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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS TO DISCUSS NORTHERN NECK NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

PHILADELPHIA--The National Park Service will hold five public meetings to discuss the Northern Neck National Heritage Area Feasibility Study. The study, authorized by the United States Congress, will help determine whether the Northern Neck area could be considered for potential congressional designation as a National Heritage Area. Public meetings will take place May 24-26, with one meeting in each of the five counties of the Northern Neck, as defined by the study legislation. The schedule is as follows:

King George County: Monday May 24, 3:00 PM in the Revercomb Administration Building, 10459 Courthouse Drive, King George County, Virginia.

Westmoreland County: Tuesday May 25, 3:00 PM in the A.T. Johnson Alumni Museum Auditorium, 18849 King's Highway, Montross, Virginia.

Richmond County: Tuesday May 25, 7:00 PM in the Richmond County Courthouse, Public Meeting Room, 101 Court Circle, Warsaw, Virginia.

Northumberland County: Wednesday May 26, 3:00 PM in the Northumberland County Public Library, 7204 Northumberland Highway, Heathsville, Virginia.

Lancaster County: *Wednesday May 26, 7:00 PM at the Belle Isle State Park, Belle Isle Visitor Center, 1632 Belle Isle Road, Lancaster, Virginia.*

The purpose of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for citizens to learn about and comment on the Northern Neck National Heritage Area Feasibility Study which will determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the study area as a national heritage area. The study legislation identifies national heritage area criteria to be employed by the National Park Service in conducting the study and requires consultation with state and local agencies. The National Park Service Interim National Heritage Criteria are used by the National Park Service in evaluating study areas for such a designation and are available on the following website: <http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/REP/criteria.pdf>. The criteria include the analysis of the natural, historical, cultural, educational, scenic and recreational resources of the area as being nationally distinct and worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation and continuing use, and the significant and demonstrated support of the study area community including residents, business interests, organizations and appropriate local, state and federal government agencies.

Information on National Heritage Areas can be found on the following website: <http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/>. The public is encouraged to periodically check for further study information on the following website: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/none/>.

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