appropriate interpretation of the site.

- This trail is underutilized and not often pointed out as an area of the park to visit by staff.

#### Analysis of parkwide interpretive trails:

- The 2006 visitor survey indicates a high level of visitor interest/enjoyment of interpretive trails.

- The visitor is given mixed messages when an interpretive facility is designated, but little or no in depth interpretation is available.

#### Scenic Drive

This paved surface road is a 9.5-mile loop offering access to most of the park's hiking and biking trails. One lane of the Scenic Drive is designated as a non-motorized lane (three miles long), however the majority of Scenic Drive is still two-way traffic. It also has nine parking areas designated "A" -- "I" with trail access and a wayside exhibit at each location

#### Analysis:

- The drive receives a lot of day use by local residents before/after work and on weekends. The one-way section is extremely popular with pedestrians and bicyclists.

- The name of this road is some-what misleading; there are no panoramic views while driving. Instead, visitors are treated to views of the Piedmont forest and its inhabitants.



The remnants of a 400 year old roadbed that once carried supplies for General George Washington during the Revolutionary War. NPS Photo.



The Scenic Drive in fall. NPS Photo.



Telegraph Picnic Pavilion. NPS Photo.

## Other Recreation Attractions

### Telegraph and Pine Grove Picnic Areas

There are two picnic pavilions in the park.

1 Pine Grove Picnic Pavilion is available “first-come/first-served”. No fee is charged for use of this area. This facility includes picnic tables and grills, both in and around the pavilion. It is located near the visitor center with hiking trails and bathrooms nearby. Pine Grove Picnic area is especially popular on summer weekends.

2. The Telegraph Pavilion is a fee operated facility where groups can reserve the Telegraph Pavilion in advance. This area includes bathrooms, grills, picnic tables, and a ball field, with trails nearby. If the Telegraph Pavilion is unreserved, it is open to any group “first-come/first-served”.

Constructed with fee money, this area opened in 2002 in order to provide a picnic area available by reservation. Establishing a day use picnic area in this location -- now called the “Telegraph Picnic Area” was one of the recommendations in the 2005 African American Study undertaken by the park.

#### Analysis:

- While Pine Grove sees much use during the summer, Telegraph remains underutilized and is closed in the winter season. A strategy to let potential users know about this facility is needed.

### Orienteering Course

The park has a very popular orienteering course. The course was created in 1974 by the Swedish National Military Orienteering team in partnership with the Quantico Orienteering Club and consists of 60 stations spread over 3 miles. The 60 stations are organized into 28 courses that range from easy to difficult skill levels. The course can be used independently or by attending a ranger offered interpretive program.

#### Analysis:

- The popularity of this facility, and scout badge requirements have created a constant demand for ranger-led orienteering

programs. Visitors using this facility, often independently, frequently can’t find the starting point and sometimes get lost. A large in-ground orienteering “you are here” starting block is required. Despite this frustration, the clear majority of users have a very positive experience using the facility.

### Williams Ball Field

This is a full sized playing field with baseball backstop and layout, area for volleyball, and horseshoe pits. This field has been used by Special Use Permit for organized groups, for large scale camping such as Boy Scouts, and as overflow parking for special events through a special use permit.

#### Analysis, Facilities General:

- The maintenance staff is experiencing an increase in vandalism to all park facilities, particularly the park areas closest to Route 234.
- It is possible to enjoy one section of the park without knowing the range of other park experiences or opportunities or even know that the area is part of the park.
- In general, more information about park facilities, services available and better interpretation on the connection of a particular site or facility to the park’s history is needed. Additional wayside interpretive panels could be installed along the multi-use paved path along VA 234.
- The location of the visitor center does not work well for year-round fee collection, and to assist visitors with information and orientation.
- Improved directional and facility signage from the Visitor Center to Williams Field and the Telegraph Picnic Area is needed.



One of the 30 individual orienteering course maps offered at Prince William Forest Park. NPS Photo.

## Interpretive Media

### Audiovisual Programs

See “Facility” sections describing the use of audiovisual programs in the visitor center and at the Oak Ridge Campground.

### Brochures/Site Bulletins

The park has a Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) produced Unigrd brochure. The map was revised and updated in 2006.

The staff has developed a wide array of site bulletins available at the visitor center. The site bulletins offer information on approximately 20 different topics and feature the park’s natural, historical, and recreational opportunities. The current list of site bulletin topics is provided in Appendix C.

#### Analysis:

- The text of the HFC Unigrd brochure needs to be rewritten in order to provide a more appropriate balance of the park’s primary interpretive themes.

### Sign Program

The majority of signs in the park were planned and produced before the advent of the NPS UniGuide sign system authorized by the Director in 2003 and implemented in 2005. The existing signs represent different types and styles, and have been installed as needed over the years in response to changing conditions. As a result, they do not always speak with one voice in terms of colors, designs, and materials.

#### Analysis:

- The current park entrance sign is traditional and functional.
- Add a duplicate park entrance sign on the opposite side of Park Entrance Road from the existing sign to be visible to vehicles traveling west bound on VA 619.

### Bulletin Boards

There are currently eleven bulletin boards maintained by the Interpretive Division. These boards have information ranging from park orientation to program and interpretive offerings and safety. There are bulletin boards in all of the cabin camps

that are maintained by the Cabin Camp staff and three bulletin boards at Oak Ridge Campground maintained by the Resource and Visitor Protection staff – these bulletin boards are used for regulatory and safety information.

### Traveler Information System (TIS)

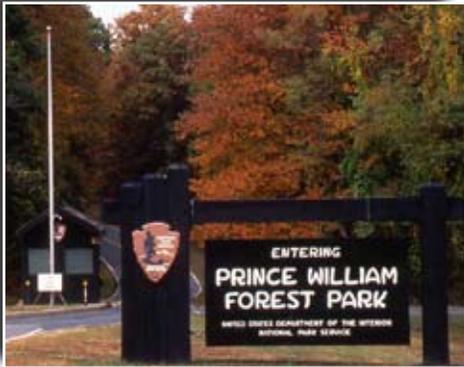
The park has an AM radio station, TIS, that broadcasts to a range of about 4 miles north of the park and one mile south. This repeating looped message provides basic information about the park, mainly to Interstate 95 users. The current agreement with VDOT, who holds the FCC frequency license, allows park staff to have temporary permission to continue to operate the TIS.

#### Analysis:

- The sign announcing the TIS is only located along southbound Interstate 95; and, it can confuse travelers because of its location, (just before the exit for Route 234, two miles prior to Route 619). The signal is not very strong resulting in no information being received when the traveler finds the radio station after seeing the sign. Improved positioning of signs announcing the park TIS is needed for both the north and southbound I-95 lanes in order to entice the passerby and provide basic orientation information about the national park.
- The station is incapable of broadcasting throughout the park, thus making it an ineffective tool for informing visitors once they are in the park.
- Consider relocating the broadcast antenna to the lattice tower located behind the park visitor center for increased height which may improve coverage to I-95.
- Investigate other means of electronic broadcasting given current media developments.

### Wayside Exhibits

The park received approval in 2005 for a PMIS Recreation Fee Demo project request to replace 33 wayside exhibits with standard panels and frames through Harpers Ferry Center (HFC). Later, the park received additional funding to replace all bulletin boards and frames and to increase the number of



A traditional NPS sign welcomes visitors. NPS Photo.



The sign announcing the TIS radio system to drivers along I-95. NPS Photo.

wayside exhibits from 33 to 79. This work is now underway and the second phase of this three-phase project has been completed (at the publication date of this plan).

**Website**

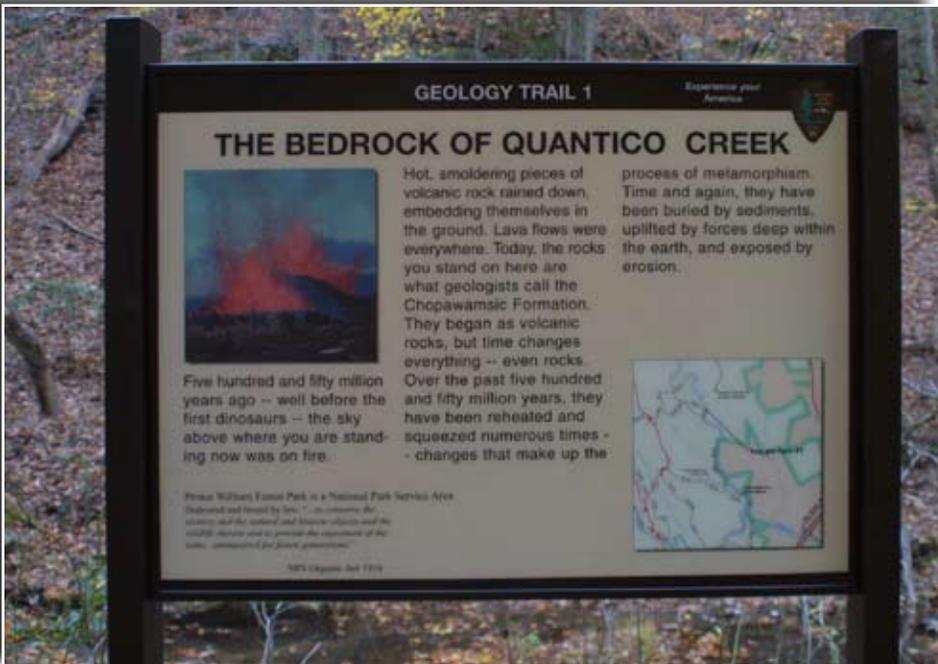
The website offers a good introductory virtual tour of the park and to most of the facilities. The web pages are a virtual extension of the park for those visitors not able to visit in person or for those seeking advanced information prior to visiting. Website visitors can view many forms of wildlife, download brochures about park history, and download camping and special use permit applications. An interactive hiking guide was developed and uploaded in April 2007. This feature offers a virtual hike and trail information. Updates have been made to the cabin camp pages to include digital photo depictions of each camps facility. Work is continuing on an “on-line museum” featuring artifacts from the parks curatorial collection. This future program is a collaborative project with WASO.

The park is working to provide access to scholarly studies on this site to assist with research requests and to provide an increased level of interpretation through links to USGS sites, Resource Management information, and site/topic specific information.

Analysis:

- Almost 25% of all visitors surveyed in the park in 2006 used the park website to plan their visit.
- For non-NPS websites (including MapQuest and non-NPS recreation sites) information received by visitors is not always accurate because of misinformation obtained from unrelated (non-NPS) WebPages and information stations.

The former waysides installed in the 1990s (left) and the new waysides installed in 2008 provide more detailed information along a few of the park trails.. NPS Photo.



## Personal Services

### Program Management Responsibilities

The interpretive staff has three full-time permanent staff members:

- a Chief of Interpretation, GS-11 Supervisory Park Ranger;
- one Interpretive Park Ranger, GS-9 Park Ranger;
- one Student Career Employment Program (SCEP)

Interpreter filling a GS 5/7/9 park ranger position; and

- a changing number of GS-04 Visitor Use Assistants, (VUA positions are budget dependent).

This staff carries out the functional responsibilities for several park program areas including the Cooperating Association Program, the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program, Ranger Programs for the general public, education programs for school groups, the Volunteer-In-Parks Program, various outreach activities, and liaison to many of the park partners. A brief description for some of these functions is provided below. *Please note:* the Volunteer-in-Parks Program and the Cooperating Association Program are discussed in the Partnership Section, following Personal Services.

Ranger Corinne Zimmerman introduces children to the park's history as a WWII spy training camp in her 'Spies in the Park' program. NPS Photo.



## Fee Collection Program

This program benefits park operations and interpretation by making the first public contact with park visitors and providing revenue to the park for one-time project use through the recreation demonstration fee program, whereby the park can retain 80% of the money that is collected for PRWI specific project work.

The entrance station is open June through September, and on weekends April, May and October. Otherwise the park entrance fee is collected in the visitor center. During the summer, when funding is available additional seasonal staff are hired to keep the entrance station open as much as possible.

### Analysis:

- Use of fee money to support the cost of collection (funding additional visitor use assistants to operate the entrance station) varies yearly due to the need to fund park projects with 80% fee money.
- During the summer months, the hours of the entrance station varies due to competing programmatic coverage requirements. For example, if someone calls in sick, the staff member will close the entrance station to operate the visitor center or conduct a previously scheduled program.
- When the entrance station is closed, the park loses revenue due to the existing park road system design and location of the visitor center. Visitors can drive directly onto the park's Scenic Drive to access facilities without stopping at the visitor center.
- The fee collection operation is divided which is sometimes confusing for the public. The interpretive staff collects the park entrance fee and the campground fees; while a program assistant that reports directly to the superintendent administers the cabin camps and collects the fees.

## Ranger Programs

The Interpretive staff offers:

- weekend programs for the general public during the summer,
- monthly programs year-round, and
- campfire programs at Oak Ridge Campground every weekend from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

These programs are advertised monthly and weekly via the park's e-mail list (now numbering over 450 addresses) and through the distribution of flyers inside and outside of the park. Sometimes local newspapers carry the program advertisements. Common program topics include natural and cultural history as well as recreation-oriented topics such as orienteering, animal programs, cultural discovery hikes, and nature hikes. During the busy school program season (spring and fall), the number of ranger programs offered for the general public is reduced to try and meet the increased demand for school programs.

The GS-9 ranger and the SCEP ranger primarily deliver programs for the general public. Seasonal staff may assist; however, this depends on the availability of funding. An overall program increase is required to be able to consistently hire a seasonal staff when all permanent positions are occupied.

## Education Programs

The park joined the Bridging the Watershed Partnership Program (BTW) in 2002. Many parks in the National Capital Region have partnered with the Alice Ferguson Foundation to provide high school students with curriculum-based, hands-on, outdoor learning experiences. This program was developed by educators and park rangers to provide high school students with real world learning opportunities. Instructors for this program include both a BTW staff member, a park staff member, and teachers who have attended the pre-course BTW workshop. The staff commitment for these programs is again primarily carried out by the GS-09 permanent ranger and the SCEP ranger. Summer seasonal staff will assist if they can be hired with available funding.



High school students conduct "real life science" in the Bridging the Watershed educational program. NPS Photo.

## Analysis:

- The greatest demand for student educational programs is in the spring and fall. Two Virginia county school systems border the park -- Prince William County and Stafford County. Students from these counties are the most common school groups using the park. For pre-school, elementary and middle grade students, the park currently offers very little in terms of curriculum-based educational programming. As a result, the park has a very high demand for short, fluffy programs. These requests often come from private pre-schools and Kinder Cares.

- Curriculum-based programs are requested very frequently but, with the exception of the "Bridging the Watershed Program", the park is not able fulfill these requests, because it has not had the staff to work in partnership with teachers to develop this level of programming. In order to support an expansion of the curriculum based educational program for other grade levels, PRWI needs an increase in funding to support staff efforts.

- The interpretive staff is stretched to and beyond capacity year round. While keeping facilities open to the public is a priority, it is often difficult for staff to have adequate time for program development or presentation. Each year, over 30 interpretive program requests are unfilled; the staff is able to conduct only 3-5 off-site school programs per year and unable to fill program requests from cabin camp users; and roving interpretation rarely occurs.

## Lessons Learned

During the August 2005 workshop the PRWI staff conducted an analysis of the Interpretive Program. All divisions assisted the interpretive staff to help identify: 1) What programs have worked well in the past – and why; 2) What programs have not worked well – and why; and 3) Discussed observations/recommendations to improve IVS

## What's not working?

- Festivals: they are time consuming and many programs in the past were unrelated to park themes. Example: why are we doing magic acts?

- Media Advertisement to attract new audiences
- Community connections: people don't know we are here

Programs that have worked or are working well:

*Note:* the planning team identified existing programs and or program topics that are successful in bringing visitors to the park. Park programs that have a star (\*) indicate that while this program connects with many visitors, more needs to be done to improve the program's connection to the park.



- The 2008 year long commemorative event honoring the 75th anniversary of the New Deal including monthly interpretive programs, a weekend-long 'heritage days' event held in June. The June program highlighted the park history as a Civilian Conservation Corps work camp from 1935 – 1941.

- Northern Virginia Community College interns that assist with interpretive program delivery

- Ranger's Against Drugs (RAD)\*

- Special Use Permits such as "Adventure Runs" are successful in bringing visitors to the park; perhaps we can build a connection with these groups to do more than a race.\*

- The Volunteer-in Parks Program

- Evening Campground programs: These are working well due to personal staff/visitor contacts. The staff works the campground before the activity and invites campers to attend.

- Sunday Afternoon programs (although not as well attended as the campground program)

- Junior Ranger Program

- Program topics that have attracted good program attendance include: beaver, turtle, snake, raptors – however, these programs need improved connection to park themes and park ecosystem recovery or threats.\*



Demonstrations of CCC crafts were some of the highlights of the 2008 Heritage Days event. NPS Photos.

- Cultural history programs such as the Pyrite Mine, family farms and cemeteries or the Office of Strategic Services

- The Fall Festival reached many kids. (No longer offered.)

- Community programs/events such as concerts in the park have reached new audiences in the past.

- Founder's Day Program's: such as the Science Museum's presentation on electric cars, sustainability and the importance of conservation.

- Haunted Forest/Phantoms of the Forest: this was an evening program done in the past. Visitors would be transported via a hayride to different stations in the park. At each station staff/volunteers interpreted different eras of the park's history.

- Providing assistance to scout groups earning merit badges such as orienteering is very time consuming. There may be a better way to do this activity.\*

- The Nature Center concept was the focus of the first visitor center here in the park. While this approach was successful in its day, and to date, many visitors still ask about the Nature Center, the park focus now is to launch visitors into the park to see wildlife; not hold wildlife in captivity.

Why did these programs work/what do they have in common?

- Family oriented

- Fee-free

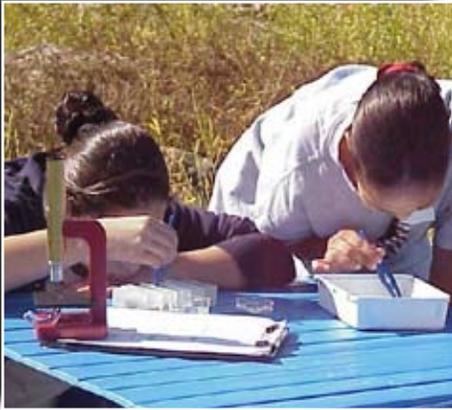
- Personal contact – rangers promote program

- Theme based/park specific/unique

- They are all interactive and "hands-on"

- They include a curiosity factor

- The park had a publication that successfully promoted these programs in advance



Bridging the Watershed students hard at work. NPS Photo.



The park store, tucked in a small area in the visitor center. NPS Photo.



The Friends of Prince William Forest Park are the park's lead partner. Logo courtesy: FPWFP.

### Partnerships

#### Bridging the Watershed Partnership Program (BTW)

The “Bridging the Watershed Program” or BTW is a National Capital Region partnership with the Alice Ferguson Foundation. The program goal is to provide high school students with curriculum-based, hands-on, outdoor learning experiences with real world learning opportunities in national parks. Instructors for this program include both a BTW staff member, a park staff member, and teachers who have attended the pre-course BTW workshop. PRWI joined the partnership in 2002.

#### Cooperating Association Program

Eastern National (EN), a non-profit park partner manages the park’s sales outlet. EN took over operations from the Parks and History Association in June 2004. Located in the visitor center, the outlet offers a variety of theme-related sales materials. Proceeds come directly back to benefit the interpretive programming in the park.

#### Friends of Prince William Forest Park (FPWFP)

Established in 1989, the Friends of Prince William Forest Park (FPWFP) is a non-profit organization whose members help support park activities and the conservation of park resources. They provide a link to the park’s website from their site at [www.fpwfp.org](http://www.fpwfp.org). Their monthly meetings feature a business briefing along with informative and interesting programs. Outdoor activities are also often scheduled before or after the meetings. Each year, the group sponsors the Chopawamsic Cycle Challenge to raise awareness of the park and its resources, of the Friends, and raise funds to support park needs and activities. This relationship was formalized in 2006 with this very effective partner through a general agreement. A Student Conservation Association intern was funded by the FPWFP and National Capital Region Partnerships funds to increase the FPWFP membership and outreach efforts in 2007.

#### Analysis:

- The group sponsors very successful events and they are looking to find other ways to support the park, both financially and as a park advocate.

#### Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC)

A General Agreement was signed and entered in to with PATC in 2006 for the primary purpose of trail maintenance. PATC also conducts trail maintenance workshops.

#### Analysis Park Partnerships in General

- Partnerships developed to support the delivery of the park’s interpretive, education and visitor services program are an integral part of Prince William Forest Park’s desired future.
- Finalize a draft general agreement with Quantico Orienteering Club (QOC). This agreement will formalize a relationship with QOC; QOC will be able to assist in maintaining the existing orienteering courses, provide orienteering programs to the public, and to scouts.
- Consider developing a general agreement with the Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy (CCCL). The CCCL is devoted to honoring the work and legacy of the CCC program and enrollees. A relationship could foster additional oral histories for the park and the donation of CCC related memorabilia and items.

#### Volunteer-in-Parks Program

Volunteers are an essential part of the Interpretation and Visitor Services (IVS) staff. Two – four part-time volunteers work in the visitor center; they provide information and assistance to the public and collect user fees. For the permanent interpretive staff, during the winter months, covering a 7-day work schedule is difficult. The visitor center remains open thanks to the presence of dedicated volunteers. In addition to IVS volunteers, the Interpretation GS-9 ranger is the parkwide volunteer coordinator. Most VIP experience requests are for maintenance related work and clean-up projects.

#### Analysis:

- While increased operational funding for the park remains elusive, the need for an expanded VIP/partner program grows. (Despite the restriction of not replacing paid positions with volunteers in order to continue to provide even the most basic of visitor services.)

- Since interpretation and maintenance are the park programs most heavily affected with budget short-falls; and, historically, these are the program areas where individuals have expressed the most interest, the park will focus target recruitment in these areas.



Volunteers young and old participate in one of the park's many volunteer events. NPS Photo.

- Across the board support, training and supervision is needed from all park divisions to increase the effectiveness of the volunteer program. For example, often, volunteers looking for maintenance related projects (i.e. – boy scouts, eagle scouts). These types of requests require weekend work and the proposed project is sometimes beyond the scope of knowledge of a GS-9 interpreter.

- A parkwide commitment to the VIP program may also increase the park's annual VIP program funding allotment. (Note: the total number of volunteer hours given during the previous fiscal year directly relates to the amount of funding the park's volunteer program receives the following fiscal year).

- Trained volunteers are also needed to conduct interpretive programs. While covering the visitor center is important, (due to the lack of visitation to the visitor center when the entrance

station is closed), getting volunteers out in the park is essential. This addition to VIP responsibilities has two advantages. It (1) provides increased park opportunities to connect with visitors recreating out in the park; and (2) gives volunteers more field experience which will enrich their ability to assist visitors in the VC.

### Issues and Influences

There are four major issues that affect Prince William Forest Park. Through the interpretation of park resources and values, the park interpretive staff plays a vital role in addressing these issues. Considering the issues outlined below, this then dictates a fifth issue; the critical need for a significant operations increase for interpretation and visitor services staff.

#### Issue 1: Local Community Support

The park is dependent on the local community to support conservation of the water quality and forest values of areas along the park boundary. One such positive example of working with the local community was based on the four-year archeological study. The park staff applied to Prince William County for a change in its zoning designation as Parks and Open Space, to a Designated Cultural Resource (DCR). This change approved by the Board of Supervisors in 2002 recognizes the cultural resources of the park by the county. While development is not prohibited adjacent to the park, or within the authorized boundary, this designation highlights the value of the park should development be proposed within the authorized boundary.

#### Issue 2: Partnerships

The location of U.S. Marine Corps Base Quantico and the new National Museum of the Marine Corps provides many opportunities for future partnership efforts for interpretation and visitor services. There are a number of agreements called for in the 1998 Memorandum of Understanding with the US Marine Corps Base Quantico; park follow-through to complete these agreements will provide additional protection for the park and identify access for park visitors. Effective partnership examples include: the update of the Quantico Creek watershed agreement, the development of a Chopawamsic Watershed agreement, a recreation plan for the





An archeologist hard at work during the 2004 Berger Survey. NPS Photo.



Breckenridge Reservoir in fall. NPS Photo.



The Bradford Tract, acquired in 2004, took a major cleanup effort. NPS Photo.

Breckenridge area, restrictions on NPS and military facilities along Route 619 and the development of a new interpretive exhibit promoting park resources and values to be placed in the nearby National Marine Corps Museum.

#### Issue 3: Land Acquisitions

The park continues to purchase land that is located within the legislative boundary of the park as authorized by Congress, with lands in the upper watershed designated as a priority. Land acquisitions allow the park new opportunities to provide visitor services, protect resources, and partner with park neighbors. An example is the acquisition of land on the park's northern boundary. This property will provide future access from Route 234 into the main area of the park. Funding has been requested to provide a parking area and trail head. Opportunities to work with local, state and federal partners to further the mission of the park exist.

#### Issue 4: National Park Significance and Mission

Confusion exists regarding the park's identity. Routine visitor comments frequently identify the park as a county or state park, or even a U.S. Forest Service Area. Because the park's name is the same as the Virginia County in which it is located, the confusion is increased. Many staff, partners, and stakeholders have suggested a name change to alleviate visitor confusion. Suggestions include:

- Using the original Native American place name to the park's designation as the: "Chopawamsic National Recreation Area", since the park now retains lands in the Chopawamsic watershed. If chosen, this name would restore a portion of the original park name used by the Recreation Demonstration Area Program in the 1930's ("Chopawamsic Recreation Demonstration Area").
- Since 2007, the park has received growing outside support from organizations such as the Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni Association. It has been suggested that the park name honor its history as a Civilian Conservation Corps constructed camp with a new designation such as "Civilian Conservation Corps National Recreation Area" or "Civilian Conservation Corps National Historical Park."

- Other suggestions have included: Chopawamsic National Historical Park, Piedmont Forest National Historical Park, Old Dominion National Recreation Area and Prince William Forest National Recreation Area.

While there are many suggestions for names, all agree that "National" needs to appear in the official name designation so the park's association with the National Park Service is more evident.

#### Background:

The reason for the name change from Chopawamsic Recreation Demonstration Area to Prince William Forest Park was that the 1948 legislation directed that all NPS lands in the Chopawamsic watershed be transferred to the U.S. Navy when the additional lands around the park were purchased. Since the park would have no longer administered lands within the Chopawamsic watershed, the name was changed to Prince William Forest Park.

The December 2003 legislation that authorized the land exchange between the park and the Marine Corps Base Quantico provided for about 1700 acres of land within the Chopawamsic Watershed to be retained by the park. Many people feel that now that the park has lands within the Chopawamsic Watershed it would be appropriate to return the original Native American place name as part of the park's official designation.

#### Issue 5: Interpretive Staffing

Expansion of the interpretive program while exciting and commendable, has taken its toll on the interpretive staff. The same staff that provides programming for the general public and educational groups operates the entrance station and visitor center and the Eastern National outlet. The interpretive staff also coordinates the parkwide volunteer program, deposits recreation fees, trains interpretive seasonals and volunteers, acts as the clearing house for park information, maintains the website, and functions as liaison to many of the park's partners. The park's interpretive program must be managed at a level that is realistic for the amount of resources available without over committing those resources.

# Recommendations

Interpretive planning analyzes significant needs and recommends a wide array of interpretive services, facilities, programs, and opportunities for partnerships to communicate in the most efficient and effective way the park's purpose, significance, and values.

The following principles will apply to all interpretation at Prince William Forest Park:

- All interpretation will address physical and programmatic accessibility.
- Where possible, interpretation will use natural and historic objects and documented personal examples to bring the story alive for visitors and illustrate diverse points of view.
- Where possible, the park will partner with scientists, historians, the local community, universities, nearby land management agencies, and neighboring institutions to develop programs, media, share research, etc.
- The park will implement new standards from the Servicewide UniGuide Sign Program as signs and interpretive media are upgraded.
- Where possible, "virtual visitors" will have opportunities to view key park vistas and to access new research, studies, management plans, and historical information.

The following recommendations describe programs and media designed to realize the visions, objectives, themes, and visitor experiences previously described for Prince William Forest Park.

The recommended methods of presentation will guide the development of personal services or media design. Realization of this vision will be achieved only if the appropriate level of funding occurs.



An original entrance sign to Prince William Forest Park. NPS Photo.

## Pre-Visit

- 1) Strengthen Prince William Forest Park's National Park Service identity in all programming and interpretive media.
  - 2) Change the park name so that "national" appears in the park's official name designation, in order to build and reinforce the park's identity as a National Park in a region surrounded with many local, county and state parks.
    - The superintendent will take the leadership role externally to determine how best to proceed and coordinate efforts with the Regional Office, WASO Office of Legislative Affairs and park partners.
  - 3) Continue to provide pre-visit information by telephone, mail, and the Internet.
    - Utilize and maintain an up-to date e-mail & postal mailing list; this will foster well attended programs and events, and keep the general public informed of resource related topics and issues of interest.
  - 4) Continue to provide up-to-date visitor information on the park's radio broadcast "Traveler Information System" for travelers on Interstate 95.
    - Work with Virginia Department of Transportation to improve sign placement on the north and south bound lanes.
    - Consider relocating the broadcast antenna to the lattice tower located behind the park visitor center for increased height which may improve coverage to I-95.
    - Investigate other means of electronic broadcasting given current media developments.
  - 5) Continue to provide a user-friendly and up-to-date website.

## Short-term:

- a. Develop a pro-active program of contact with other Internet information providers to insure that the most up-to-date and correct information is provided where possible.
- b. Utilize website for trip planning. Include safety tips for visitors planning day hikes. Address the need to carry food, water, wear appropriate footwear, and other safety precautions.



The left hand turn onto Scenic Drive, known as 'Milepost 0' is enough to deter many visitors from reaching the visitor center. NPS Photo.



'Milepost 0' as shown coming from the visitor center in snow. NPS Photo.



The park entrance sign in spring. NPS Photo.

### Long-term:

a. Add to future audiovisual interpretive media contracts the requirement to create shorter video clips of the same interpretive product in a format compatible for website use. Post the material in the appropriate area – to entice the general user and inform the researcher.

b. Promote scholarly access by adding new research on website. For example: in future resource management contracts, add an interpretive component providing for an informational training session for the interpretive staff and an executive summary written in layman's language for posting on the park's website. When appropriate, provide the detailed study as a PDF attachment for interested visitors.

6) Research and purchase a new phone system to serve as an "after hours" information source with a multi-layered attendant system so callers can obtain detailed information by pressing a designated number about a specific aspect of the park any time of the day.

7) Continue to partner with community and tourism leaders to market Prince William Forest Park as a key area attraction, and improve informational signs directing travelers to Prince William Forest Park from all approaches.

- Participate in county and regional tourism familiarization tours: "FAM tours".

- Continue to participate in travel writer tours.

### Arrival Experience

Although the visitor center is only about a quarter mile off the main road, the left-hand turn directing visitors to the Scenic Drive prevents many from stopping at the visitor center.

The planning team believes the current location of the visitor center is a major factor in the effectiveness of the current and/or future facility operation. If visitors do not go to the visitor center, then they gain no value from its interpretive or informational programs or media.

### Facilities

#### Visitor Center Facility and Media Recommendations

#### Location

#### Short-Term:

- Continue using the existing visitor center as the principal facility for providing orientation information and park interpretation, along with other necessary services visitors seek such as contact with rangers, rest rooms and publication sales.

- Seek funding to pursue planning to determine if all visitor traffic, after paying their entrance fee at the entrance station, can be re-routed to pass by the current visitor center before continuing on to the Scenic Drive. This alternative proposes re-routing traffic through signage, temporary barriers, and possibly the relocation of the entrance station.

This recommendation affirms earlier park discussions held during the 2005 Business Planning process. The LRIP planning team agrees that if this short-term recommendation is possible, its implementation would achieve the desired effect of helping visitors receive better park orientation at the start of their visit. It could also increase fee collection receipts and cooperating association sales when the entrance station is not be staffed. Further study will determine if this recommendation is both practical and affordable. If the road cannot be rerouted, then improved signing at the intersection might increase visitation at the Visitor Center.

- Seek funding to design and install new exhibits in the current visitor center. Development of the new exhibits will be guided by a schematic exhibit design. (See specific recommendations that follow in the "Interpretive Media in the Visitor Center" section.)

#### Long-term:

- Seek planning and construction money to plan, design and construct a new visitor center. The visitor center function should be moved to a location along the main route into the park, preferably not far from the park entrance. The planning team believes the current location of the visitor



The visitor center in the late 1990s. NPS Photo.



The visitor center entrance today. NPS Photo.

center is a major factor in the effectiveness of the current and/or future facility operation. If visitors do not go to the visitor center, then they gain no value from its interpretive or informational programs or media. The park experience will be far more meaningful to first-time visitors if they have an opportunity to learn about the context of the park, its history, significance, and primary themes before driving through it or hiking on its trails. Visitors should have full access to maps and orientation information, especially because the one-way section of the road requires a commitment to follow through in a counterclockwise direction, and visitors are not permitted to double back through that section.

A logical location for the visitor center would be at the intersection of the Park Entrance Road and the Scenic Drive, one-quarter mile west-southwest of the current visitor center. A location here might make it possible to use some of the existing spur road, and some of the extended parking area associated with the current visitor center/picnic area. The new facility would provide space for larger exhibit galleries, AV programs, an all-purpose room for group programs and meetings, and include an outdoor amphitheater. Achievement of this recommendation would consolidate longstanding park efforts to improve visitor services and provide effective interpretation.

It is important to note that this long-term recommendation is in conformance with two significant park planning documents: the May 2006 Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect for a New Access/Entrance on VA 234 and the 1999 Prince William Forest Park General Management Plan (GMP).

- The 1999 GMP calls for the expansion of the park visitor center, education program and existing visitor support facilities.

- During the 2005 EA for a New Entrance/Access from VA 234, the park entrance off of Interstate 95 and VA Route 619 was confirmed as the park's primary entrance. Future visitors desiring to enter the park from VA Route 234 will access the park via bicycles or walking from a 50 – 100 space parking lot near Waterway Drive and VA 234 on NPS land.

### Visitor Center Role and Function

- Change the focus of the visitor center: the visitor center should function more like a “hub” providing introductions to broad park themes versus the present treatment of intricate exhibits detailing all of the park’s stories. Short and long term exhibit and audiovisual recommendations reflect the concept that the Prince William Forest Park’s visitor center should not be seen as a primary destination for visitors, but as an orientation center preparing visitors to experience the many dimensions of the park, and many features of the forest. Visitors will discover more in depth interpretive opportunities out in the park, where these significant features are located

### Interpretive Media

#### Visitor Center

#### Audiovisual

#### Short-term Recommendations:

The implementation of recommendations assumes that accessibility features will be included in future audiovisual programs. For audiovisual programs, this includes providing captions, audio description, and assisted listening devices.

In light of the phased recommendations for facility improvement, it is important to consider the kinds of audiovisual programs that can accommodate a number of planning and funding scenarios in the short term, and be used in and of themselves, or, as building blocks for expanded interpretive opportunities in the long term. Flexibility should not be the only driver when creating the park’s audiovisual concepts and their ultimate presentation. The park’s themes and resources, and how visitors experience and use the park are also important directorial factors.

The park has many stories to tell, from the Civilian Conservation Corps and a tradition of recreation to the piedmont ecosystem and the Quantico Creek watershed. However, the trap in developing audiovisual presentations is trying to tell all stories at once. This type of treatment results in the production of a timeline of information versus an intellectual engagement that facilitates connections between the viewer and the park’s multiple resources. The interpretive themes presented in this LRIP will be an important tool to

begin to conceptualize future audiovisual programs that assist the park and its staff in providing enhanced educational and interpretive opportunities to visitors. The following short-term audiovisual recommendations are cost effective and flexible building blocks outlined to assist the park reach their long term visitor experience goals.

- Prepare for new interpretive audiovisual media projects. The production of any media project, including audiovisual programs, requires research to find materials, such as photographs, oral history recordings, home movies and artwork, which help tell the park's stories. The park has these kinds of unique and invaluable materials.

- Assess the state of the park's collections, including the quality of the materials themselves and the rights to use these materials, in order to understand and assign the work involved in creating comprehensively organized research packages for future projects. This work will bring great efficiency to future projects and will help to further protect and enhance the collections and their usability for internal and external research.

- Consult with a Harpers Ferry Center curator for an initial assessment to seek recommendations as to how the park might proceed with this project and a cost-estimate to proceed with the work. Discussions should include defining project goals and parameters, the skills sets needed to accomplish these goals, and possible sources to achieve these goals.

- Create an accession plan for the collection of oral histories and other materials. In addition to an assessment of current collections, the park has and will continue to have the opportunity to add to their collection. Create a plan that identifies potential subjects and identifies research into finding interviewees is recommended.

- Consult with an HFC curator regarding the creation of a plan to expand the collection. The park has a finite window of opportunity to continue to collect oral histories as they directly relate to the CCC, summer, camps, and the OSS.

- Create a release form and lists of questions for consistency. Utilize professional-grade equipment and seek training to ensure that any park conducted and recorded oral history interviews are high quality and usable for other applications.

- Develop a protocol for what to do with the recordings at the conclusion of the interview, such as transcribing the material and making duplicates for research and archival purposes.

- Identify partners to help the park further its oral history collection. The park is located close to so many resources.

- Contact the NCR Partnership office to verify what Cooperative Studies Units are currently in place; and use this consultation opportunity to explore how to create new partnerships to benefit the park's interpretive program. For example: George Mason University has both a history department as well as a folklore focus in their interdisciplinary studies master's program. The Smithsonian Center for Folklife and the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress may also be good resources. The National Park Service's History Webpage includes various articles and oral history projects: <http://www.nps.gov/history/history/oh/index.htm>.

- Consult with individual parks and their partners for lessons learned; this step may be helpful when deciding how to define the park's oral history needs. For example, some parks have partnered with a local university to conduct oral histories and received some funding from the cooperating association for several years. Most of the funding went towards transcription of the oral histories, an important aspect of their preservation and future use.

- Improve the synchronization of sound in the park's DVD copy of "The Human Crop" (transferred from a 16mm film). Ask the vendor who originally copied the material to reevaluate the sound quality of the original transfer. It sounds like the recording level was set too high, causing high-pitched distortion. If the distortion is on the master 16mm film, ask the company if any adjustments can be made to improve the sound. If it is not on the master and the audio was set too high in the duplication, ask them to re-do the audio in its entirety.

- Provide universal access to "A Secret Worth Sharing" and "The Human Crop" if the park continues to show these audiovisual presentations. Both videos are not captioned or audio described and the park does not have assisted listening devices. Captioning, audio description, and assisted listening

are requirements under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act

- Consult with the Harpers Ferry Center to ensure the receipt of the proper deliverables so that future re-mastering can be produced if necessary; if the park produces captioned and audio description on their own.

- Replace the sign behind the visitor center desk noting park's AV program with a larger portable sign. Perhaps one on a pedestal that is free-standing so that it can be moved closer to the visitor center desk. Provide a duplicate sign at the end of the exhibit in the adjacent room—either free-standing if space allows or hanging on the wall in the hall. This change may encourage visitors to see the AV programs because the current sign is very hard to see.

- Continue efforts to seek and copy related historical audiovisual materials. If these items are used for public programming, incorporate accessibility requirements for universal access.

#### Long-term Recommendations:

- Re-write the current audiovisual PMIS statement (for a 24-minute orientation video) and replace with a new request to create seven separate audiovisual products totaling 35 minutes of public viewing time. The bundling of these audiovisual products will be cost effective and enable the park to use the orientation video and video clips in multiple formats and venues until park funding comes through to replace the current visitor center exhibits. Future audiovisual products defined during the recommendations workshop include:

- Producing a moving and inspirational 10 – 12 minute park video to be shown in the current visitor center and during off-site presentations. Weave together a longer story of these voices and faces that is neither meant to be a timeline nor provide information on what to do, but is instead meant to present all of the different kinds of hearts that have beat in this place.

- Developing five to six separate 2-3 minute audiovisual presentations on different topics: (1) the farmers who lived on the land before the creation of the park; (2) the experiences of Civilian Conservation Corps men who constructed the park and lived in the park during its developmental period;

- (3) the summer camp experience for those who came to Chopawamsic RDA; (4) the Piedmont Forest, and (5) the Quantico and Chopawamsic watersheds. These shorter audiovisual presentations are intended to be incorporated in the future replacement of visitor center exhibits; and, in the interim could be posted on the park website and/or used as part of topic specific ranger programs.

- Creating a 5-7 minute Office of Strategic Services (OSS) program. The primary audience for this program would be future users of Cabin Camp 4. When the park proceeds with the renovation of the Camp 4 Amphitheater (as part of their implementation of the 2005 Business Plan to use Camp 4 as a regional meeting center), this facility would include training capabilities – an area with seating, and projection equipment. This set-up will facilitate several interpretive opportunities as well. In addition to an audiovisual presentation, the park intends to construct OSS related exhibits. The production of a slightly longer video, lasting approximately 5 – 7 minutes is recommended; however, you don't want it too long so that it could not be shown elsewhere, such as at a ranger led talk or at the recommended mini-theater in the visitor center. This video segment could also be used for off-site presentations, or as a downloaded program on the parks website.

- Consult with Harpers Ferry Center for a new audiovisual equipment cost-estimate as needed.

- Seek funding to develop an attractive, professionally produced video for use on the park website on the Cabin Camps. The goal of this short video would be twofold: (1) to interpret the rich heritage of the cabin camps; and, (2) to support the park's marketing needs by providing visuals of the camp facilities for potential renters. Use the 2008 park produced 360° Cabin Camp tour now available on the park website. The current tour enables virtual visitors to view Cabin Camps 1- 5 (including exterior views, site maps, and some facility interior views) prior to renting park facilities. In the interim, connect the current 360° Cabin Camp tour/ marketing tool to the park history pages to enhance the interpretation of this era of the park's history. Post video on park website in two locations: regarding facility rentals and cabin camp history page.

While the park has a number of cultural stories to tell, these stories should be told within the context of the park's natural history. This can easily be achieved by specific references within the audio track but also in visuals that reference the natural environment. The goal with the creation of all recommended audiovisual products is to help visitors to see and hear people connected to the park's history — people who had and continue to have a connection to this place, its natural environment, and the longstanding tradition of recreation within the park from its inception. During the October 2007 Recommendations Workshop, the planning team outlined some additional key concepts to guide future audiovisual program development, these ideas are summarized in Appendix D.

### Exhibits

#### Short-Term Recommendations:

- Initiate the development of a schematic plan with Harpers Ferry Center for each room in the existing visitor center – the exhibit room, the lobby area and the current AV room. Seek Harpers Ferry Center assistance to develop a cost estimate with this planning phase and the steps required to formulate design and production of a new exhibit -- this proposal will give the park a jump-start in the planning of a new comprehensive exhibit design. Topics to address:
  - Re-evaluate the existing space used to show audiovisual programs to design and construct a “mini theater” environment during the proposed schematic design phase for new visitor center exhibits. This evaluation should include the utilization of the current storage space in between the current exhibit area and the AV room as well the creation of a new viewing area for the above recommended 10-minute AV program. It is not recommended that people stand for this program.
  - Evaluate whether the space on the lower level of the building can be converted into universally accessible additional office work space for the interpretive staff.
  - Explore the feasibility of adding an outdoor amphitheater to the existing visitor center to provide a programming space for outdoor evening programs or campfire programs the staff would like to hold for the general public – since the amphitheater at Oak Ridge Campground does not seem to

work for this audience. It has been noted that the current outdoor amphitheater is too far from the entrance to the park. If there was an outdoor amphitheater closer to the entrance, the park may have larger audiences in attendance at educational and interpretive events, particularly from the local community who are day users of the park. In addition, this amphitheater can better accommodate school programs, which the park is currently not able to accommodate at or close to the visitor center.

The schematic design process is a collaborative project involving knowledgeable and talented park staff and HFC media specialists. When completed, the schematic plan can serve as a fundraising tool, and guide the park staff in laying the groundwork for project cost estimates, final planning and production through content research, object acquisition, front-end audience evaluation, and facility rehabilitation, renovation, or restoration.

An exhibit planning team would include park staff, an architect, an exhibit planner, an exhibit designer and possibly subject matter specialists from outside the park to develop the content and preliminary design ideas for the new exhibit. This team would assess and build on the ideas outlined in this LRIP with the intent of translating the ideas discussed during the LRIP process into schematic design. Suggested approaches and criteria that could guide the team are described below. These are brainstorming ideas only, and are not intended to dictate or constrain future planning and design efforts.

- Restore the interior of the main exhibit room to its original rustic state, remove track lights and ceiling tiles. All existing exhibits and carrier structures would be removed, opening up the room and forest views from all windows. The sales area and information desk could remain in their existing locations which are logical and functional, perhaps with some cosmetic changes or modifications to improve accessibility
- In the new exhibit it would be clear to visitors that they have not entered a museum as such, but are seeing an appealing orientation to the forest and its many features, and that they are being invited to visit the forest as time and interest allow. The goal would be to arouse interest

and personal connections, not to tell the whole story about any one theme or topic. The room would therefore seem more open and inviting. In the center of the room, or on a prominent wall, there may be a map or model of the forest, perhaps with some interactive elements. In other free spaces along the walls there would be freestanding “portal” exhibits which would introduce selected themes, sites, and stories. These exhibits would contain their own lighting fixtures, and could be moved like furniture if desired. It would be good to have a clear organizing principle for exhibits, but without a strict path that visitors must follow.

- A few exhibits might have monitors which could display multiple images or film clips, but for the most part, the intent is not to load up on content in this room, but to present a small number of compelling images, artifacts, models, or furnishing settings that would connect quickly with visitors’ interests, and encourage them to explore the park in more detail. Titles would be large, and subtitles or quotes would provide a secondary layer of information for quick comprehension. If desired, it might be possible to make relevant site bulletins available on the exhibit structures to add an additional layer of information, and to direct visitors to the various sites in the forest.

- Topical or theme-related exhibits might feature one large image, like the Office of Strategic Services telegraph historic photo, one charismatic object that tells an important park story or a film clip that brings people from the past into the park story.

- A visitor standing near the center of the new exhibit room would be able to see all major exhibits units at one time, read their titles, and discern from their major images and objects the themes and topics being presented. Visitors could browse exhibits in any order, and remain visually connected to the other people in their party.

- An exhibit about farming in the area might include a model of the type of farm that was here. Such an exhibit might lead more visitors to the Taylor Farm site where waysides or personal services could expand the interpretation. Another modeling technique that could be used would be to use two or three models to show the progression from farm back to forest.

- The windows in the room could be used to some advantage in the exhibit by bringing a piece of the forest into the room, or perhaps by revealing some aspect of the forest treated in an adjacent exhibit. When visitors enter the room the exhibits should begin to give them a feeling for the values of the forest—its size, quality, sounds, smells, quality of light, and colors. With the room opened up, it would be good to provide a few places to sit.

- Use the fireplace as a centerpiece representing the original intent of the park to provide cabin-based overnight recreation for people. If possible from an engineering and safety standpoint, it would be good to have the fireplace operate seasonally. The room might include a few furnishing items—either authentic or reproduction—from the early days of the park; perhaps a lamp, mantel decoration, or floor treatment. The treatment of the ceiling might reflect some of the feeling of the forest canopy, or the ceiling of a park cabin.

- Design exhibits to immerse visitors in historic settings, and make it possible for visitors to visualize and empathize with the people who lived the journey. Personal accounts of experiences of visitors to the park, both current and historic visitors, could be powerful tools in making intellectual and emotional connections to the park and its resources. These elements might be in the form of written quotations or audio clips, perhaps accompanied by photos, art, or video footage. Although concise in their presentation, these vignettes could help lead visitors to explore the park beyond the visitor center, and find their own connections among the trees and historic structures. An example of such a technique might be a recording of an adult visitor describing his or her experience in one of the group camps many years ago.

- Re-evaluate artifacts now on display which are connected to the park themes. If any are deteriorating due to environmental conditions in the museum, they may be rotated off display, or accommodated in more controlled cases in the new exhibition. Renovation work on the building should include design for improved temperature, humidity, and light control in the museum space as a whole. Because original artifacts will be used, security systems should also be addressed by the architects. Because there is limited space for permanent artifact display, consideration should be given to designing a changeable artifact case that would make it easier

to display selections of artifacts from the collection, borrowed display objects, or even seasonal specimens from the forest.

- Build into the project the funding for media evaluation.

This should include front-end evaluation to better understand visitor needs and expectations, formative evaluation of a few key exhibits during concept development, and summative evaluation of the entire exhibition after exhibit installation. Harpers Ferry Center can provide guidance on exhibit evaluation, and numerous evaluation reports may be viewed on the HFC web site.

- Consider using an exhibit system to reduce the cost of planning design considerably by eliminating the design of original structures, and by allowing park staff to take a substantial role in the brainstorming of exhibit concepts, research of exhibit elements, and the writing of draft exhibit text to fit into defined layout areas. Harpers Ferry Center may be able to assist park staff who would like to gain skills in media development. The modular exhibit system used at Harpers Ferry NHP for the Lewis and Clark “Supplied for Survival” exhibit could be a good model for exhibit design.

- Consider all audiences when developing exhibit techniques and content. There should be some exhibit elements designed with children in mind; and, all exhibits will include accessibility features such as tactile elements, audio description, captioning of audio elements, and will conform to NPS accessibility specifications. NPS programmatic accessibility guidelines are now available from HFC at: <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/accessibility/index.htm>

- Design new exhibits with environmental concerns in mind. Principal issues would be exhibit materials, lighting, and sustainability.

*Note:* if the park name changes, as has been suggested in Prince William’s Centennial Strategy, this may necessitate some rethinking of the exhibit recommendations given here.

#### Long-Term Recommendations

- Pursue exhibit development with the building designers for the new visitor center proposed at the intersection of the Park Entrance Road and the Scenic Drive. The scope of the building project will define the scope of the exhibit project.

Even with more space, the mission of the visitor center should remain to orient visitors to the park as a whole, to promote visits to the forest itself, and not to make the exhibit experience an end destination.

- Incorporate desirable features in the new building such as: more circulation space and seating space, space to accommodate larger images, space for a larger park map/model or equivalent, windows designed to bring the forest view into the room, higher ceilings to interpret aspects of trees, and space to replicate aspects of natural and historic settings in the park—forests, streams, farm sites, cemeteries, mines, Civilian Conservation Corps cabin interiors, and Office of Strategic Services offices.

- Coordinate park planning and funding efforts. If the approval to proceed with the new facility precedes the planning and replacement of the existing visitor center exhibits, the conceptual ideas presented earlier can guide discussions for the new facility. (See section on Short-Term Exhibit Recommendations.)

#### **Future Route VA 234 Entrance/Access**

- Plan for a positive arrival experience. At this writing, no personal services are intended at this location. Proposed development will include a paved parking lot with 50 – 100 parking spaces, orientation and informational panels and an “iron ranger” for fee collection. It is critical during the planning phase that the planning team approach “what are the important messages to convey”, as if they were communicating to “first-time visitors”. This approach will affect the hierarchy of information provided.

While the park anticipates that this entrance will mostly be used by park neighbors for recreational opportunities, some first time visitors will access the park through this facility. Since visitors will only be able to hike and bike through this entrance, it is important that new visitors are aware that the visitor center and a more extensive park experience is available by accessing the park via I-95 and VA 619. Clear directions should be provided regarding how to get to the main entrance.

- Include the Chief of Interpretation in the future planning project so that all visitor experience needs are planned for at the beginning of the project.

### Scenic Drive

- Rename this roadway, it is misleading; there are no long distance panoramic views – it is a restful view of the Piedmont Forest. During the workshop names suggested included: Forest Drive, Piedmont Forest Drive, and Recreation Destination Drive – since most park facilities are accessed from the 10-mile loop road. The name change could be an internal decision; or, the park could work with their friends group, create a park staff/partner panel and have a competition to select the name of this park feature. For example: this naming project could be tied to the annual Chopawamsic Challenge Event cosponsored with the Friends group and might stimulate additional interest of local and repeat visitors.



The CCC-built bridge along Scenic Drive is one of the most beautiful spots along the 11 mile road. NPS Photo.

### Pine Grove Picnic Area:

#### Short-term:

- Hold a staff discussion regarding this facility – is the name still appropriate; or has succession occurred with no pine trees remaining?

#### Long-term:

- Enlarge the pavilion to accommodate school group tours. Explore using the pavilion in Cabin Camp 5 as a model for design. The interpretive staff stages special events and/or programs from the large pavilion in this picnic area with great success.

### Interpretive Trails

- Work with parkwide planning team to establish a park cultural heritage trail. Create an action plan to develop the trail, an interpretive display, brochure and an informative website link explaining the trail.

1. Integrate new history uncovered during the African-American funded by the park. There is a tremendous need in the community to interpret the park's African American heritage. Work collaboratively with the team that authored the resource study and other interested parties.

2. Develop an in-house plan of action before proceeding with any future community discussions.

It will be important for the planning team to select a method of delivering interpretive messages that is a cost-effective (considering the resource, audience, and use); to mitigate the possibility of future budget shortfalls affecting interpretation of the proposed facility.

### Piedmont Forest Trail

- Use the trail as a sustainability model. When it's time to replace the overlook decking use recyclable materials.

### Cemeteries

- Provide interpretation through waysides for sites located near roads and trails. Connect these sites to what is known about the farm property, family, and the farming era. Incorporate resource preservation messages.

### Travel Trailer Village

#### Short-term:

- Consult with Regional fee program and concessions specialist to resolve how to collect an entrance fee from the campground users. This will circumvent the embarrassing discussions between park staff and Travel Trailer campers who go beyond the campground into the larger park to recreate.

- Establish a clear National Park Service identity in the campground.

- Work with concessionaire to provide improved information and orientation on the history of the park and the variety of recreational opportunities.

- Construct a small amphitheater within the concessionaire facility to provide programs.

#### Long-term:

- Work with concessionaire to provide expanded interpretive programming opportunities for this audience.



The campground office at Travel Trailer Village. NPS Photo.



A trail sign provides direction in the Chopawamsic Backcountry Area. NPS Photo.

### Oak Ridge Campground

#### Facilities:

- Seek funding to improve facilities used during ranger provided programs. Design and construct a new structure to safely store high tech equipment and a shed to keep campfire wood dry.

- Replace benches with benches made of materials less attractive to native spiders. Work with resource management and maintenance staff for a recommended material.

- Develop a universally accessible interpretive trail along the old “Farms to Forest Trail” (This trail needs to be renamed as succession is complete.)

- Interpret the trail through waysides. Waysides should include touchable areas – animal tracks, etc.

- Work with the cooperating association to develop a corresponding family activity/trail guide to be used in conjunction with new interpretive waysides panels placed along trail. It is recommended that this proposed activity guide be developed as a sales item to increase the number of theme related family activities available at the campground. This future publication could also serve as a camping souvenir.

#### Programming:

- Continue offering the successful family movie night on weekends at the campground. Seek movies that tie to park themes; or use popular movies as an interpretive teaser to expose campers to park themes, values and other recreational opportunities they might enjoy while visiting the park.

- Before developing new visitor facilities, utilize focus groups to determine what campers are interested in – in order to see what public needs; or, use “How was your visit?” comment cards.

- Provide more kid focused interactive activities at this site.

- Continue successful programming efforts to reach this audience; and, encourage staff to continue to creatively connect with this audience through ongoing interpretive program experimentation.



A young explorer discovers the grave of Eural Reid who died in the Cabin Branch Pyrite Mine. NPS Photo.

### Cabin Camps

See Cabin Camps recommendations in the Personal Services Recommendations -- the next section in this document.

### Chopawamsic Backcountry Campground

- Involve the Chief of Interpretation at the beginning of the planning for new campground parking facilities. The Chief will assist with an assessment of wayfinding needs and development of orientation and interpretive waysides.

Interpretation should include site specific orientation and interpretive information that promotes park values and addresses other visitor experience opportunities in the park.

### Taylor Farm

#### Short-term:

- Conduct a cultural resource assessment before encouraging the public to visit what remains of this site.

- Provide wayside panels to interpret the farm site and park efforts to control non-native species.

#### Long-term:

- Include site in the development of future exhibits for the visitor center.

- If the park proceeds with implementing a GPS or cell phone tour, this site is easily accessible from several trails and would be a good location to discuss the farming era in the park’s history.

- Develop a self guided tour of the site with signage, GPS, and/or podcast.

### Turkey Run Education Center

#### Short-term:

- Continue to use the facility for employee training and as a Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) center site

- Continue to coordinate interpretive programming needs with the staff member coordinating room reservations for



The Taylor Family in 1909. NPS Photo.

non-park users – sometimes the classroom is used for school groups and/or guided tours by appointment in rainy weather. While the interpretive program emphasis is to get visitors outside to interpret the resource, it is helpful to have a location if the weather becomes inclement.

- Stage the beginning of more interpretive programs here to alleviate congestion at the visitor center.

#### Long-term:

- Develop a scientist in the park program and use TREC for this purpose. Conduct science research and infuse results into the interpretive program through a partnership with a university. Partner with a high school program, utilize nearby camping facilities and have university/ranger staff conduct a biology/natural science camp.

- Explore the feasibility of using the center to conduct interactive interpretation via web conferencing.

#### Potomac Path/Rochambeau Trail /Telegraph Picnic Area

##### Short-term:

- Use visitor center contacts to promote visitation to the trace site. There's an interesting local connection here because revolutionary soldiers camped at Dumfries and used this trail. Most visitors are unaware of this park feature.

- Include this site in the 45 page handbook the Association is developing for the park . Request the Regional Archeologist and Historian to write this section.

- Identify in the objectives of the upcoming park funded Historic Resource Study the need to document this site with a portion of this project funding. The research focus: is the trace the main route travelled by the Continental Army to Yorktown, VA. Or, the route used by the artillery and camp supply wagons?

#### Long-term:

- Whether the public should have hiking access along the trace is a decision beyond this planning document. If it is decided at a later date that access will be provided by an

overlook, the park has an opportunity to develop an intimate setting here for visitors to see the resource and connect with the story – use the deck on the Piedmont Trail as a development model. Provide an interpretive wayside.

- Develop a related sales item for the bookstore.
- Develop an interpretive link on Route 1 through highway signage – connecting remaining trace in the park to the modern day highway.
- Establish a trail from the pavilion in the Telegraph Picnic Area to the trace to create an outdoor museum space for these visitors.

#### **Interpretive Media**

##### Audiovisual

- Explore using cell phone tours or tours utilizing GPS units to provide interpretation while visitors are recreating in the park; and to assist visitors with more site specific information while travelling through the park. Or, develop podcasts, featuring specific park themes. The planning team recommends that alternate electronic interpretive media not be developed until the park has implemented the recommendations to research and create the park orientation film and topical video clips. These recommendations were described in the Visitor Center Interpretive Media Section -- these audiovisual products will be building blocks for any future electronic media developed.

##### Publications

- Produce a “Short Hikes” site bulletin highlighting the Telegraph Area Trail, the Crossing Trail and other interpretive trails.

##### Signs

- Add a duplicate park entrance sign on the opposite side of Park Entrance Road from the existing sign to be visible to vehicles traveling west bound on VA 619.

- Place on the Orienteering Course a large in-ground orienteering "you are here" sign at the starting point to eliminate unnecessary visitor confusion.



The Taylor Farm from above. NPS Photo.

- Consult with Harpers Ferry Center for the development of a sign plan to consolidate wayfinding, trails, and facility identification parkwide. Note: Entrance Signs: The team recommends that traditional park entrance signs at the park boundaries and at the approach to the visitor center be retained, but combined with elements of the new UniGuide system.

- Improve directional and facility signage from the Visitor Center to Williams Field and the Telegraph Picnic Area.

#### “Traveler Information System”

- Work with Virginia Department of Transportation to improve placement of signage on the north and south bound lanes.
- Consider relocating the broadcast antenna to the lattice tower located behind the park visitor center for increased height which may improve coverage to I-95.

- Investigate other means of electronic broadcasting given current media developments.

#### Waysides

Parkwide wayside exhibit planning preceded this LRIP, and most new waysides are in place. The team recommends that this system be maintained, and that additional units be considered as needed. These waysides were developed with the assistance of Harpers Ferry Center and comply with NPS guidelines for identity. They help to identify Prince William Forest Park as a unit of the National Park System. Graphics are attention-getting, and the layouts have a professional look. The park should continue to evaluate its waysides and to make revisions as needed to make them more useful. Any waysides that are remnants of previous systems should be removed to eliminate visual clutter.

#### Website

- Constant and consistent contact with other Internet information providers is needed to insure that correct park information is provided.

- Expand upon AV virtual tours: the park has developed various components to their website to enable visitors to plan their visit in advance. Make website virtual tours even more dynamic for those who are preparing to come to the park and for those who remain virtual visitors by updating photographs, including moving footage, sound bites from rangers or relevant interviews, virtual tours can have layers and levels of interactivity, which can also include an interactive map as discussed above. Glacier National Park’s e-hikes: (<http://www.nps.gov/glac/photosmultimedia/virtualtour.htm>) is just one example of how these virtual tours can be made more dynamic. Also look at the virtual tour on Clara Barton National Historic Site’s website (<http://www.nps.gov/clba/photosmultimedia/virtualtour.htm>). These programs will give an idea of different approaches and techniques to virtual tours and may especially prove useful if the park decides to historically furnish a cabin.

- Create an on-line Jr. Ranger program specifically for the park. This program can enhance the park’s offerings to school-aged children and can be used as a foundation for other school-based programs. In addition, consider producing an electronic program related to RAD as an outreach tool to school-aged children.

- Link the current 360° Cabin Camp tour/marketing tool on the park history pages to enhance the current interpretation of the cabin camps. In the future, replace current video with a professionally produced short video that meets marketing and interpretive needs. (See Section on Long-Term Audiovisual Recommendations.)

#### Other Media Considerations

- Keep in mind when planning media projects, (even if they are not all produced or planned at the same time), it is important that future projects complement each other in content and in style. For example: currently, trails are identified by various colors on park maps or trail blazes in the forest. These color selections are random. The planning team recommends that thought be given to the colors or sets of colors that can be used to better clue people into the themes

and resources within the park. These colors or grouping of colors can be used within a variety of media and can help tie activities and the resource together. For example, the natural history story may be represented by various shades of green. Not only can your trail blazes that relate to this story or theme story be green, such as the Piedmont Forest Trail, but your exhibits, how the trail is identified on a map, and your web-related materials may also be identified with this color or grouping of colors.

- Explore creating an even more detailed map or a selection of maps so that when a visitor selects a particular trail it can tell him/her more about the theme, stories, and important interpretive features of that trail and other associated activities and vice versa. An interactive (electronic) map can also be created to function in the same manner in addition to providing logistical information, such as length and level of difficulty of any particular trail. This interactivity can help

organize the resource and therefore help visitors make more meaningful choices that better connects them to the resource and their purpose for coming to the park. In addition, it may also offer them a window into other stories and resources within the park that they may have otherwise not been aware of or interested in.

#### Personal Services

- Seek funding to support the expansion of the park's year round interpretive program. Programmatic expansion requires an increase in base funding in order to provide:
  1. A variety of year-round weekend programs, and special events for the general public.
  2. The development of a curriculum based education program for pre-K through middle school students to complement the existing Bridging the Watershed curriculum-based high school program. And,



The cover of the park junior ranger booklet.



Intermittent Ranger Corinne Zimmerman on a 'discovery walk' with kids. NPS Photo.

- The staff will develop a curriculum model centered on the park's three primary interpretive themes. This focus would merge the park's educational programmatic efforts into a consolidated Pre-K through high school curriculum-based program that all interpretive rangers could learn and provide on a consistent basis with measurable results. This recommended change would also create new relationships with neighboring schools.

3. Facilitate seven-day coverage of the fee collection program at the entrance station/visitor center (location changes seasonally), during the busiest season: March - November.

Funding is required for 3 positions:

a) Develop a position description for a GS-9 education specialist to oversee the development of the education program and program for the general public. The target date to fill this position is FY10. This position will assume coordination of the education and general interpretive program development, staff training, and scheduling -- this includes program reservations and staff/VIP scheduling.

b) Fund two GS- 5, four-year term (subject to furlough) positions. These staff members will work at the entrance station, visitor center and assist with the delivery of the education/interpretive program. The target date to fill these positions is FY13.

- Develop a recruitment plan to insure year-round appropriate coverage through a mix of hiring authorities – permanent, seasonal, term and volunteer positions. Fully qualified candidates will reflect the attributes needed for the park's first public points of contact – a friendly, helpful and informative staff able to handle fee transactions, information and orientation and visitor safety needs.

- Broaden training of new entrance station/visitor center employees to include information on resources, visitors, the local area, emergency and fee program information.

- Provide an enjoyable, challenging, and personally satisfying work environment for staff working in the visitor center and entrance station.

- Look at all tasks assigned to interpretation;

determine what tasks are suitable assignments to work on during slow visitation periods in the VC or entrance station.

- Install computer access in the entrance station to utilize staff time on quiet days. The staff should limit recreational reading, and instead they should focus on reading job oriented and related materials.

- Correct an internal parkwide staff belief that “all this staff does is collect fees”.

- Keep Chief of Interpretation out of the Entrance Station and Visitor Center to work on program administration and high priority projects.

- Continue to devote personal services work time to provide:

1. Site specific interpretation through the wayside exhibit and bulletin board program. Major seasonal messages will be created and posted seasonally -- three times a year. The bulletin boards will stand alone – information presented on bulletin boards will differ from information given in a nearby wayside.

2. Up-to-date visitor information through its radio broadcasted “Traveler Information System”.

3. A visitor friendly, up-to date and informative website.

- Utilize and maintain an up-to date mailing list, the interpretive staff will carry out a pro-active parkwide publicity/ public information program. This successful program will foster well attended programs and events, and keep the general public informed of resource related topics and issues of interest.

1. Identify one person on the interpretive staff to be in charge of the parkwide publicity program – some parks refer to this position as the “public information officer”.

- Once the Superintendent reviews and approves a press release, the designated interpretive staff member will be responsible for getting out the message to the various press contacts.

- While other park divisions may originate press releases or serve as the point of contact for a press release, for the sake of process clarity and streamlining, have one identified individual to serve as the press point of contact and to maintain the official park mailing list is ideal.

2. Designate who specifically on the interpretive staff will have the “public information officer” responsibility. And who is the back up for this task in the event the park needs to get out something quickly and the designated staff member is on leave.

3. Improve the timing of the issuing of press releases to the date of the event.

4. Keep the media contact and individual mailing lists up-to-date.

- Designate the interpretive division with the responsibility for maintaining and uploading, and coordinating the updating the park website. The Chief of Interpretation will:

1. Assign the appropriate staff member with the requisite electronic media skills to take on this responsibility and include this critical communications function as a primary performance plan element.

2. Work with park management staff to select an inter-divisional team to assist the interpretive staff with a comprehensive review of material provided on the park website

- Discuss whether or not specific pages or informational supplements communicate desired park messages.

- And, identify what specific changes are needed and who will revise and approve the item before it is posted by the interpretive staff.

- Conduct an annual interdisciplinary meeting to review website content for accuracy, relevancy, etc.

- Offer a dynamic year round weekend program for the general public. Program topics will be theme based having a broad family appeal. This approach complements current visitor patterns that indicate that the most popular and well attended programs are family-oriented programs.

1. Continue recent programming efforts to offer an annual speaker series to build a strong neighborhood constituency of interest and support. The series will reflect theme/resource related topics.

2. Create a park specific Junior Ranger program that addresses several different age levels and include age/theme related topics and activities.

3. Develop a signature park concert series. Music groups and selections offered will tie to the park’s long cultural history.

4. Offer special programs for groups by appointment. Specific program offerings will be defined and correspond to park themes and the most frequently requested program types. The park will have sufficient staffing supplemented by a trained cadre of volunteers to deliver programs. The education specialist/program coordinator (a new position) will coordinate program reservations. By 2016 the park can accommodate all advanced reservations for ranger-led programs requested by a cabin camp user groups.

Measures of success:

- a) Visitors will anticipate the starting date of new programs and contact the park to find out when they will be offered.

- b) By 2019 park neighbors will look to Prince William Forest Park as a center/local resource on topics related to the National Park Service and conservation.

- Design and produce a quarterly newsletter that is available on the park website and in printed format for any visitor coming in to the park.

- Include in any press releases developed for programs offered for the general public at the Oak Ridge Amphitheater, the time it takes to travel from the park entrance to the campground -- until another proposed program facility is constructed. (See facility recommendations section.)

### Cabin Camps

#### Short-term:

- Work with Cabin Camp staff to expand interpretive programming efforts:
  - Offer guided tours by appointment for the general public of Cabin Camp 3, in the winter months.
  - Provide interpretive programs for permitted Cabin Camp groups that request a ranger conducted program. If funding is an issue, add a set program fee on the park registration form to help compensate for the overtime incurred to cover the program
- Integrate the cabin camp operation into the overall interpretive program. This program goal includes several facets to be implemented over several years as increases in staffing and operational changes occur. Including:
  1. every visitor has an opportunity to see the camps; scheduled guided camp tours are offered to the general public;



Cabin Camp 2 in fall. NPS Photo.

2. the park has sufficient staff to provide ranger talks for any group that reserves a camp and requests a tour;
3. the camps are interpreted in the Visitor Center, and
4. new groups that approach the park to lease the camps for long term programming are encouraged to partner with the park to develop theme related programming.

- Interpret the Cabin Camps by number, rather than by name. The current practice is confusing to the public from an interpretive standpoint – because the name of the camps changed depending on the era or the user.



Inside an individually-rented unit in Camp 3. NPS Photo.

- Consult with Regional fee program coordinator. Assess the cabin camp fee program structure and determine a group

entrance fee/amount to be added to the campground user fee – an additional amount that would be reasonable/cost-effective (not drastically impacting cabin camp rentals).

This recommendation addresses staff concerns regarding potentially difficult discussions between park staff and groups that reserve the cabin camps whose individual members go beyond the cabin campgrounds into the larger park to recreate.

#### Long-Term:

- Restore one cabin camp area at a time instead of building by building; this internal management shift would allow the park staff to conduct comprehensive site planning across divisions (maintenance, interpretation, resource management, cabin camp operations and overall park administration); and improve funding requests, protection of park resources, potential partnering and future visitor experience opportunities.

- Develop a sign plan for each cabin camp that incorporates wayfinding, orientation, interpretation and CFR requirements to address the ongoing high vandalism occurring in the camps
  - Create smaller interpretive panels for each building and place prominently on the interior of each building. Panels would include photographs of the structure during the pre-WWII historic period. These signs might include generic text regarding functional use of each building with a preservation message inviting users to share in the traditions of the park history and to help preserve the area.

- Develop Cabin Camp 3 as an interpretive facility for the general public.
  - Conduct a separate planning effort with a broad cross-section of skill sets to plan for overall facility needs, exhibit planning, daily operations and general visitor experience planning. Since Cabin Camp 3 is not currently heated, (and this would be an important element for future year-round museum exhibits), it will be important to have a historic preservation specialist on the team to advise on compliance requirements as long-term planning evolves. The scope of this proposal is extensive; there may be several work

groups that report back to the larger planning team. This recommendation is one of the recommendations of the 2005 Business Plan; and was enthusiastically endorsed by the LRIP planning team.

- Seek funding and consult with Harpers Ferry Center for a cost estimate to develop schematic exhibit designs to interpret the historic cabin camps. This plan would define the number of cabin facilities needed to adequately interpret the history of the camps including:

- President Roosevelt’s New Deal programs that coalesced to create “Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area” – a camp for underserved kids living in Washington, DC during the Depression Era

- Construction of the camps by the Civilian Conservation Corps – and the experiences of the young men and their leaders who built the park;

- Since Cabin Camp 4 will be available for private group use by permit holders, interpret the WWII history of Cabin Camp 4 (its use by the Office of Strategic Services) in Cabin Camp 3 – where most park visitors will have the opportunity to learn about cabin camp history.

- Discuss the ongoing restoration of the historic cabin camps and connect this work to the park’s heritage. Use a variety of media types to tell this story including the website, park newsletter, press releases, features on “Inside NPS”, etc.

Additional planning needs related to future cabin camp facility use:

- Conduct a historic resource study to pull together the documentation for the cabin camps. The study should include collection items, information scattered in program history files and from other sources to inform future programming.

- Conduct a historic furnishings study to document interior appearance of facilities in the best documented camp – use information in future interpretive media and programs.

- Develop an operating plan for Cabin Camp 3 that pulls from the expertise of the cabin camp operation, and the interpretive and law enforcement staffs regarding how best to operate a

camp with mixed use – where some sites are permitted for private camping and other facilities are used for the park’s public programming. (For example: using campground hosts to provide 24 hour coverage of facilities, etc.) Develop an action item list of changes needed to inform the overall planning effort; and, in preparation for transferring the operation of Cabin Camp 3 to the interpretive staff when it is time to operate the re-purposed camp.

- Explore partnership opportunities to run an NPS/partner operated camp at Cabin Camp 3; the program goal would be to teach the uninitiated how to enjoy nature and introduce participants to National Park Service values.

- Implement plans and seek funding to upgrade the Theatre in Cabin Camp 4 as a conference and program facility. The 2005 Business Plan recommends restoring this building and upgrading the facility for group use for meetings, conferences and interpretive programs.

- Include interpretive elements in the early design documents. Refer to exhibit and audiovisual recommendations discussed in the Visitor Center Interpretive Media Section of this document.

- Name the Cabin Camp 4 Theater the “Wild Bill Donovan Theater” (lead officer for the WWII Era Office of Strategic Services).

*Note:* CCC era maps indicate locations for camps that were never built. While beyond the scope of this LRIP the park might consider constructing a camp for 21st century users and provide overnight facilities in the outdoors with electronic access for “campers” that want all of the comforts of home; or for future users that take “working” weekends or vacations.

- Conduct a business analysis of the parkwide fee program to determine the future best practices for visitor experience and internal operational efficiency.

- After Cabin Camp 3 is successfully up and running, in the long term should the park consider whether it’s feasible and time to move the cabin camp operation -- including fee collection -- under interpretation? This would integrate interpretation with the protection/operation of the camps,

simplify park messaging and perhaps promote a more cohesive park visitor experience. A unified operation might also facilitate internal decisions regarding how to provide general public access to the cabin camps and seek to provide the privacy desired by cabin camper users.

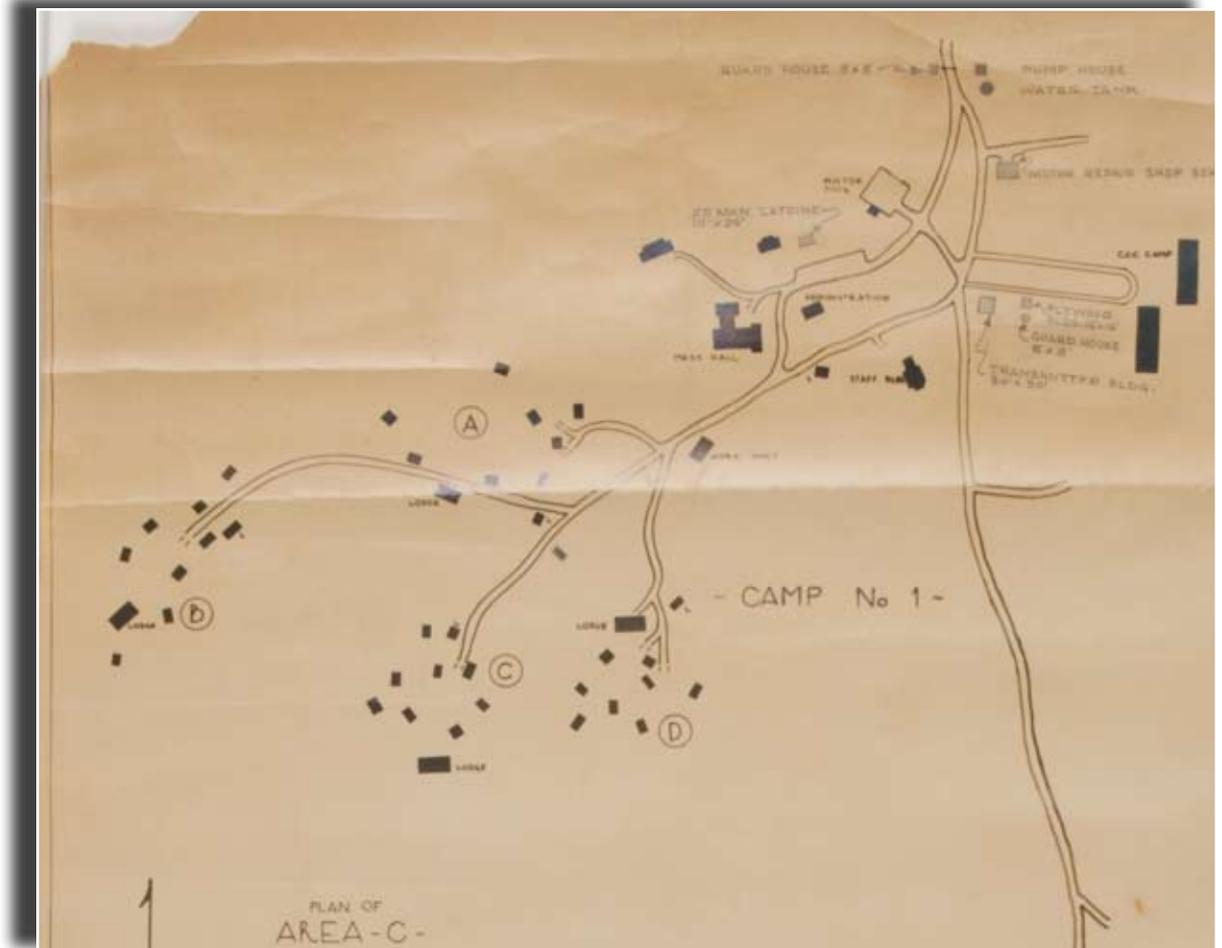
#### Future Studies Needed

*Please note:* this section is a repeat of recommendations throughout the document that advocate the need for a study, assessment or further research. They are gathered into one section for the convenience of the reader and/or future funding requests.

- Conduct a historic resource study to pull together the documentation for the cabin camps. The study should include collection items, information scattered in program history files and information from other sources in order to inform future programming.

- Conduct a historic furnishings study to document interior appearance of facilities in the best documented camp – use information in future interpretive media and programs.

- Use an evaluation method (consider focus groups) to assess why when given the option, (existing condition) visitors turn



A map created by the Office of Strategic Services, of Camps 1 and 4 - also known as Area C. NPS Photo.

directly on to the Scenic Drive rather than driving straight ahead to use the visitor center and facilities in this area. (The location of the visitor center seems well-signed.)

More detailed information on visitor use patterns/needs would inform park managers regarding this LRIP's short-term recommendations (and the 2006 PRWI Business Plan) to change the road design to purposefully direct visitors to the current visitor center; and, guide long-term facility recommendations to relocate and construct a new visitor center on land adjacent to the intersection of the Park Entrance Road and the Scenic Drive.

- Conduct a complete analysis of rental rates and usage of the Turkey Run Education Center (TREC) to evaluate whether TREC is more useful for internal park use or as a designated meeting space for outside groups.

- Assess the state of the park's collections, including the quality of the materials themselves and the rights to use these materials, in order to understand and assign the work involved in creating comprehensively organized research packages for future projects. This work will bring great efficiency to future projects and will help to further protect and enhance the collections and their usability for internal and external research. Consult with a Harpers Ferry Center curator for an initial assessment; seek advice regarding how the park might proceed with this project, and a cost-estimate to proceed with the work. Discussions should include defining project goals and parameters, the skills sets needed to accomplish future project goals, and possible sources to achieve these goals. Evaluate items that could have reproductions made that could be put on display, or used as "hands-on" during interpretive programs.

- Create accession plan for the collection of oral histories and other materials. In addition to an assessment of current collections, the park has and will continue to have the opportunity to add to their collection. Create a plan that identifies interviewees and identifies research into finding interviewees is recommended. Consult with an HFC curator

regarding the creation of a plan to expand the collection. The park has a finite window of opportunity to continue to collect oral histories as they directly relate to the CCC, summer, camps, and the OSS.

- Identify in the objectives of the upcoming park funded Historic Resource Study the need to document the Potomac Path/Washington/Rochambeau Revolutionary Route with a portion of this project funding. The research focus: is the trace the main route travelled by the Continental Army to Yorktown, VA. Or, the route used by the artillery and camp supply wagons?

- Conduct a historic resource study to pull together the documentation for the cabin camps. The study should include collection items, information scattered in program history files and information from other sources in order to inform future programming.

- Conduct a historic furnishings study to document interior appearance of facilities in the best documented camp – use information in future interpretive media and programs.

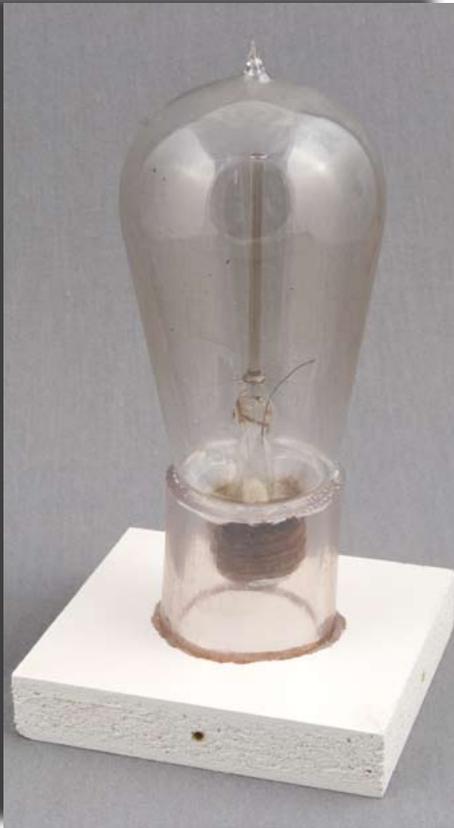
- Seek funding to determine feasibility of short-term visitor flow/traffic recommendation. This short-term facility alternative proposes re-routing traffic through signage, temporary barriers, and possibly the relocation of the entrance station and requiring all visitor traffic to pass by the current visitor center locations before continuing on to the Scenic Drive where most recreation facilities are located.

- Conduct a cultural resource assessment before promoting the Taylor Farm site as a visitor destination.

#### Partnerships

- Continue to build and strengthen existing partnerships and seek new and innovative partners to support the delivery of the interpretive, education and visitor services program.

- Maintain an effective partner relationship with Eastern National.



A light bulb once used to light the shafts of the Cabin Branch Pyrite Mine. NPS Photo.

1. Coordinate with the Association and the Regional Office in order to provide enhanced donated funding to supplement a variety of interpretive programs.

2. Work cooperatively to increase sales through the development of a wide range of theme appropriate and park specific sales items.

3. Explore the possibility of establishing satellite bookstore outlets at high use areas such as the Oak Ridge Campground. The proposed expansion of Association provided outlets would give visitors an opportunity to purchase items in the area of the park where they are recreating, expand park staff/visitor contacts and possibly increase Association sales.

4. Collaborate with the Association to produce a trail activity guide for the future universally accessible trail in the Oak Ridge Campground. (See recommendation in Oak Ridge Campground/future universally accessible trail/now the “Farms to Forest Trail”.)

*Program goal:* increase the level of sales to the volume where the Association covers the operation of the bookstore with their personnel.

- Continue to build upon the strong relationship with the Friends of Prince William Forest Park. Collaborate to develop an annual work plan. The Agreement should outline roles, responsibilities and address the Friends’ integral role as:

1. A strong vocal advocate that speaks out regarding issues important to the park.

2. Cosponsors signature theme related events;

3. Assists the park in meeting its outreach goals to meet new audiences and win new friends;

4. Conducts fundraising for approved park projects. And,

5. In the future will serve as the primary point of contact for volunteer projects.

Annual work plans should define important benchmark completion dates for any collaborative projects, and include a meeting schedule to maintain an effective relationship and communication.

- Designate the Chief of Interpretation in a key leadership role with the Friends Group – particularly, regarding partner activities that affect event schedule and public messaging. Include Chief in ongoing Friends/park meetings.

- Expand the parkwide Volunteer-In Parks Program (VIP). The park will have in place a fully developed and prioritized pre-planned VIP job/project list with corresponding position descriptions and designated project leads/supervisors developed in all divisions. The VIP coordinator will meet with staff that supervises volunteers to identify projects and staffing needs, then work to recruit.

1. Target recruit individuals or programs such as the Student Conservation Association Program or the Youth Conservation Corps that provide volunteers with individuals seeking visitor services and/or maintenance experience.

*Program goal:* The VIP program will be a fully integrated parkwide program led by a Friends Group volunteer coordinator.

- Develop a defined partnership agreement with school namesake Forest Park High School.

In addition to providing “BTW” curriculum based educational programming for the school, the park will partner with this school to provide additional learning experiences through student volunteer projects and internships while the school may be able to provide the park with specific assistance on a variety of pre-defined project needs.

*Program goal:* This future park/school partner program will serve as a model for other schools and parks.

- Develop a “train the trainer” volunteer corps to teach orienteering and other badge related services currently conducted by park rangers.

- Finalize a draft general agreement with Quantico Orienteering Club (QOC). This agreement will formalize a relationship with QOC; QOC will be able to assist in maintaining the existing orienteering courses, provide orienteering programs to the public, and to scouts.
- Complete the additional agreements outlined in the 1998 Memorandum of Understanding with the US Marine Corps Base Quantico. These agreements will provide additional protection of park resources and clarify visitor access to park features located near the US Marine Corps Base Quantico.
- Consider developing a general agreement with the Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy (CCCL). The CCCL is devoted to honoring the work and legacy of the CCC program and enrollees. A relationship could foster additional oral histories for the park and the donation of CCC related memorabilia and items.



A CCC cap from the late 1930s/early 1940s. NPS Photo.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: The Planning Team

### Prince William Forest Park Staff

George Liffert, Acting Superintendent  
David Hayes, Resources Manager  
Laura Cohen, Chief of Interpretation/Supervisory Park Ranger  
Norma Revis, Administrative Officer  
Jenn Kays, Park Ranger  
Ralph Marrantino, Park Ranger  
Judy Volonofski, Museum Technician  
Kathi Bertsch, Visitor Use Assistant  
Meagan McFadden, Outdoor Recreation Planner  
Chip Nelson, Supervisor Park Ranger-Law Enforcement  
Chris Alford, IT Specialist  
Chuck Ayers, Maintenance Worker  
Teresa Dickinson, Chief of Maintenance  
Scott Shea, B & U Foreman  
Kathy Caudill, Safety Officer

### Park Partners

Patricia Mullen, Quantico Marine Base, US Marine Corps, Research Archives  
Debrarae Carnes, Prince William County Planning  
Marian Lynch, PWRI Friend  
John Bedell, Louis Berger Group, Park Contractor  
Arvilla Jackson, Howard University, Professor of African American History  
Sue Taylor, Howard University, Professor of African American History  
Kimberly Ward, Weems – Botts Museum  
Lee Watenpaugh, Friends of Prince William Forest Park  
Laurie Wieder, Prince William County Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Nicky Staunton, Virginia Native Plant Society  
John White, Prince William County, Planning  
Robert Weems, Research Geologist, U.S. Geological Survey  
Kim Hozen, Prince William County Park Authority  
William Weisenberger, Citizen  
Lillian Gaskill, Prince William County Historical Commission  
Kim Hansen, Prince William County, Planning

### National Park Service Staff

Mary Mallen, Interpretive Planner-Park Ranger, Harpers Ferry Center  
David Guiney, Interpretive Media Specialist - indoor and outdoor exhibits, Harpers Ferry Center  
Michele Hartley, Audiovisual Producer, Harpers Ferry Center  
Sue Hansen, Chief of Interpretation, National Capital Region  
Stephen Potter, Archeologist, National Capital Region  
Don Briggs, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail  
Gary Scott, Historian, National Capital Region  
Pete Peterson, Park Ranger, National Mall and Memorial Parks  
Marian Norris, Hydrologist, National Capital Region, Center for Urban Ecology

### Prince William Forest Park Staff:

#### Retired or Transferred during Park Planning Period

Bob Hickman, former Superintendent, retired  
Kate Richardson, former Assistant Superintendent, transferred  
Jennifer Lee, former Chief, Resource Management, transferred  
Brian Carlstrom, former, Chief of Natural Resources, transferred  
Kirsten Talken-Spaulding, former Chief, Interpretation and Visitor Services, transferred  
David Elkowitz, former Chief, Interpretation and Visitor Services, transferred  
Don Fleming, former Maintenance Supervisor, retired  
Chris Derman, former Park Ranger, Interpretation, transferred  
Bill Ellis, former-Park Ranger, retired  
Ed Roach, Former-Park Historian, transferred  
Patrick Gregerson, Former-Planner, National Capital Region, transferred

## Appendix B: Significant Periods of Use and Documented Sites Related to Park Significance

The land that makes up Prince William Forest Park:

- Protects a visible remnant of a portion of the “Potomac Path” which is located along the fall line within the park boundary. This path records a history of use from Native Americans to the present day as a major transportation route.
  - Was used by Native Americans for base camps of extended families of hunters and gatherers. Research in adjacent areas has revealed evidence of occupation back to the 8800 BC and possibly up to 4500 BC. Increasing populations in the Potomac Valley by 1100 BC probably meant increased usage of parklands. By AD 700-900 villages had begun to be established in the vicinity of the park by the Potomac, or Tauxenent, American Indians. English contact, disease, and group warfare gradually affected Native Americans’ use and occupation of the area. By 1660 Native American populations were greatly reduced in and around the park area.
  - Was used for plantations which farmed a number of subsistence crops as well as the economically important tobacco.
  - Was home to a thriving community of free and freed African Americans who, in Batestown, lived in one of the oldest pre-civil war communities in Virginia; and, in Hickory Ridge, who lived together in an integrated subsistence farming community. Both communities were displaced by the creation of the Chopawamsic Recreation Demonstration Area (now Prince William Forest Park).
  - Was mined for sulfur and other products in various areas, notably, Cabin Branch Pyrite Mine.
  - Conserves the 158 buildings documented in the List of Classified Structures that were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps, and are listed in the National Register of Historic. These structures were built under President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal Program through the Recreation Demonstration Act; and, today provide a unique camping experience in historic, forest retreats.
- Is one of only two National Parks that was occupied by the OSS (forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency) as an intelligence training area during WWII.
  - Offers diverse, resource-based outdoor experiences like biking, hiking, orienteering, and camping in a 15,000 acre natural setting in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

## Appendix C: Brochures/Site Bulletins

The Visitor Center has a wide variety of site bulletins formatted and printed into the new graphics identity format. These site bulletins offer information about the park's natural and cultural history, recreation and overnight opportunities. The brochures provided are as follows:

Volunteers at Prince William Forest Park

Civilian Conservation Corps and Prince William Forest Park

Office of Strategic Services: Training in the Forest

Leave No Trace in Prince William Forest Park

The Cabin Branch Pyrite Mine

The Prince William County Poorhouse, 1794-1927

Meadows

Frogs and Toads of Prince William Forest Park

Gypsy Moths

Ticks and Lyme Disease

Fishing in Prince William Forest Park

Oak Ridge Campground

Chopawamsic Backcountry

Turkey Run Ridge Group Campground

Bicycle Guide

Bicycle Trail Descriptions

Group and Individual Cabin Camping

Individual Cabin Rentals

“Trash Free Park” Program

Bird Checklist

Park Safety Etiquette

Hickory Ridge and Batestown: Local Life Before the Park

## Appendix D: Background on Audiovisual Recommendations:

Shorter AV programs, be they audio only stations or 1 – 3 minute videos can be produced in conjunction with visitor center overview exhibits. These programs could focus on a specific story the park has to tell, from the CCC to the piedmont forest. Instead of trying to tell the park’s entire story as is done in “A Secret Worth Sharing,” these videos can function more like chapters—each one telling one of the park’s stories and/or focusing on a particular resource. In keeping these programs focused, they will also better lend themselves to being educational and interpretive.

They can also be used by rangers for topic-specific presentations that are not the centerpiece, but rather one component of the talk that helps bring that story to life. There is nothing like seeing the real thing. Hearing these stories not just through the voice of the narrator, but from the interviews themselves, whether they are from subject matter experts or the people themselves, is powerful.

Regardless of the story, the planning team recommends that there is always the underlying connection to the land, the natural resource, and recreation. Some questions to ask and answer during the production that can help to make this connection between the cultural and the natural are: Why did farmers farm here? What natural resources did the CCC use? How did the kids in the summer camps relate to the natural environment, experience nature, and have fun?

Whether the above questions are answered in one of the shorter AV “chapters” or the longer 10-12 minute movie, it is important to make the connection that current visitors who come here to recreate are like those visitors of the past and are perpetuating one of the innate traditions integral to the creation and development of the park: recreation.

Establish more visual connections between the media, the park and its resources. Because the park has a diversity of stories and no one truly “monumental” event, finding ways to make connections between these stories and the resource is all the more important. Helping visitors explore the park and learn about its cultural and natural history can make what may have originally been a trip for the sole purpose of recreation more enriching. In addition, the more visitors connect to the

park and value its stories, the more they will function as the park’s stewards.

The purpose of the media is to get people into the resource. The visitor center, the web, and interactive programs are not the destination, especially in this park. But they can be the place where the seeds are planted to help visitors experience the multiple levels and layers that exist within the park. These programs can facilitate visitors in using their imagination in informed and accurate ways to see the trees themselves and what lingers in and around them.

## Appendix E: Accessibility

Every attempt will be made to promote full access to interpretive media and programs to ensure that people with physical and mental disabilities have access to the same information necessary for safe and meaningful visits to national parks. This is in compliance with the National Park Service policy:

“ . . .To provide the highest level of accessibility possible and feasible for persons with visual, hearing, mobility, and mental impairments, consistent with the obligation to conserve park resources and preserve the qualities of the park experience for everyone.”

NPS Special Directive 83-3, Accessibility for Disabled Persons

All interpretation will follow general standards for accessibility as described in the Harpers Ferry Center Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for Interpretive Media.

## Appendix F: References

### Park Legislation

August 2007 Prince William Park Centennial Strategy

May 2006, Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect,

New Access Entrance on VA 234

January 2006 Environmental Assessment: Establishment of

Multiple Use Trails at Taylor Farm and South Orenda Roads

2005 Prince William Forest Park Business Plan

February 1999 Prince William Forest Park General  
Management Plan

“Few Know that Such A Place Exists”: Land and People in  
the Prince William Forest Park, April 2004; Prepared by The  
Louis Berger Group, INC, 2300 N Street, NW, Washington,  
DC, 20037

Prince William Forest Park: An Administrative History, Susan  
Carey Strickland, January 1986, History Division, National  
Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC

1989 Prince William Park Interpretive Prospectus, Interpretive  
Planning, Harpers Ferry Center

2006 National Park Service Management Policies

Sourcebook for Director’s Order on Park Planning

Intermountain Region Comprehensive Interpretive Planning  
Guide

Visitor Use and Evaluation of Interpretive Media, September  
2003, The National Park Service Visitor Services Project and  
Harpers Ferry Center

## Appendix G: Park Implementation Plan

The planning team discussed and identified important future programs and projects to undertake during the next 10-years. Some program expansion can occur within existing staff and funding levels; other recommendations require the addition of new interpretive positions and/or project funding. During the park's annual strategic planning process, the Chief of Interpretation will work with the Superintendent and other staff members to implement program goals and outcomes to achieve Long-Range Interpretive Plan recommendations.

## Appendix H: End Notes

- i. Memo: 1989. “Natural National Significance of Prince William Forest Park” by Dr. L.K. Thomas, Jr.
- ii. Prince William County Demographic Fact Sheet. Fourth Quarter, December 12, 2006. Prince William County Office of Information Technology. Geographic Information Systems Division. <http://www.pwcgov.org/demographics>
- iii. CCC work took place at Chopawamsic from May 13, 1935 to June 30, 1941. Gerner Report, (1950). At the height of construction three CCC companies were located in Chopawamsic at camps designated SP-22-VA, SP-25-VA, and SP-26-VA (Figure 43). Camp SP-26-VA was converted from state to national park status in October 1939. The subsequent Camp NP-16-VA was officially active from October 1, 1939 until April 25, 1942 (14th to 18th enrollment period).

The project manager was William R. Hall; the CCC, WPA, and PWA programs provided labor, with a multi-company contingent of CCC enrollees executing the majority of the projects (200-300 CCC workers at the height of construction). Susan Cary Strickland. Prince William Forest Park: An Administrative History. (Washington, D.C.: History Division, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, January 1986), 3, 7-8, 14-15. The administrative history quote is an excerpt from another document: HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY, CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS ACTIVITIES IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, HABS No. DC-858.

- iv. Quote from former landowner from “Prince William Forest Park: An African American Experience.”





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