



White's Ferry Development Concept Plan

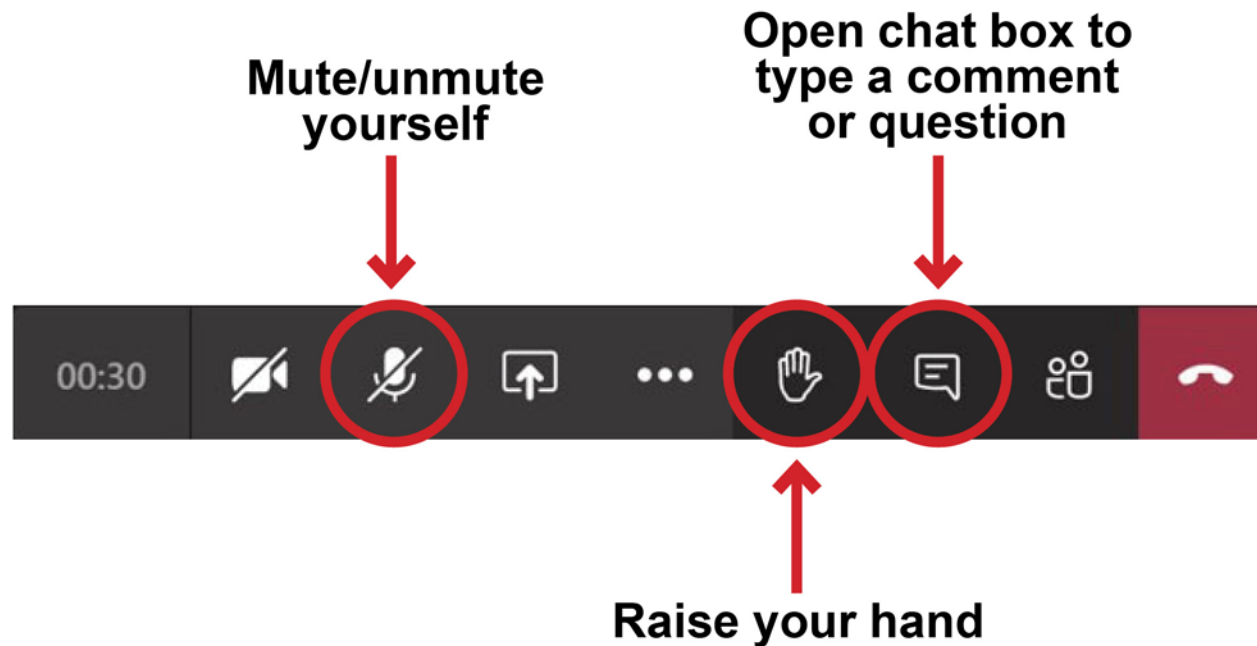
Public Meeting #2

October 12, 2022



Meeting Housekeeping

Please sign in to the meeting using the website link posted in the chat box.





Agenda

Welcome + Introductions

Meeting Purpose

Existing Conditions

Review of Initial + Refined Concepts

Questions + Answers

How to Submit Comments



Why is the NPS developing this Plan?

- In 1974, the National Park Service (NPS) acquired Tract 17-101. The White's Ferry Sportsman Club continuously occupied Tract 17-101 from before 1974 to 2021.
- The White's Ferry Sportsman Club has departed from Tract 17-101.
- The NPS now has the opportunity to look at Tract 17-101 and Tract 17-102 holistically and re-envision public use of the site in the future.
- The purpose of the Plan is to evaluate existing conditions and develop potential concepts for the future public use and enjoyment of the project site.
- The NPS will use the Plan, which will be made available to the public, to implement improvements to the area. The Plan is conceptual and is not a decision document.



Meeting Purpose + Goals

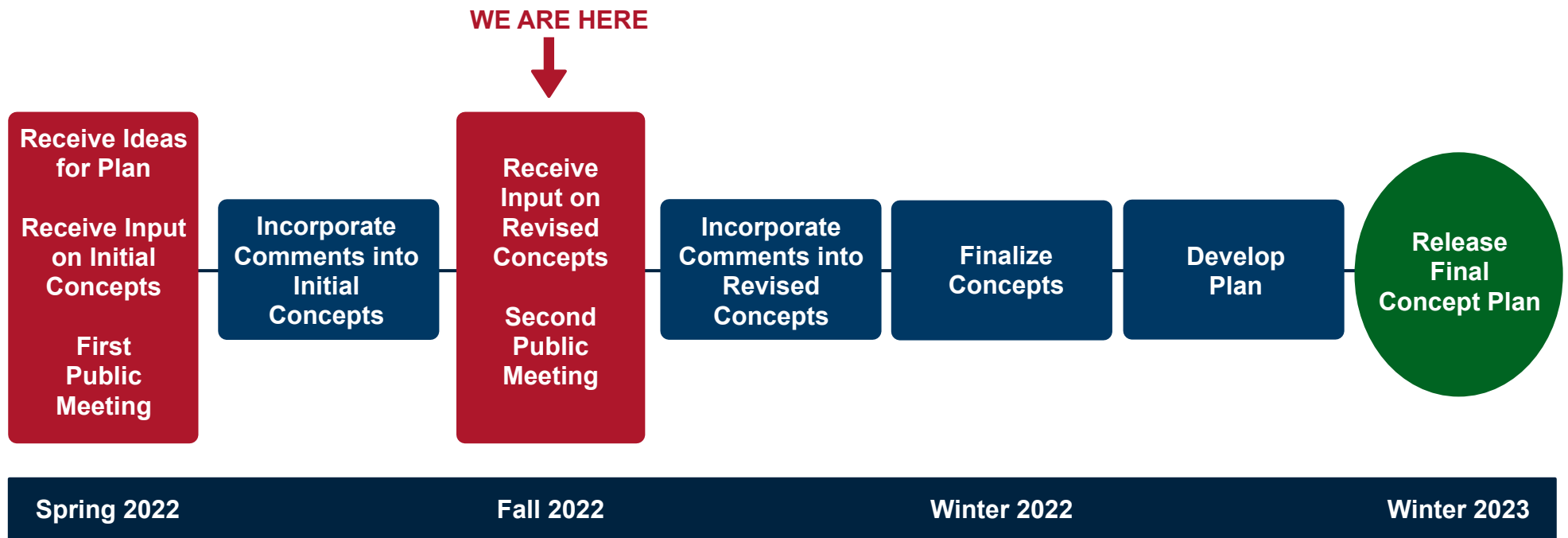
The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with an opportunity to:

- Review refined concepts
- Identify any issues, concerns, and ideas

After hearing from the public, the NPS will further refine the concepts.



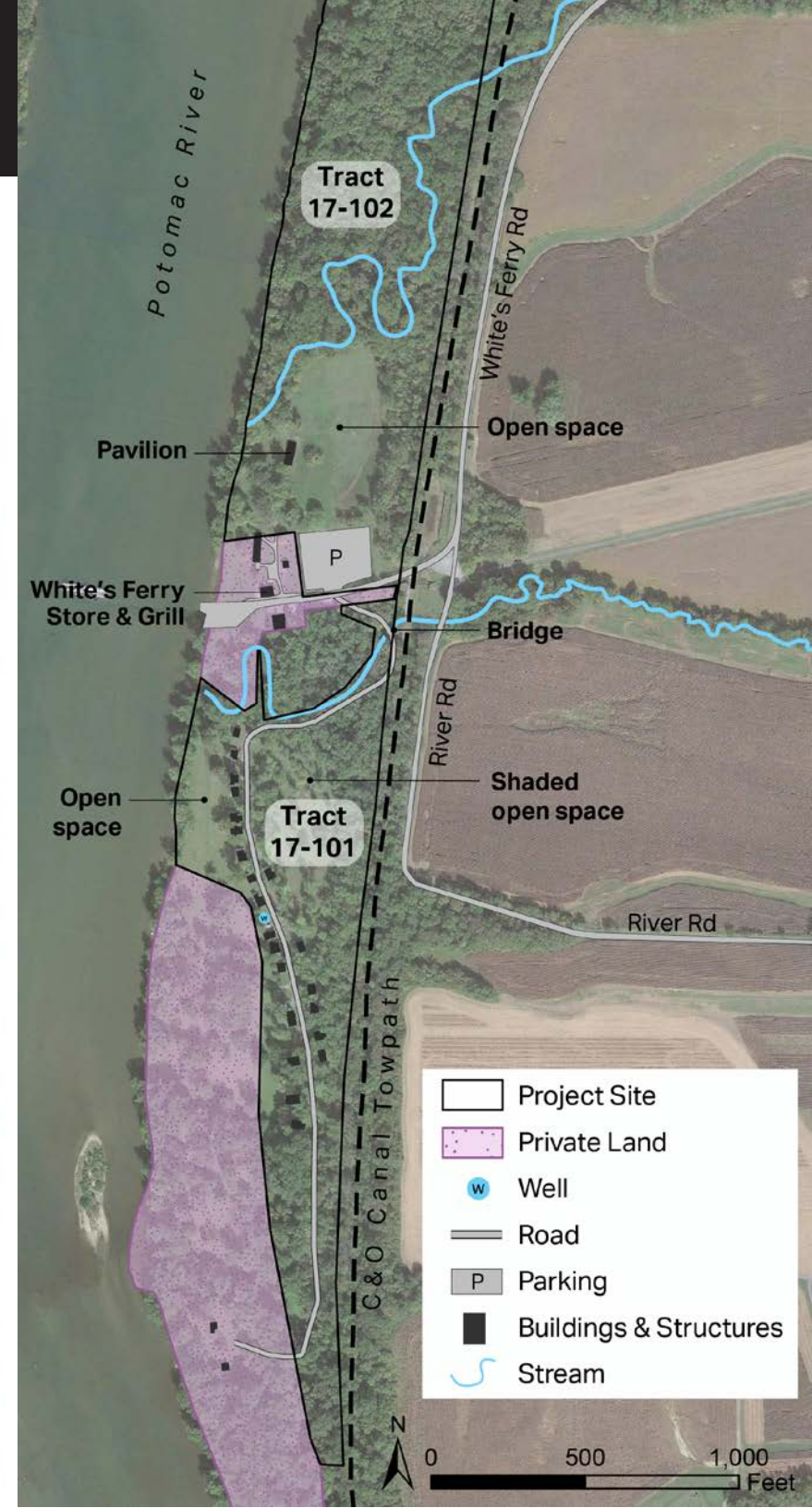
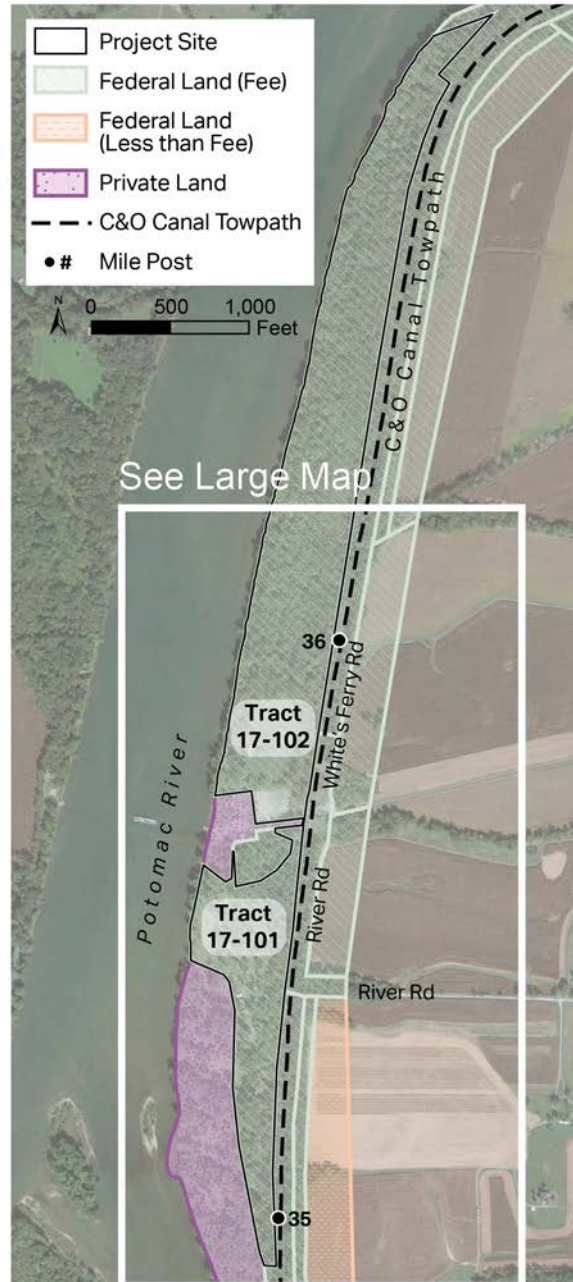
Project Timeline



The Development Concept Plan is conceptual and is not a decision document. The Plan provides recommendations for the NPS to consider when future proposals and decisions are being made. Prior to a decision, the NPS will conduct the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 review processes as required.

Existing Conditions

- Part of Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park
- Northern portion of site is 54 acres (Tract 17-102)
- Includes open space, pavilion, parking lot, and wooded areas
- Southern portion of site is 19 acres (Tract 17-101)
- Includes river access, drive, structures, and access to private lands
- No direct access to Canal towpath





Existing Conditions - North Tract



Pavilion and open space



Pavilion and open space



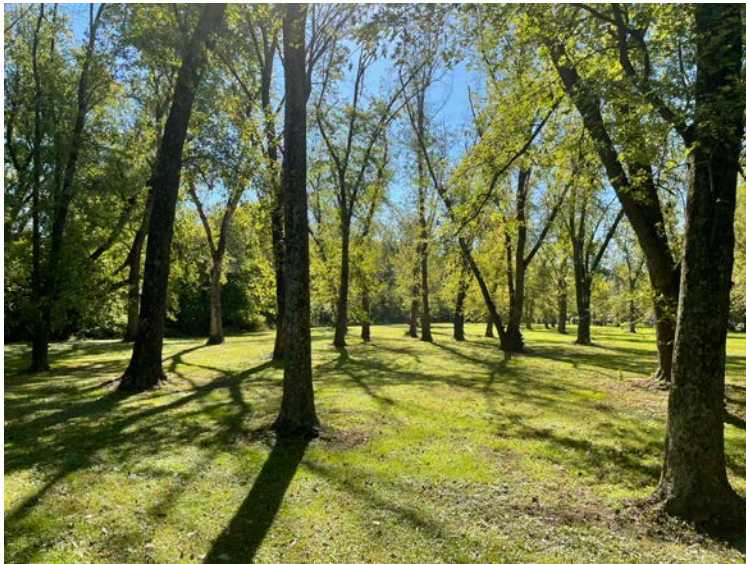
View from pavilion towards the Potomac River



Picnic area and parking lot



Existing Conditions - South Tract



Shaded open space



Access road



Potomac River access



Open space adjacent to the Potomac River

Floodplains and Wetlands



June 2018



White's Ferry Store & Grill





CHOH Foundation Document (2013)

Park Purpose

The purpose of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park is to preserve and interpret the 19th century transportation canal from Washington, D.C., to Cumberland, Maryland, and its associated scenic, natural, and cultural resources; and to provide opportunities for education and appropriate outdoor recreation.



CHOH Foundation Document (2013)

Park Significance

- The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park **preserves and interprets 19th century canal transportation, civil engineering technology**, and the evolution of a flat water transportation system in support of the industrial growth of the nation.
- The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park contains **more than 1,300 historic structures**, including one of the largest collections of 19th century canal features and buildings in the national park system.
- The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park preserves **archeological evidence of 13,000 years** of human habitation along the Potomac River.
- Through preservation efforts that began in the 1950s, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park towpath was transformed into **one of the most heavily used recreational trails in the nation** and serves as the backbone for national and regional trail systems.



CHOH Foundation Document (2013)

Park Significance (continued)

- The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park provides **diverse recreational opportunities** for millions of visitors annually, including numerous access points to the Potomac River, ranging from urban to rural settings.
- The 15-mile-long Potomac Gorge, managed in part by the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, is one of the **most biologically diverse natural areas** in the national park system.
- Paralleling the Potomac River for 184.5 miles and traveling through four physiographic provinces, Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park provides a **natural buffer of forest, woodlands, prairies, and barrens and a wildlife corridor** along the second-largest tributary to the Chesapeake Bay.
- Interpretive and educational opportunities **engage a diverse cross section of urban and rural communities** along the length of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park and were envisioned in the park's enabling legislation.



Nearby Camping

- 35.5 Mile Marker (MM) - White's Ferry

Nearby hiker-biker campsites (shown on map)

- 47.6 MM - Calico Rocks
- 42.5 MM - Indian Flats
- 38.2 MM - Marble Quarry
- 34.3 MM - Turtle Run
- 30.5 MM - Chisel Branch
- 26.1 MM - Horsepen Branch

Closest drive-in campground (not shown on map)

- 69.6 MM - Antietam Creek

Closest group campground (not shown on map)

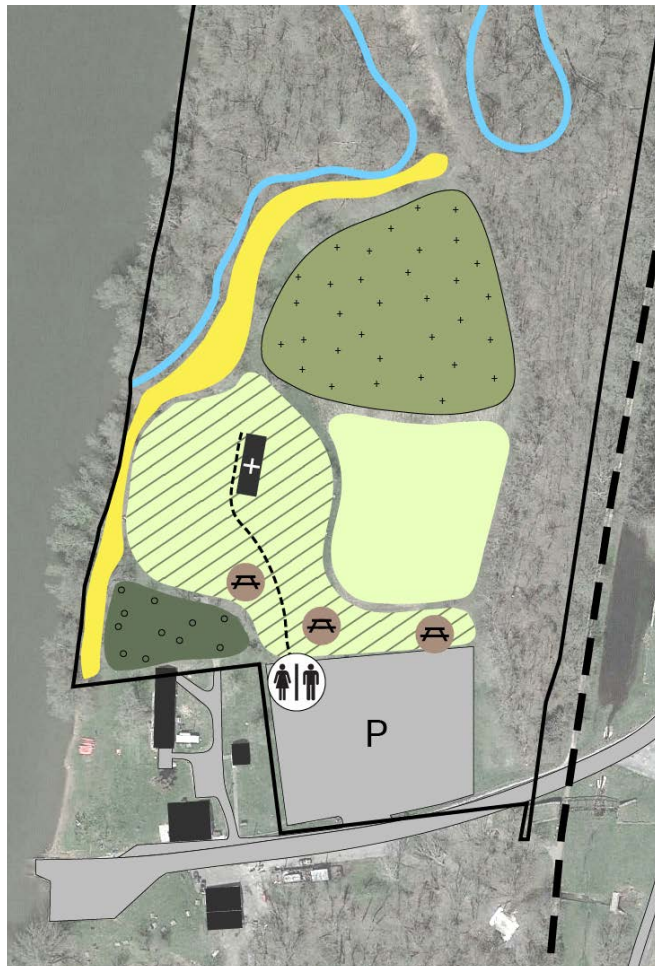
- 11 MM - Marsden Tract





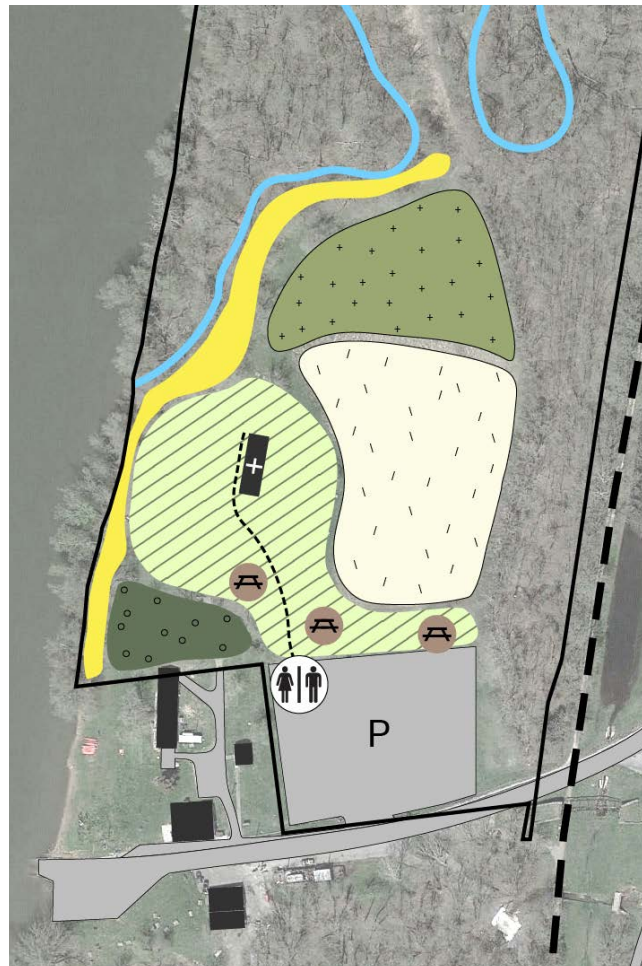
Previous North Concepts Overview (May 2022)

A: Recreational



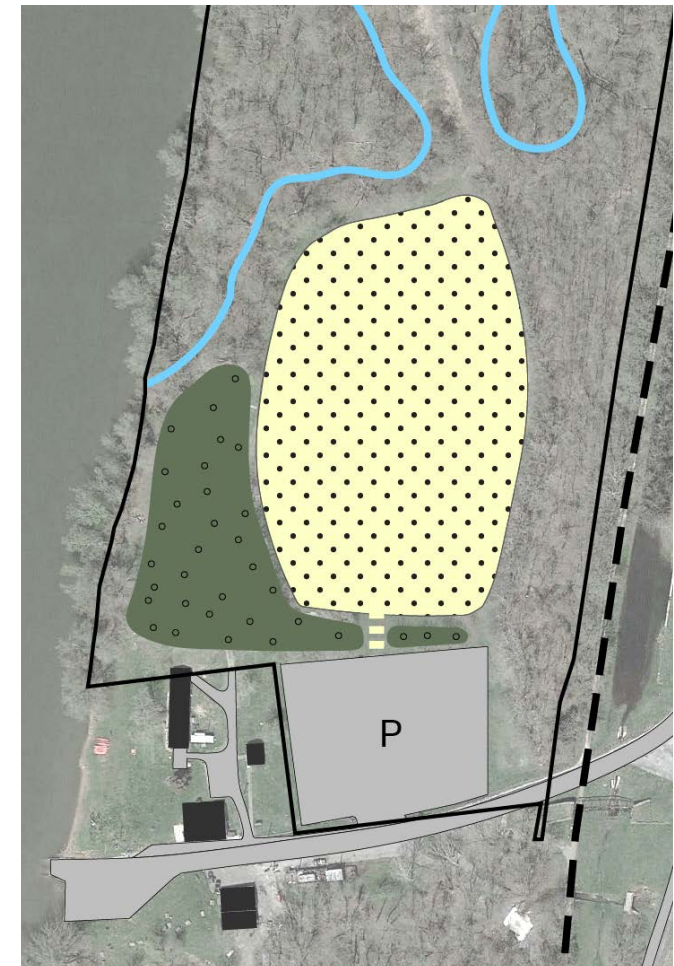
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|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Reforested | Informal Picnic Area |
| Group Gathering Area (Shade) | Accessible Path |
| Group Gathering/Play Area (Sun) | Vault Toilet |
| Riparian Buffer (Improved) | Road (existing) |
| Forest Buffer (Improved) | Parking (existing) |
| Pavilion (Improved) | Building (existing) |
| | Stream |

B: Ecological



- | |
|------------------------------|
| Reforested |
| Group Gathering Area (Shade) |
| Meadow |
| Riparian Buffer (Improved) |

C: Agricultural



- | |
|--------------------------|
| Agricultural Use |
| Field Access |
| Forest Buffer (Improved) |



Previous South Concepts Overview (May 2022)

A: Clustered



B: Concentrated



C: Dispersed



- Group Gathering Area
- River Access (non-motorized)
- Group Camping Site (# = maximum occupancy)
- Riparian Buffer
- Vegetative Buffer
- Low Elevation
- Vault Toilet
- Maintenance Vehicle Access

- Accessible Path
- Well (upgraded existing)
- Road (new)
- (existing)
- Parking (new)
- (existing)
- Well (new)
- Reforested

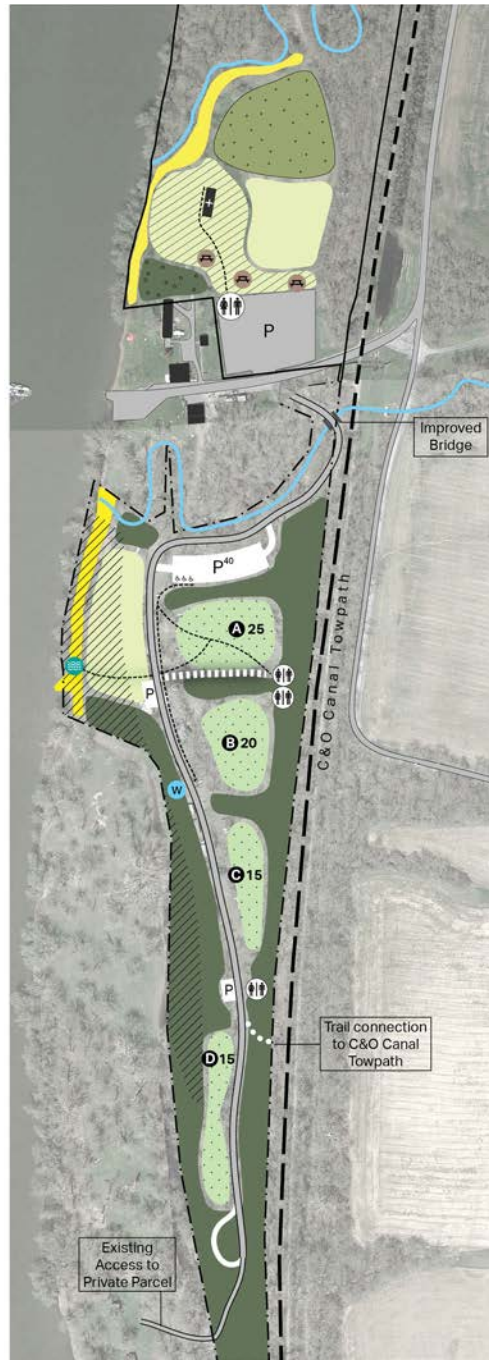


Previous Concepts Overview (May 2022)

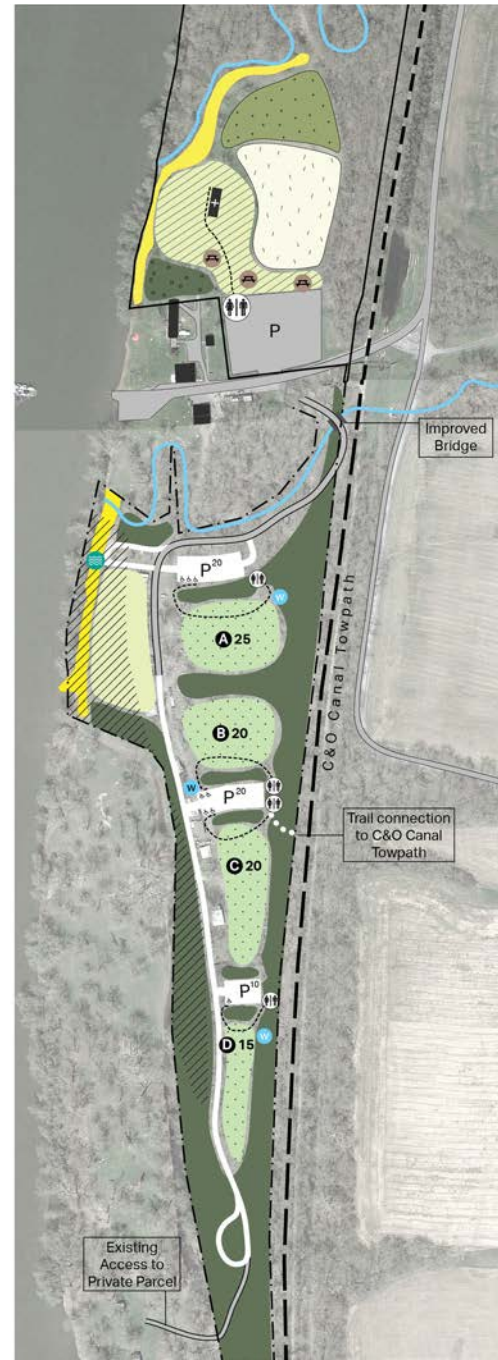
The North and South concepts are interchangeable with one another.

For example, North Concept A could be paired with South Concept C.

A: Recreational + Clustered



B: Ecological + Concentrated



C: Agricultural + Dispersed





What We Heard

Summary of public comments received:

- **Support of Proposed Plan**
 - Improvement of forest areas & riparian buffers
 - North Tract
 - » North Concept B: Ecological
 - » Open gathering/play area
 - » Meadow
 - » New picnic tables & restrooms
 - » Retention/repair of pavilion & parking lot
 - » Regular maintenance/mowing
 - South Tract
 - » South Concept C: Dispersed
 - » Campgrounds
- **Concerns About Proposed Plan**
 - Agricultural use on north tract
 - Reforestation in south tract may block views
 - Toilet location along towpath (privacy, flooding)
- **New Ideas**
 - Museum for ferry history & public education
 - North Tract
 - » Area named after Gilbert Gude
 - » New restrooms by patio & by towpath
 - » Walking path with interpretive wayside signage
 - » Old ferry boat in play area, canal boat playpark
 - » Reproduction dry lock & canal boat
 - South Tract
 - » Cabin rehabilitation for public use
 - » Mix of group & individual campsites
- **Request for More Details**
 - Project funding & implementation schedule
 - Pavilion repairs & rental use on north tract
 - Camping & campsite amenities on south tract
- **Comments Unrelated to the Plan**
 - White's Ferry ferry operation



North Concepts Overview

All concept options provide:

- Changes to the existing pavilion
- Forest buffer
- Options for the existing open area east of the pavilion, including:
 - Agricultural use
 - Open gathering area for informal recreation
 - Meadow
- Mix and match opportunities



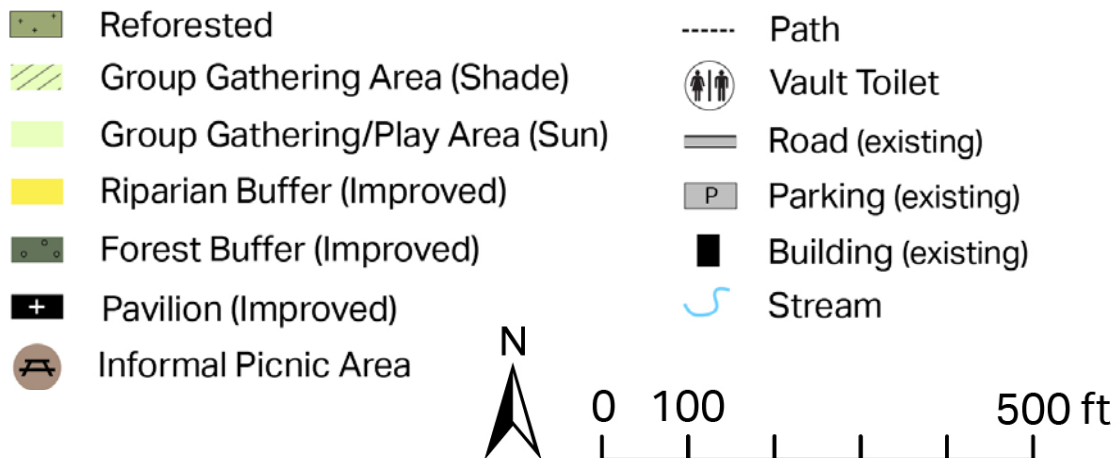
Concept A: Recreational *North*

Facilities

- Repairs and upgrades existing pavilion
- Provides shaded group gathering area
- Provides open group gathering area for informal recreation
- Adds restrooms and informal picnic areas
- Adds larger reforestation area at northern end of open gathering area
- Improves forest buffer at southwest portion of site
- Improves riparian buffer along Potomac River and stream

Operations

- Generates revenue through pavilion rental
- Requires mowing





Concept A: Recreational *North*



Existing conditions



Example of future informal picnic area and group gathering/play area with the improved pavilion in the background



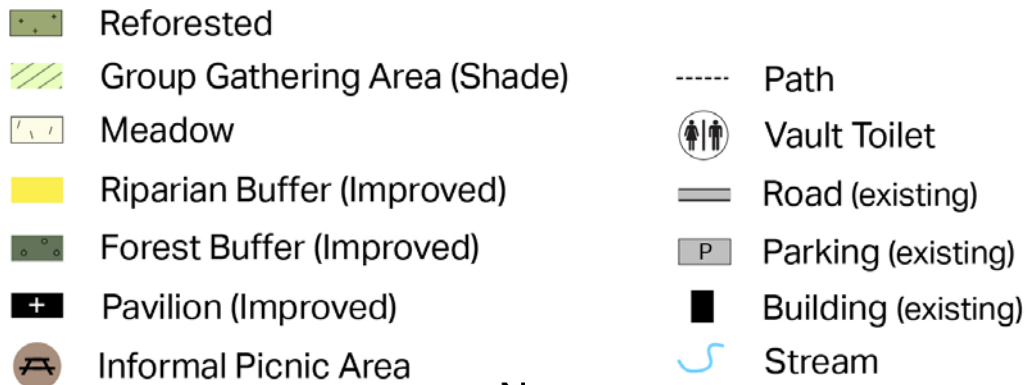
Concept B: Ecological *North*

Facilities

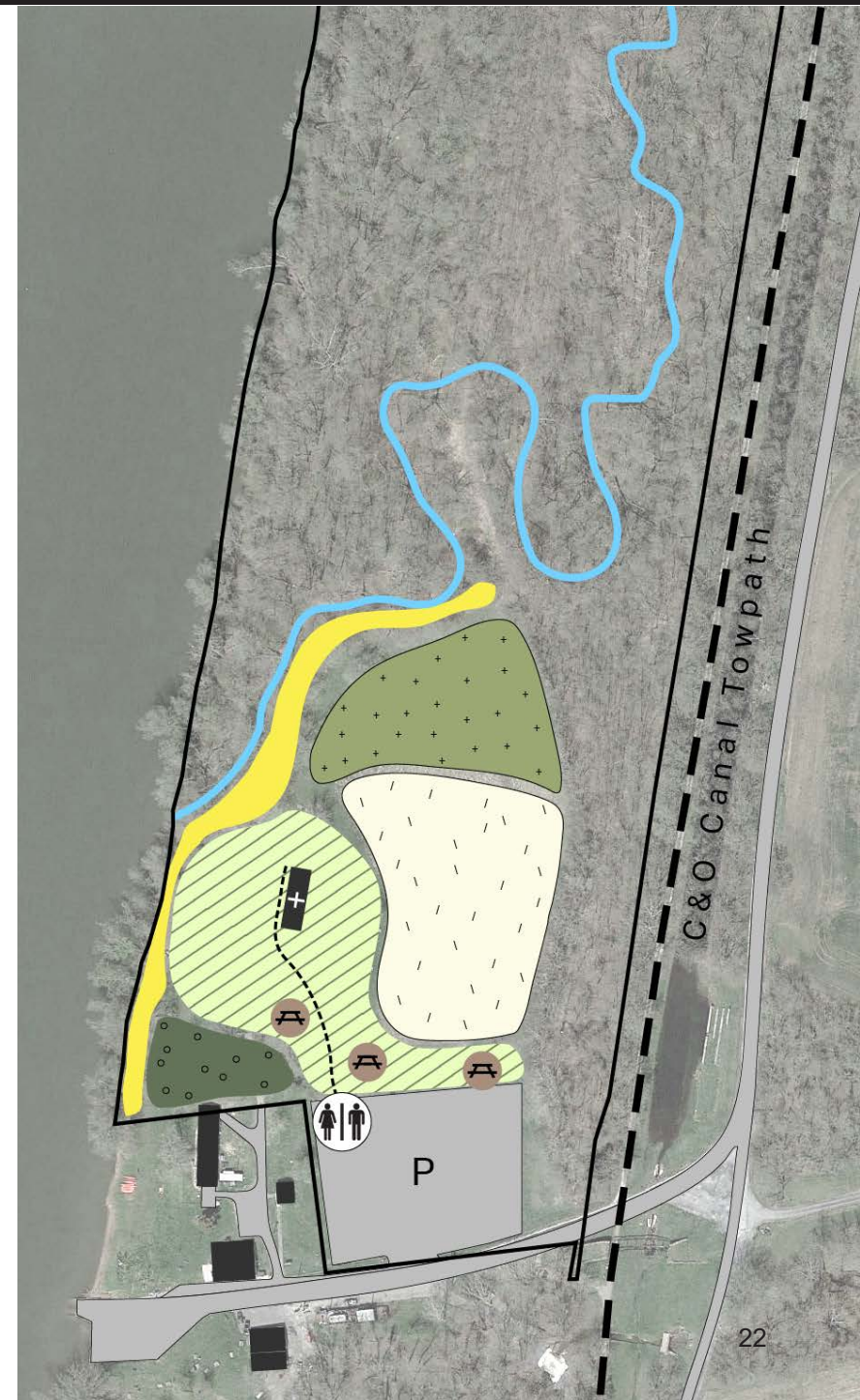
- Repairs and upgrades existing pavilion
- Provides shaded group gathering area
- Converts open turf to meadow
- Installs interpretive signage (e.g., local ecology and history)
- Adds restrooms and informal picnic areas
- Adds reforestation area at northern end of meadow
- Improves forest buffer at southwest portion of site
- Improves riparian buffer along Potomac River and stream

Operations

- Requires biannual mowing



0 100 500 ft





Concept B: Ecological *North*



Existing conditions



Example of future informal picnic area and meadow with the improved pavilion in the background



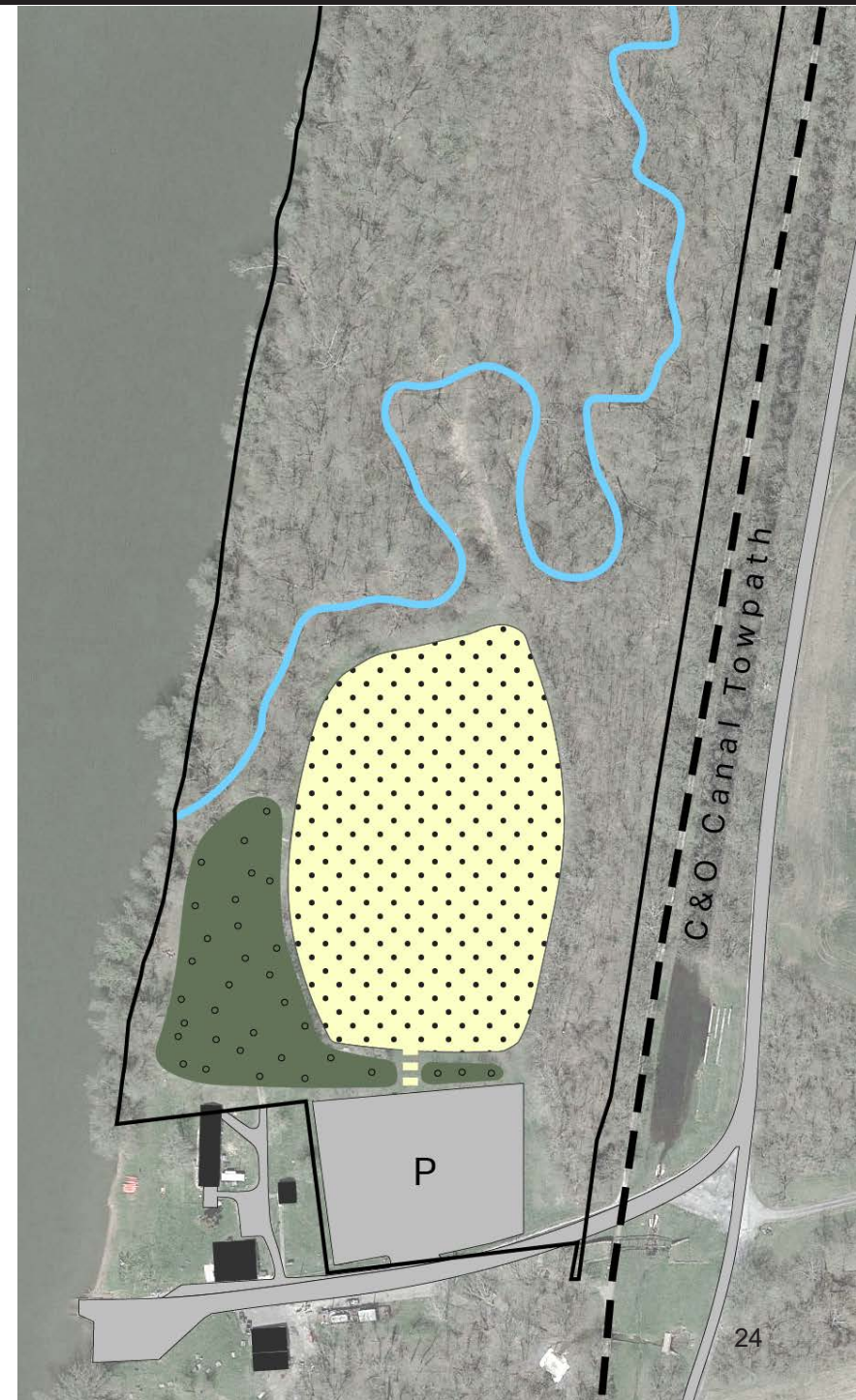
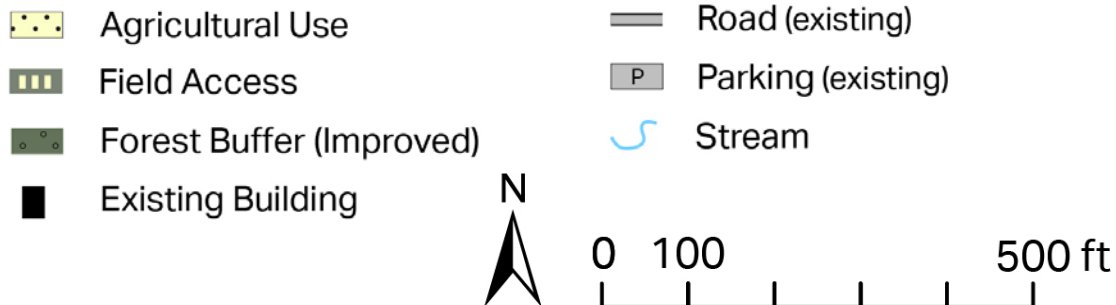
Concept C: Agricultural *North*

Facilities

- Removes existing pavilion
- Converts open turf to agricultural use (~ 3.6 acres), which would be consistent with historic land use
- Improves forest buffer at southwest portion of site

Operations

- Potential for agricultural leasing program
- Minimizes NPS maintenance responsibility

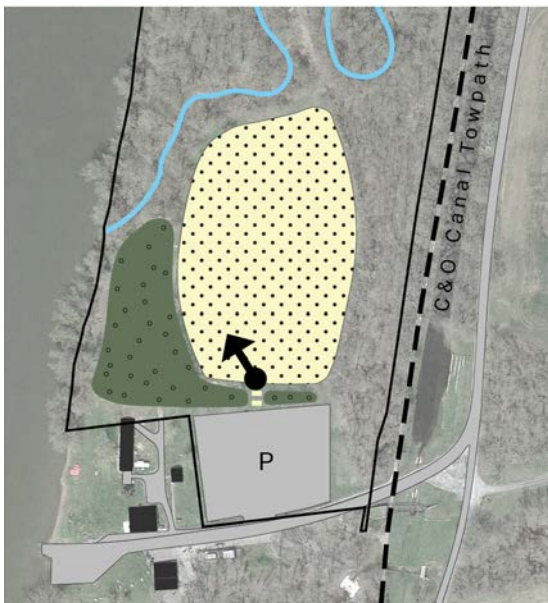




Concept C: Agricultural *North*



Existing conditions



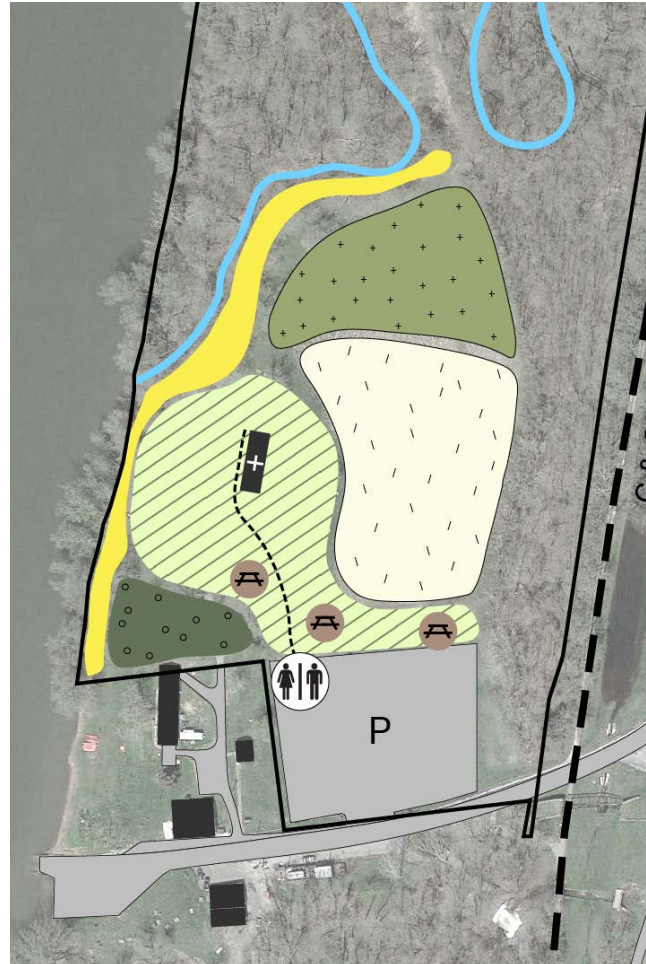
Example of future improved forest buffer and agricultural field



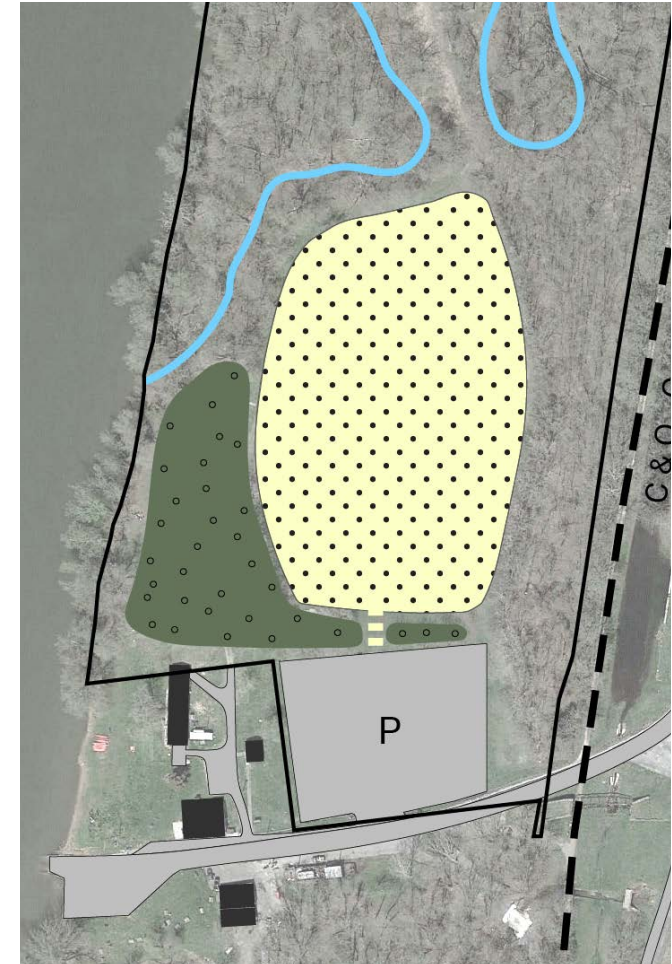
A: Recreational



B: Ecological



C: Agricultural



- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------|
| Reforested | Path | Meadow |
| Group Gathering Area (Shade) | Vault Toilet | |
| Group Gathering/Play Area (Sun) | Road (existing) | |
| Riparian Buffer (Improved) | Parking (existing) | |
| Forest Buffer (Improved) | Building (existing) | |
| Pavilion (Improved) | Stream | |
| Informal Picnic Area | | |

- | |
|------------------|
| Agricultural Use |
| Field Access |



A: Recreational

B: Ecological

C: Agricultural



Existing conditions



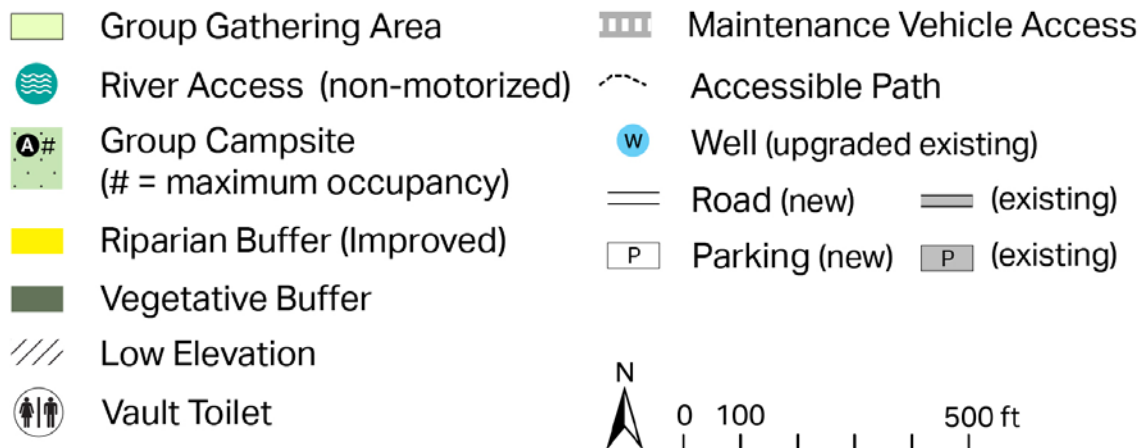
South Concepts Overview

All concepts provide:

- Campsites, with options for:
 - Tent camping
 - RV/camper camping
 - Single large or multiple groups
 - Individual campsites
- Parking
- Vault toilets
- Well access
- Options for open or shaded space for group gathering
- Non-motorized boat launch/fishing pier
- Trail connection to the C&O Canal Towpath
- Mix and match opportunities

Concept A: Clustered *South*

- Installs tent campsites for four groups, including one accessible site (Site A)
- Contains one primary parking area and two secondary parking areas
- Provides mown open space for group gathering/informal recreation adjacent to the river
- Provides shaded group gathering area
- Adds non-motorized boat launch/fishing pier
- Uses single existing well
- Includes fire ring, area for tents, and picnic tables at each group campsite
- Adds three vault toilets away from river
- Precludes RV/camper parking





Concept A: Clustered *South*



Existing conditions



Example of future group campsite A with accessible path leading to the restroom in the background



Concept A: Clustered *South*



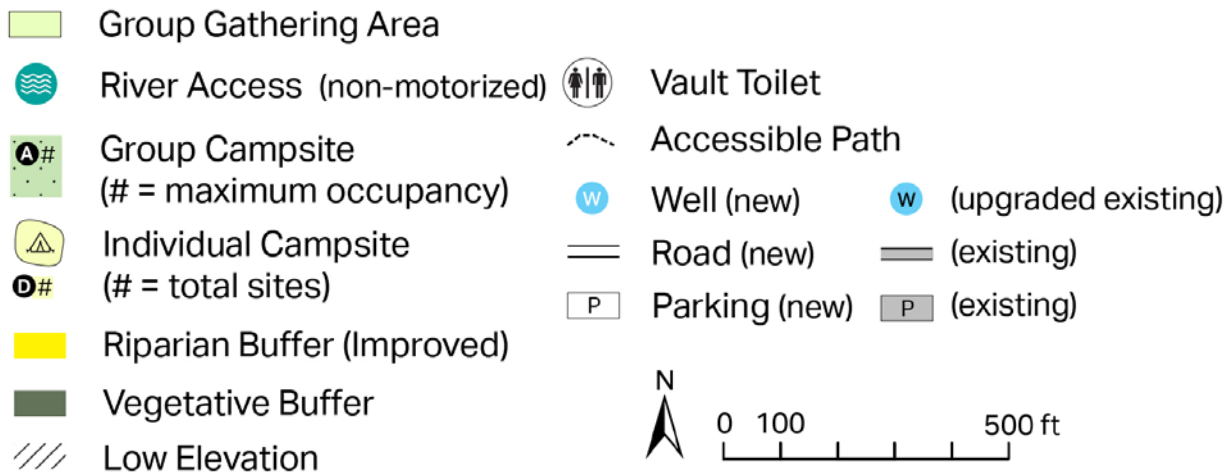
Existing conditions



Example of future group gathering area and improved riparian buffer with the path to the non-motorized boat launch/fishing pier in the background

Concept B: Concentrated South

- Adds three group tent campsites, all of which are accessible
 - Includes individual restroom for each group campsite and individual or shared parking and water facilities depending on the group campsite
 - Precludes RVs/camper parking
- Adds ten individual campsites, including:
 - Two accessible campsites
 - Adequate space for tent camping or RVs/campers
 - Parking at each campsite
- Precludes utility hook-ups at individual campsites
- Moves toilets away from towpath
- Adds shared parking for individual campsites
- Adds drive to river access point for non-motorized watercraft
- Includes fire rings, area for tents, and picnic tables at each group campsite and individual campsite





Concept B: Concentrated *South*



Existing conditions



Example of future group campsite A with accessible path in the foreground and vegetative buffer between campsites A and B in the background



Concept B: Concentrated *South*




Existing conditions




Example of future path to the non-motorized boat launch/fishing pier with the group gathering area and improved riparian buffer in the background

Concept C: Dispersed South

- Installs two group tent campsites, including one accessible site (Site B)
 - Includes individual restroom for campgrounds
- Adds eight individual tent campsites, including:
 - Two accessible campsites
 - Six walk-in or bike-in campsites
- Adds shared parking and restrooms for individual accessible and walk-in or bike-in campsites
- Uses single existing well
- Reforests area adjacent to river to provide shaded group gathering area
- Adds non-motorized boat launch/fishing pier
- Includes fire rings, area for tents, and picnic tables at each group campsite and individual campsite
- Precludes RV/camper parking

 River Access (non-motorized)

 Group Campsite
(# = maximum occupancy)

 Individual Walk-in Campsite
(# = total sites)

 Riparian Buffer (Improved)

 Vegetative Buffer

 Reforested

 Low Elevation



Vault Toilet



Maintenance Vehicle Access



Accessible Path




Well (upgraded existing)



Road (new)  (existing)



Parking (new)  (existing)



0 100 500 ft





Concept C: Dispersed *South*



Existing conditions



Example of future group campsite A with vegetative buffer between campsites A and B in the background



Concept C: Dispersed *South*



Existing conditions



Example of future path to the non-motorized boat launch/fishing pier with the reforested area and improved riparian buffer in the background



A: Clustered



B: Concentrated



C: Dispersed



- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Group Gathering Area | Vault Toilet |
| River Access (non-motorized) | Maintenance Vehicle Access |
| Group Campsite (# = maximum occupancy) | Accessible Path |
| Riparian Buffer (Improved) | Well (new) (upgraded existing) |
| Vegetative Buffer | Road (new) (existing) |
| Low Elevation | Parking (new) (existing) |

- Individual Campsite (# = total sites)

- Individual Walk-in Campsite (# = total sites)
- Reforested



A: Clustered



B: Concentrated



C: Dispersed



Existing conditions



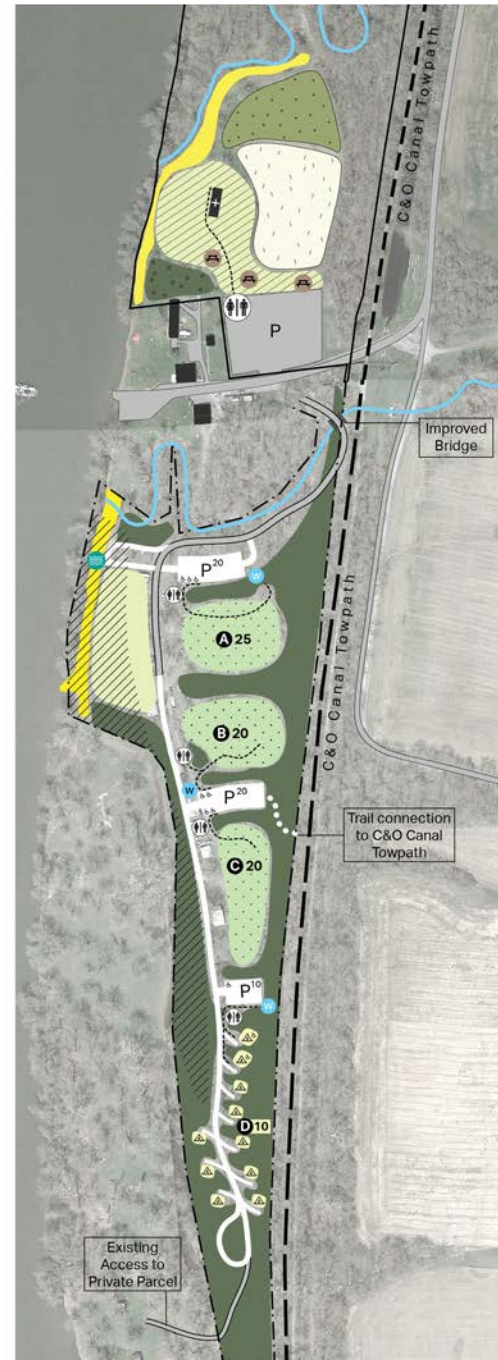
A: Clustered

B: Concentrated

C: Dispersed



Existing conditions

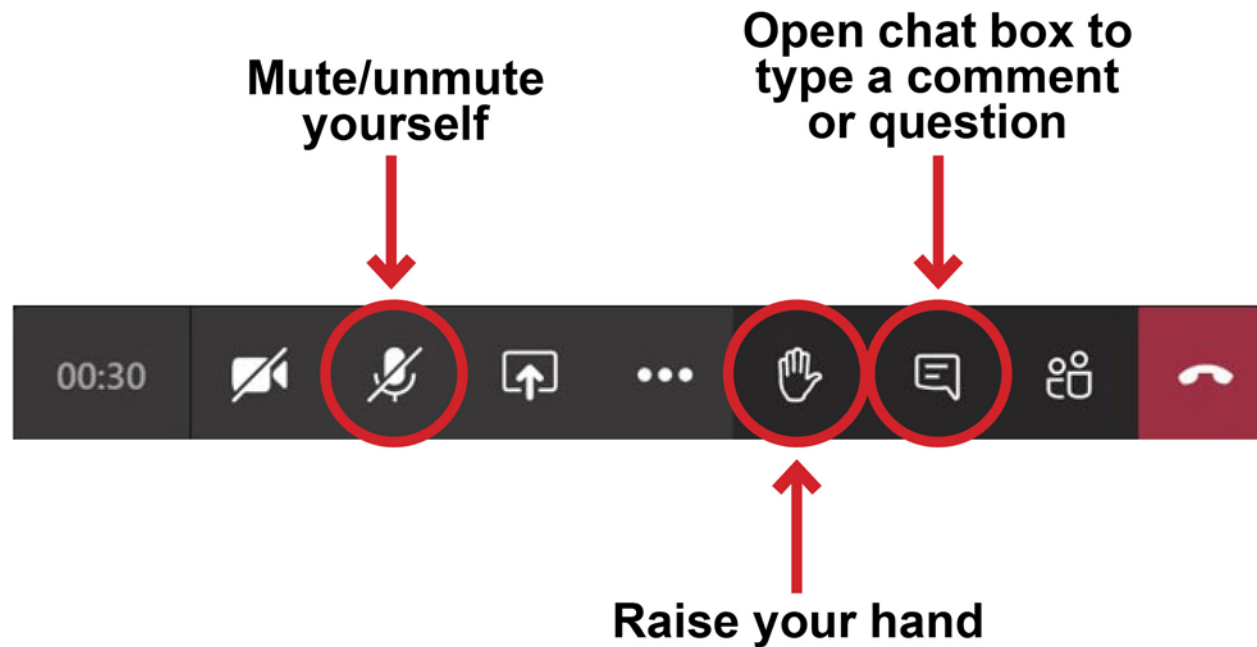
**A: Recreational + Clustered****B: Ecological + Concentrated****C: Agricultural + Dispersed**

The North and South concepts are interchangeable with one another.

For example, North Concept A could be paired with South Concept C.



Questions + Answers





How Can You Submit Comments?

- **Online:** Submit written comments by **November 12** at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/whitesferryconceptplan>
- **Written comments can be mailed to:**

Superintendent
Attn: White's Ferry DCP
National Park Service
Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park
142 West Potomac Street
Williamsport, MD 21795
- **Mailed comments** must be postmarked by **November 12** to receive consideration

Please Note: Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.