



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

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**US Army Corps of
Engineers
Norfolk District Regulatory
Office
Received by: RLS
Date: August 14, 2015**

Mr. William T. Walker
Chief, Regulatory Branch
Department of the Army
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Norfolk District
Fort Norfolk
803 Front Street
Norfolk, VA 23510-1011

Dear Mr. Walker:

We have received your letter dated July 2, 2015 (arrived at the National Register of Historic Places on July 6, 2015), requesting a determination of eligibility for the National Register for properties located within the vicinity of the Dominion Virginia Power-proposed Surrey-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton aerial transmission line project. The proposed project calls for construction of 7.4 miles of overhead transmission lines from Surry, Virginia, to a proposed switching station in James City County, Virginia. The proposal calls for the transmission line to cross the James River, thus requiring a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which would constitute a Federal undertaking subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

You have requested that the National Register provide a determination of eligibility for properties located within the project's "Indirect Area of Potential Effect" (Indirect APE) which the Corps of Engineers defines as having both inland land-based and water-based components. The water-based section of the APE extends from just west of Jamestown Island to include portions of the James River downstream to the Pagan River near Smithfield, VA, and its boundary is drawn to include adjacent lands extending several thousand feet from the river's shoreline. The Indirect APE is defined in U.S. Army Corps of Engineers report *Dominion Virginia Power Surry-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton Proposed 500/230kV Line, NAO-2012-00080/13-V0408*, May 7, 2015, p. 1, (hereafter referred to as *Corps of Engineers report*) and is shown as a blue line drawn on the map titled "Indirect APE Map, Surry-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton Proposed 500/230kVline" included as Enclosure 1 with the Determination of Eligibility request.

This request for a determination of eligibility does not extend to the inland, land-based portion of the Indirect APE, which is comprised primarily of an existing overhead utility right-of-way that extends generally from Skiffes Creek south to Hampton, VA (*Corps of Engineers Report*, p. 1).

All further references in this letter to the Indirect APE should be understood to exclude the inland land-based portion referenced above. You have specifically requested a determination of eligibility for the portion of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (CAJO) and the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail that are located within the Indirect APE.

The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (CAJO) was established by Congress in 2006, following a feasibility study by the National Park Service and a determination by the National Park System Advisory Board that the trail was nationally significant. The initial trail route extended approximately 3,000 miles along the Chesapeake Bay and the tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay in the States of Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, and the District of Columbia; it traced the 1607-1609 voyages of Captain John Smith to chart the land and waterways of the Chesapeake Bay. The trail was extended by order of the Secretary of the Interior in 2012 through designation of four rivers as historic components of CAJO. This action extended the trail by 841 miles to include: the Susquehanna River Component Connecting Trail (a 552-mile system of water trails along the main-stem and West Branch of the Susquehanna River in Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York); the Chester River Component Connecting Trail (a 46-mile system of the Chester River and its major tributaries); the Upper Nanticoke River Component Connecting Trail (23-miles of the Nanticoke River, Broad Creek and Deep Creek); and the Upper James River Component Trail (a 220-mile water trail of the James River in Virginia). CAJO, the first designated national historic trail that is composed primarily of a water trail route, now extends along waterways from Cooperstown, New York, to Norfolk, Virginia.

The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail (designated in June 2007) includes over 680 miles of land and water trails that follow the route taken by General George Washington and the Continental Army and French General Jean-Baptiste de Rochambeau and the Expédition Particulière to and from the siege of Yorktown, a pivotal event in the American Revolution. The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail passes through Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Virginia.

After considering all documentation submitted, we have determined that the entire area encompassed by the Indirect APE is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district under National Register Criteria A, B, C, and D, in the areas of significance of Exploration/Settlement, Ethnic Heritage, and Archeology. This historic district forms a significant cultural landscape associated with both the American Indian inhabitants of the area and the later English settlers.

The English colonization of North America was an extraordinary undertaking which had a profound impact on the Old World and the New and much of what was to come had its origins here along the James River: the establishment and growth of the first permanent English settlement in the New World; some of the earliest and most sustained interactions (both cooperative and antagonistic) between the original inhabitants of the area - the American Indians - and the Europeans; the initial English voyages of discovery which took them throughout the Chesapeake Bay and into the interiors following the numerous rivers and led to expanding

contact with the American Indians and the spread of English settlement; the foundation and development of the tobacco economy which would dominate the Chesapeake Bay world; the introduction and firm establishment of chattel slavery; the architectural evolution of buildings in the James River area from the first crude huts built by the English to the flowering of the dominant Georgian architectural style; and the growth of the unique political and social institutions which would lead to the development of representative democracy and the growing impulse of the colonists to gain independence and self-rule from the corporate founders of the colony and later their royal master the King.

The Indirect APE includes numerous significant historic properties already listed in the National Register of Historic Places including all or parts of: Colonial National Historical Park; Jamestown National Historic Site; Colonial Parkway; Yorktown Battlefield; Kingsmill Plantation (which includes a series of important archeological sites); Carter's Grove National Historic Landmark, one of colonial America's most impressive examples of Georgian architecture (built 1750-1755) noted for its exquisite brickwork and finely crafted, fully-paneled interior; the archeological site of Martin's Hundred located at Carter's Grove (established in 1619 as one of the earliest English settlements outside of Jamestown Island, it was destroyed in the American Indian uprising of 1622); and a number of other archeological sites. A significant contributing feature of the district is Hog Island, which was fortified in 1609 to help defend Jamestown Island. In a letter dated March 11, 2015, to the Corps of Engineers, the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office notes that three 17th century archeological sites have been identified on Hog Island and that in their opinion the island is individually eligible for the National Register. In addition to the properties enumerated above, the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, in letters dated June 12, 2014, and June 19, 2015, to the Corps of Engineers, identify an additional twelve properties within the Indirect APE which are either listed in the National Register or they are considered to be potentially eligible (including the James River National Defense Reserve Fleet, also known as the Ghost Fleet).

The Indirect APE encompasses a portion of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (CAJO). The boundary of CAJO extends from shore to shore of the James River. Jamestown Island and Hog Island (an isthmus) are located within the James River and are thus within the boundary of CAJO.

The National Park System Advisory Board in March, 2006, found that the trail was nationally significant for its association with the following historic patterns of events:

- Captain John Smith's Chesapeake Bay voyages are nationally significant because they accelerated the process that destroyed the Powhatan polity and disrupted the native people's world throughout the region.

The Water Trail is significant as:

- a) the route that John Smith followed in his voyages to American Indian towns and territories;
- b) a symbol of the independence of the English colonists from Powhatan's control;
- c) a symbol of the impact on and eventual collapse of the Powhatan polity

and the native peoples' world of the Chesapeake Bay and beyond.

- Captain John Smith's Chesapeake Bay voyages are nationally significant because of their impact on the exploration and settlement of North America.

The Water Trail is significant as:

- a) the route that John Smith followed in his program of exploration and discovery in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries;
- b) a symbol of the spirit of adventure and wonder that were important components of Smith's voyages and the English exploration;
- c) the route by which Smith gathered information vital to the survival and growth of the English settlements in North America.

- Captain John Smith's Chesapeake Bay voyages are nationally significant because of their impact on the commerce and trade of North America.

The Water Trail is significant as:

- a) the route by which John Smith surveyed the Bay and explored for gold, silver, copper, and the Northwest Passage, for the benefit of the commerce and trade of the colony and England;
- b) the route by which Smith made contact with American Indian tribes, established trade agreements with them, and increased the chances that the English colony would survive;
- c) a symbol of England's trading power, soon to be increased by the production of tobacco for export from the colony;
- d) a symbol of the long-term impact on the cultural contact between the native peoples and European colonists.

This segment of CAJO is among the most historically significant portions of the overall National Historic Trail's 3,000 plus miles of waterways. Jamestown was the starting and ending point for all of Smith's voyages and was Smith's base of operations and center of political power over the new colony. Properties within and along this segment of the trail are directly associated with the historic patterns of events for which the trail was found to be nationally significant and thus this section of the trail itself is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing element in the larger historic district defined by the Indirect APE boundary.

We note that the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, in a letter to the Corps of Engineers dated May 11, 2015, advised that, in their opinion, what they describe as an eligible cultural landscape within the APE may extend further upstream beyond the boundary of the Indirect APE. We do not have sufficient information to evaluate properties upstream from the district at this time.

As to the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail, no information has been provided with this determination of eligibility request regarding the trail section located within the APE, thus we cannot provide a determination of the trail's eligibility.

Please let us know if you have any questions concerning this determination of eligibility.

Sincerely,



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Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Partnerships,
and Science
Keeper, The National Register of Historic Places

Enclosure

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