

106 SUCCESS STORY

Collaboration Leads to Creative Off-Site Mitigation Solution

Fort A.P. Hill, Caroline County, Virginia

“The innovative approach to archaeological preservation created at Fort A.P. Hill is an example of how bringing all interested parties together through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act yields the best possible results.”

— JOHN L. NAU, III
Former Chairman, Advisory Council on
Historic Preservation (2001-2010)

Photos: Above, top, first Army Convoy at Bowling Green 1941; bottom, Army at Bettys Inn 1941 (photos courtesy U.S. Army); Left, resistivity survey performed during the archaeological fieldwork of September 2009 (photo courtesy Deanna Beacham); Middle, 17th century European metal objects from Middletown archaeological complex (photo courtesy Virginia Department of Historic Preservation); Right, 2009 celebratory ceremony at Camden showing U.S. Army Environmental Command Commander Col. Maria Gervais with Rappahannock tribal council member Wanda Fortune and Chief Anne Richardson (photo courtesy Virginia R. Busby).



THE STORY

In an effort to lessen tension between Native Americans and increasing numbers of planters in the mid-1600s, the Virginia government set aside tracts of land on the Rappahannock River for Native Americans. According to the Digital Archaeological Record, a large village believed to be inhabited by Nanzatico and Portobago Indians (called the Camden site) was part of a complex of Native American settlements that were occupied into the 18th century. Archaeologists believe that the leader of the Machotick Indians may have lived at the Camden site, based on excavations in the 1960s. The Camden Farm, including the historic Native American settlement, prehistoric archaeological sites, an English colonial settlement, and a major plantation complex with an Italianate manor house, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1969 and designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) in 1971. In 1941, “A.P. Hill Military Reservation” was established adjacent to Camden Farm and included farmsteads and small communities, cemeteries, and Civil War camp sites, in addition to sites significant to Indian tribes.

THE PROJECT

When Fort Lee was to be realigned under the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 1990, the installation lacked sufficient field training space. Heavy weapons and explosives training was proposed to move to Fort A.P. Hill. The move and subsequent redevelopment would adversely affect historic properties on post. Recent incompatible development in surrounding areas had become a challenge for military installations nationwide, impeding training and other military operations. Fort A. P. Hill had instituted the Army Compatible Use Buffer program to address incompatible land uses on adjacent private properties but had not yet been able to secure sufficient funding for tracts containing key archaeological sites within the NHL.

THE 106 PROCESS

The Army, the federal agency carrying out this project, was responsible for conducting the Section 106 process under the National Historic Preservation Act. Section 106



Photos: Left, Rappahannock River landing; Above, an extant slave dwelling on Camden Farm shows the evolving cultural landscape of the farm from American Indian occupation, to colonial and antebellum occupations, to a modern working farm. (photos courtesy the Conservation Fund)

requires that federal agencies identify historic properties and assess the effects of the projects they carry out, fund, or permit on those properties. Federal agencies also are required to consult with parties that have an interest in the fate of the property when adverse effects are likely to ensue. Through consultation, the Army elected to conduct limited on-site mitigation to resolve the adverse effects to historic properties on post, including recording oral histories, documenting certain Civil War-era historic properties, and conducting limited archaeological excavation. The consulting parties agreed to directing greater resources to acquire a conservation easement for approximately 500 acres on the Camden Farm NHL through the Army Compatible Use Buffer program and the Army Innovative Mitigation Strategy program. The latter program was designed to set aside funds to purchase off-site easements and development rights on parcels containing significant historic properties, as well as producing public outreach materials. The easement on Camden Farm limited expansion of a sand and gravel pit and provided a 55 acre “no development area” to protect the cultural resources. The Programmatic Agreement was concluded in 2008, setting forth the mitigation measures and the commitment to seek the multi-faceted easement that provided for compatible land uses and that specifically protected the archaeological resources.

THE SUCCESS

A broad group of consulting parties worked together, considered the installation’s broader needs, established good communication with the community, and developed an innovative mitigation strategy. Through Section 106 consultation, the Army decided to do less work on sites within the post’s boundaries and focus resources on preserving significant sites that the parties agreed should be saved outside the fort. Further, the easement created a buffer of open space around Fort A.P. Hill, preserved sensitive resources, and prevented incompatible development, thus enabling critical Army training. Thanks to the Section 106 process and the public-private collaboration it spurred, this easement was the first example of the Department of the Army and a State Historic Preservation Office working together to mitigate cultural impacts on a military installation through off-post resource conservation. This approach serves as a model for agencies seeking ways to afford real protections to historic properties, including those properties that may be outside of their current reach. In 2011, the project was given the National Trust/ACHP Award for Federal Partnerships in Historic Preservation.

Consulting Parties:

U.S. Army
 ACHP
 Virginia State Historic Preservation Office
 Archeological Society of Virginia
 Caroline County Historical Society
 Civil War Preservation Trust
 Council of Virginia Archaeologists
 National Park Service
 Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park
 Rappahannock Tribe of Virginia
 United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma
 Virginia Council on Indians

For more about Section 106 and the ACHP go to www.achp.gov

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