

Destructive, Prior Ground-Disturbance, George Washington's  
Boyhood Home National Historic Landmark

George Washington Foundation

July 27, 2015

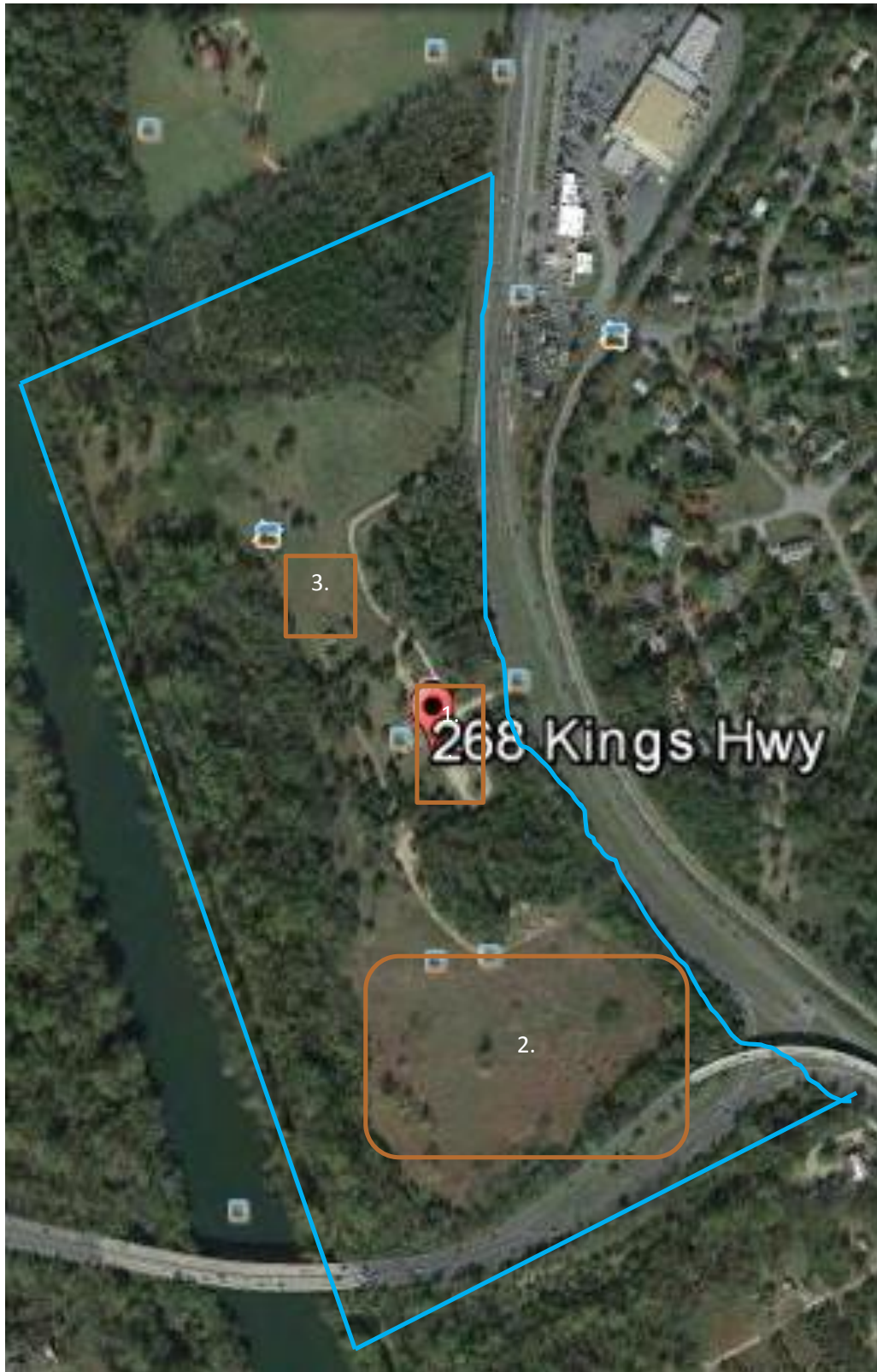


Figure 1. Google Earth Image showing general zones (orange) of destructive, prior ground-disturbance at Ferry Farm (boundaries in blue)...zones delineated specifically in the report that follows.

## **Introduction.**

The 2011 Programmatic Agreement for the Treatment of the Site of George Washington's Boyhood Home National Historic Landmark includes (p. 16) an Addendum addressing archeological investigations at locations of proposed undertakings. Section 1 of the Addendum stipulates that, "In locations not subject to prior archeological survey but where substantial and destructive prior ground disturbance can be documented, within a proposed undertaking's Area of Potential Effect (APE) for direct effects, not additional investigation will be required. The Addendum goes on to note that in such cases, the George Washington Foundation is "required only to submit such documentation for review as is needed to establish the extent and effect of disturbances that would preclude the presence of archeological resources." Accordingly, the Foundation submits documentation for substantial and destructive, prior ground disturbance for three areas on the property.

### **Area 1- The area immediately adjacent to the existing Visitor Center.**

In 1963, Youth for Christ International took ownership of the property with plans to establish a home for wayward boys. This purchase led to the eventual construction of the Boys' Home and its associated parking lots, entrance road, and septic field. This construction project created a large disturbed area in the center portion of the property. This disturbance ranges in depth from top to subsoil to 2 ft. into subsoil. This disturbance has been confirmed by shovel testing (see Stantec Report -Stewart and Brady 2015 p. 5-60; Dovetail Survey - Schamel- González and González, 2007 p.33)



Figure 2. Visitor Center, Parking Lots, and Septic Field. (Looking West)

## Area 2. Gravel Pits.

In the late 1960s a new road project in Stafford County was in need of crushed stone for road bedding material. The owners of the Boys' Home sold soil and stones from a 15 acre area situated on the southern end of the property. The machinery removed soil up to 15 ft. in depth in this pit. (Levy 2013). This disturbance has been confirmed by shovel testing (See Ferry Farm Dovetail Survey 2007 - Schamel-González and González, p.33).

This photograph from around the time the property was acquired by Walmart shows the extent of the Gravel Pits. This photograph and Figure 5 are particularly helpful in determining the extent of the mining activity.



Figure 3. Area Containing Gravel Pits C. 1994 (Looking North).

These topo maps demonstrate the amount of disturbance in this area.

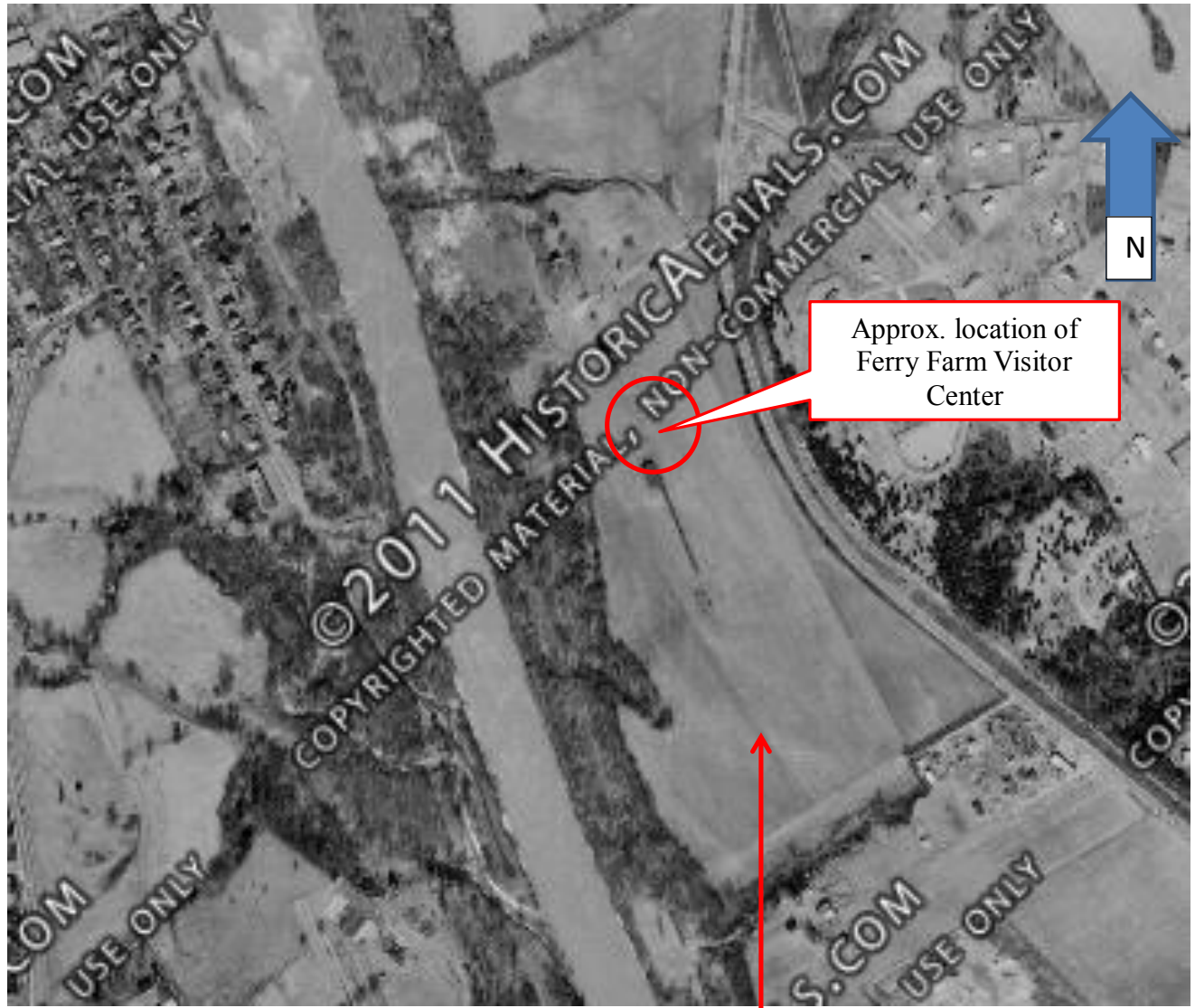


Figure 4. 1963 – No Evidence of Gravel Pits on the Southern End of the Property.

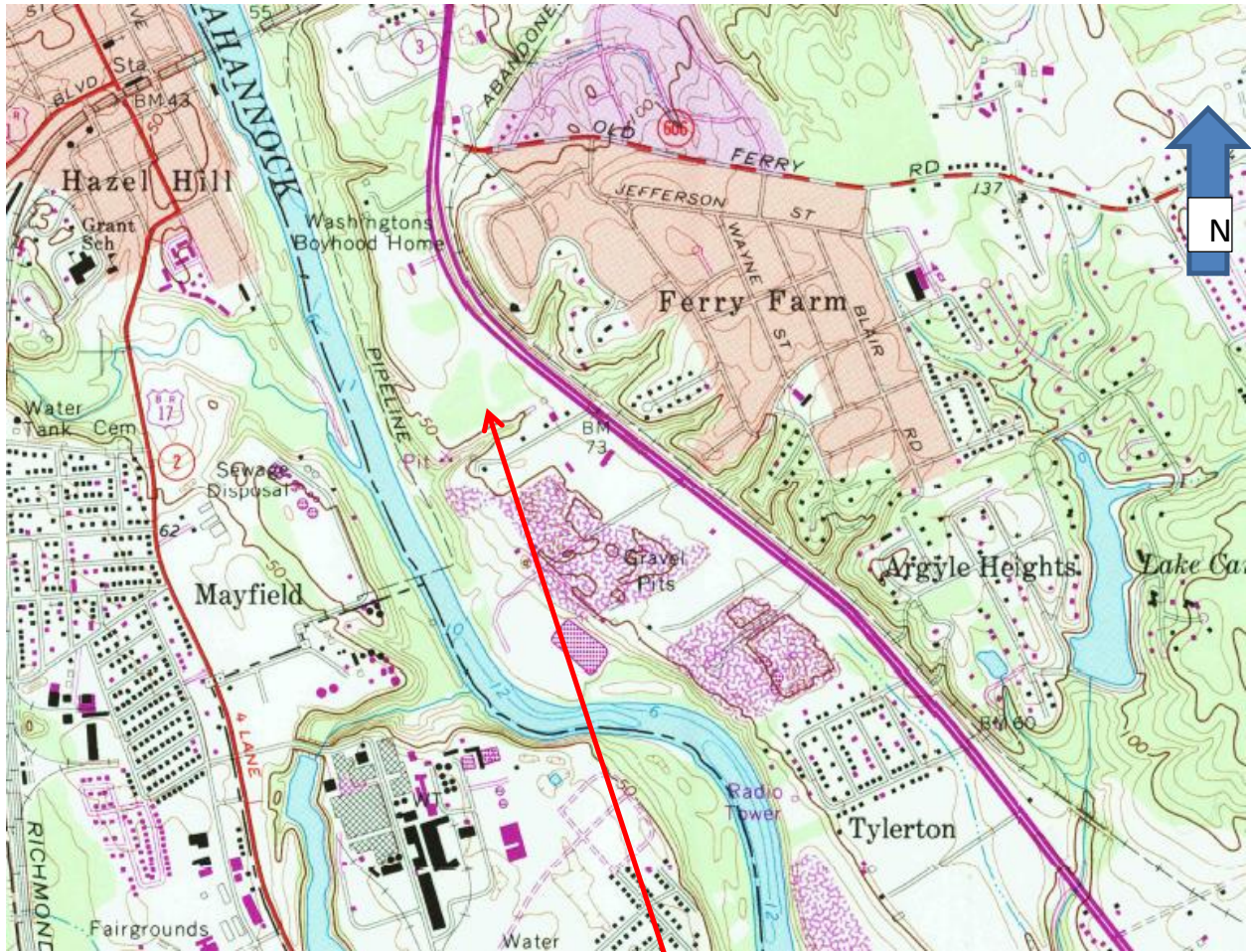


Figure 5. 1966 USGS Topo Map –Disturbed Area Shaded in Green.



Figure 6. 2009 Photograph Showing Visible Grade Change in Gravel Pit area (Looking North). The Edge of the Pit is Marked by Arrow.

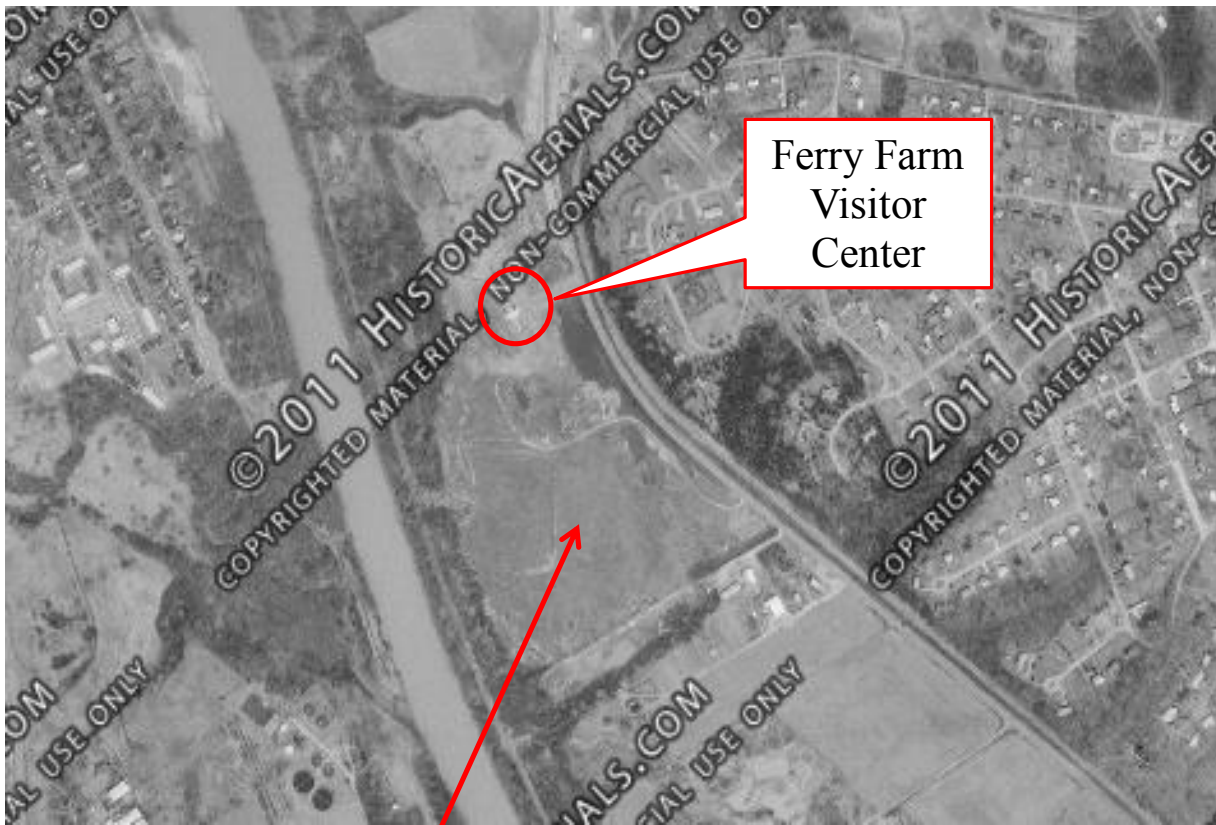


Figure 7. Gravel Pits Shown in Shaded Area. Looking North.



### Area 3. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century Farm Complex

In the 1920s and 30s Ferry Farm was an operating farm. Its owner J.B. Colbert was a big man in Fredericksburg, and operated a number of business enterprises. As part of his farm operations he built a complex of outbuildings, barns, and other agricultural buildings in the area just south of the Washington House archaeological site (44ST174). This photo from 1930 demonstrates the extent of these structures on the landscape. Shovel testing has confirmed the existence of disturbance but not the extent (See Ferry Farm Dovetail Survey 2007 - Schamel- González and González Pp. 44 -45). The disturbance seems to be related to the removal of these structures and the disturbance is variable depth but extends to the top of subsoil for most of this area. The archaeological potential of this area is yet to be determined, but these structures have certainly damaged this area.



Figure 9. Aerial View of Area 3- Marked in Blue.



Figure 8. Area 3. Just South of the Archaeological Site 44ST174 Washington House Site. (Looking West)

Note that most of the farm building are situated south of the entrance road that marks the southern boundary of the George Washington Boyhood Home Site (44ST174).

The nature of the disturbance in this area makes shovel testing impractical. In the place of shovel testing, Foundation archaeologists will supervise the machine grading of disturbed soils to subsoil followed by archaeological monitoring in all area scheduled to be disturbed by Phase I construction activities. Both NPS and VDHR will be notified if significant archaeological remains are encountered.



Figure 9. Another view of Colbert farm complex taken around 1930. (Looking North)

## References and Collections Used

Ferry Farm Photograph Digital Archive.

Google Maps. 2013. Imagery Date 1994 USGS.

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Levy, Phiip

2013 Where the Cherry Tree Grew: The Story of Ferry Farm, George Washington's Boyhood Home. Saint Martin's Press, New York.

Schamel- González, Kerry and Marco A. González

2007 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE FERRY FARM PARCEL STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA. Report on file at Ferry Farm.

Stantec

Stewart, Brynn and Ellen Brady

2015 Phase I Archaeological Survey, Metal Detector Survey, and Archaeological Evaluation of Two site at Ferry Farm, A National Historic Landmark in Stafford County, Virginia

USGS Topographical Map 1966