



*Greetings from*



*Maryland*

# ACCOKEEK HERITAGE TOURISM STUDY

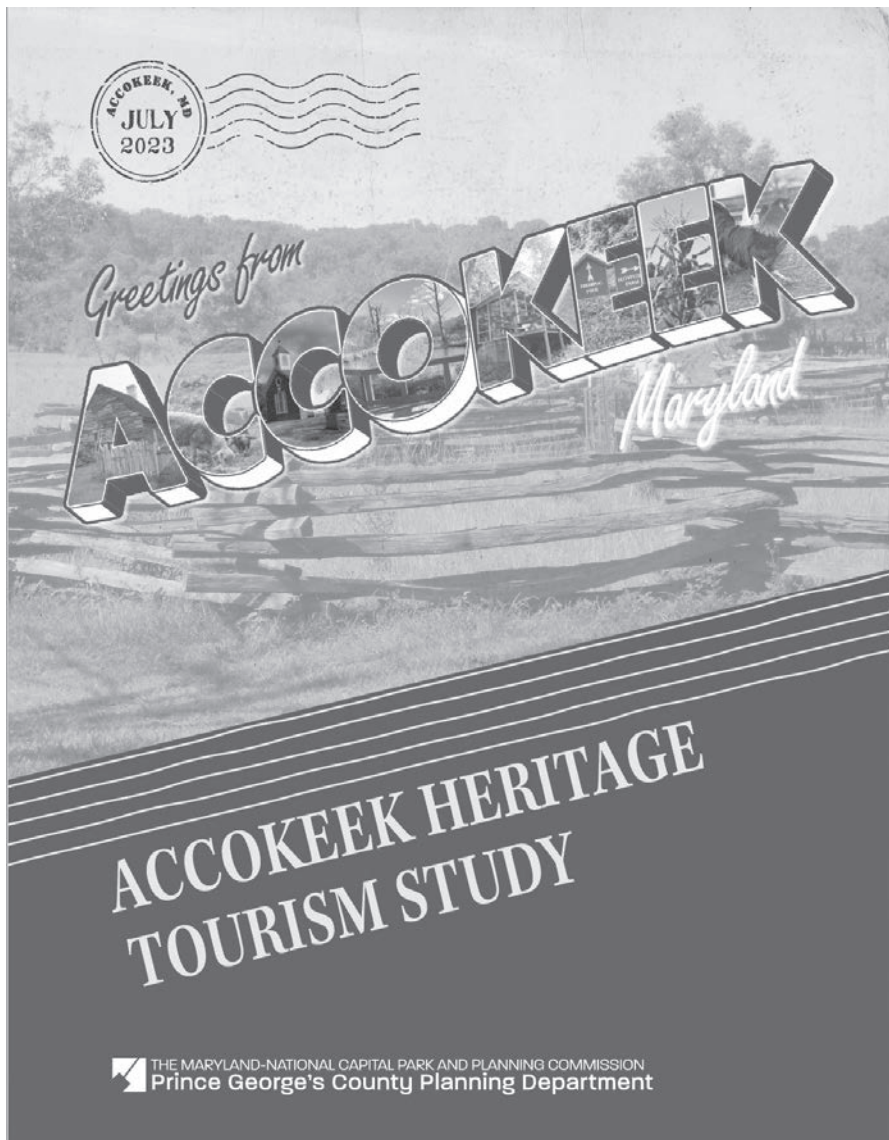


THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
Prince George's County Planning Department

# Abstract

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This study identifies and analyzes heritage tourism resources in Accokeek, Prince George's County, Maryland, the challenges they face, and provides recommendations to make them known or better known using best practices. The study identifies common heritage themes and 34 action steps to enhance connectivity and accessibility, without threatening the resources themselves or the community's quality of life.



July 2023

**The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission**  
Prince George's County Planning Department  
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

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**Signs at Piscataway Park**



# Introduction

In winter 2021, the Greater Accokeek Civic Association, the Accokeek Foundation, and the Alice Ferguson Foundation applied to the Prince George's County Planning Department to fund a heritage tourism study. The purpose of the proposed study was to identify and analyze heritage resources and the pressures they face, to determine how best to make those resources known or better known, and to identify common heritage themes to enhance connectivity and accessibility, all without threatening the resources themselves or the community's quality of life. Funding for the project was approved by the Prince George's County Planning Board on June 3, 2021, through the Community Planning Division's Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities (PAMC) program. Hyattsville-based Neighborhood Design Center was retained to undertake the study. Their consultant team included Bradley Site Design and Cultural Heritage Works.

The Accokeek Heritage Tourism Study began in summer 2021. A steering committee was formed to work with the consultant team to gather information and to plan and conduct a study tour. The team began by reviewing information about Accokeek's cultural, historic and natural resources and current tourism status to identify focus areas. Materials reviewed included the 2013 *Approved Subregion 5 Master Plan*; National Register of Historic Places nominations for the Moyaone Reserve, Piscataway Park and Hard Bargain Farm; the *Through Piscataway Eyes Master Plan*, the *Alice Ferguson Foundation Strategic Plan: 2019-2023*, the *2010 Approved Prince George's County Historic Sites and Districts Plan*; the *2014 Formula 2040: Approved Functional Master Plan for Parks, Recreation and Open Space*; the *2014 Plan 2035 Prince George's County*

*Approved General Plan*; the *2010 Approved Prince George's County Water Resources Conservation Plan: A Countywide Functional Master Plan*; the *Maryland Department of Natural Resources: Land Preservation and Recreation Plan, 2019-2023*; *Preservation and Partners: A History of Piscataway Park (2020)*; *Maryland Office of Tourism: Annual Strategic Plan*, visitor research studies; Experience Prince George's (CVB): website, annual strategic plan, the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, Inc., Management Plan, interpretive plan, and boundary amendment feasibility study; Southern Maryland Heritage Area's National Heritage Area feasibility study; and Maryland Historical Trust Inventory of Historic Properties forms.

The first work session with the steering committee was held October 12, 2021, and began with a presentation on the principles of and steps for successful heritage tourism development. Participants also reviewed and confirmed agreement on the study area boundaries. The meeting then focused on identifying interpretive themes for Accokeek based on the region's history and culture, using the National Park Service's definition: "Themes are ways of organizing a site's or region's stories to communicate important messages about the place and what it means to people. Stories connect people to each other, their families, their communities, and the landscape. Themes connect the past to the present and reveal something about the future. They embody and reinforce the sense of place that makes an area special. Themes and stories are truly at the heart of interpretation."<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Interpretive Planning Tools for Heritage Areas, Historic Trails and Gateways*, (Annapolis: The National Park Service, Chesapeake Bay Office, 2010), 26.

Themes developed for two potential partners—the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area (ATHA) and Southern Maryland National Heritage Area (SMNHA)—were shared with the steering committee. ATHA has completed a feasibility study to expand the heritage area’s boundary into southern Prince George’s County and which would include Accokeek. SMNHA has completed a feasibility study for National Heritage Area designation which would also include Accokeek. Major interpretive themes for these potential partners are:

**Anacostia Trails Heritage Area**

- The Natural Environment
- Settlement Patterns
- Changes in the Landscape

**Southern Maryland National Heritage Area**

- Piscataway: The Land Is Who We Are
- Time and Tide Shape Land and Life
- Tobacco: A Growing Concern
- Spirit of Faith, Spirit of Law, Spirit of Progress
- Defense of a Nation

The framework of heritage themes used in this study grew out of those identified by the steering committee and generated in the November 2021 study tour.

**Tour goals included:**

- Gather a variety of opinions from stakeholders
- Learn about Accokeek’s history and culture
- Evaluate the current visitor experience
- Evaluate visitor services;
- Identify target audiences;
- Evaluate current marketing;
- Assess support for tourism; and
- Assess capacity for heritage tourism development and growth.

The tour began at the Accokeek Branch Library, part of the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System. The library’s lobby features interpretive exhibit panels with pictures and text exploring the history of Accokeek from the 1930s through the 1970s. The tour was organized by Judy Allen-Leventhal of the Greater Accokeek Civic Association; Laura Ford, President and CEO of the Accokeek Foundation, and Theresa Cullen, Executive Director of the Alice Ferguson Foundation. Consultant team members taking part in the tour included Carolyn Brackett, Dana Puzey, Logan Staley, Nick Maletta and Matt Weir. The itinerary included touring cultural, historic, recreation and natural resources. The itinerary also included opportunities to talk with staff, volunteers and community stakeholders to gather information about cultural, historic and natural resources and to discuss ideas, challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism development and promotion. The team gathered current studies, promotional brochures and other materials to familiarize themselves with the area’s resources.



Credit: M-NCPPC



Source: M-NCPPC

## Following the study tour, interviews were conducted with stakeholders to gather more information and insights:

- George A. Cooley II, Executive Vice President, Experience Prince George's
- Theresa Cullen, Executive Director, Alice Ferguson Foundation
- Mark Falzone, President, Scenic America & Prince George's Scenic America Chapter
- Laura Ford, Executive Director, Accokeek Foundation (with Randi Korn, Trustee)
- Deborah Byard Kirby, Accokeek Development Review District Commission (ADRDC)
- Mario Harley, Piscataway Conoy Council
- John Mitchell, Metropolitan Airport Authority's Citizens Working Group
- Lona Powell, Accokeek Artists Alliance
- Marci Ross, Assistant Director, Maryland Office of Tourism

Subsequent steering committee work sessions refined the topics and themes covered by the study.

## This study is organized into nine sections:

**Section 1, "Accokeek in Context,"** describes Accokeek, its history and how heritage tourism is supported by approved County plans.

**Section 2, "Heritage Tourism,"** explores what is meant by this term, analyses current conditions, and concludes with the ways heritage tourism works and is incentivized in Maryland and Prince George's County.

**Section 3, "Accokeek's Heritage Tourism Resources,"** describes identified sites and organizational resources in detail.

**Section 4, "Accokeek's Potential for Heritage Tourism Development,"** details strengths and challenges to growing heritage tourism in Accokeek, lists the heritage themes identified in the process of building the study, provides the primary recommendation for special interest group tourism, describes the benefits of this approach, and sketches the pros and cons of potential heritage tourism management structures.

**Section 5, "Welcome to Accokeek,"** details the physical approaches to the community and recommends action steps to improve signage.

**Section 6, "Heritage Documentation and Programs,"** details the existing ways and levels in which the community's heritage and resources have been documented and recommends action steps for updates and improvements.

**Section 7, "Accokeek Heritage Tourism Themes,"** returns to the themes that emerged in creation of the study and recommends actions steps to promote and share them with heritage tourists.

**Section 8, "Promote: Attract Visitors and Keep Them Coming Back,"** reviews marketing and branding efforts, and makes recommendations for new positioning of resources and heritage tourism partnering.

**Section 9, the Implementation Matrix,** lists all 34 action steps and suggests potential leads, partners, funding sources (if applicable) and timeframes. The study concludes with a list of source materials for further study.



**Winter at Hard Bargain Farm, n.d.**





**SECTION**  
**1**

**Accokeek  
in Context**





Piscataway Park  
Source: M-NCPPC

# The Community of Accokeek

Accokeek is an unincorporated, census-designated community at the southern end of Prince George's County, Maryland with a population of slightly less than 14,000. Approximately 17 miles from Washington, D.C. and 50 miles from Baltimore, Accokeek is located along the Potomac River, encompassing approximately 28 square miles.

Accokeek is an affluent community with a median household income of \$133,992, compared to Maryland's median household income of \$87,063. Seventy-seven percent of the population is over the age of 18; 13 percent are over 65; 23 percent are under 18. Forty-one percent of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. Almost 71 percent of residents are employed compared to 63 percent statewide. Although 47 percent of employed residents work for private businesses, 34 percent are employed by local, state or federal governments. The out-migration of workers is reflected in the average 46-minute travel time to their places of employment, with 73 percent traveling alone by automobile. The homeownership rate is 96.4 percent compared to 67.1 percent statewide. Eighty percent of dwellings are valued from \$300,000 to \$1 million. There is currently little housing available in Accokeek—out of 4,813 housing units, only 151 were vacant at the time of the 2020 Census. According to the 2020 U.S. Decennial Census, Accokeek's population is primarily African American, followed by white, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian.

The landscape appears suburban when entering Accokeek on MD-210 (Indian Head Highway) and becomes rural when turning onto MD-373 (Livingston Road) and other smaller roads throughout the community. Near the library on Indian Head Highway is the building that was Accokeek's first strip mall (currently housing offices) and a more recently built shopping center that includes a Weis grocery store, fast-food restaurants, a gas station and other shops. The areas around the intersection of Indian Head Highway and Livingston Road include B & J Carry-Out and a vacant restaurant building.

Accokeek is framed by the Potomac River, Piscataway Creek, and Mattawoman Creek. Accokeek's forested areas are interspersed with residential development. Longstanding businesses include Beretta U.S.A. Corporation and Anchors Kennel. Manning Road includes several housing developments including Manning Preserve and Mannington.

A defining characteristic of Accokeek is Piscataway Park, a 5,000-acre national park that spans parts of both Prince George's and Charles counties along the Potomac River. Piscataway Park was established in 1968 to preserve sacred American Indian spaces and the historic view from George Washington's Mount Vernon. Accokeek's two major cultural heritage attractions, National Colonial Farm, operated by the Accokeek Foundation and Hard Bargain Farm, operated by the Alice Ferguson Foundation, are located within the park as is the Moyaone Reserve, a residential community of houses on five-acre wooded parcels.

## A Brief History of Accokeek

Prior to European settlement, the area that is now Prince George's County, was home to the Piscataway Indians, who lived in villages from the Anacostia River south to the Port Tobacco River from around 900 A.D. (The Piscataway still live in Prince George's County and retain their cultural traditions. In January 2012, Governor Martin O'Malley signed executive orders officially recognizing the Piscataway Conoy Tribe and the Piscataway Indian Nation.) They established farming villages in the fertile floodplains along major rivers and streams. The site of one of these villages, the Accokeek Archaeological Creek site along the shore of the Potomac River, is a National Historic Landmark.

After 25 years of trading with the Native Americans, in 1634 the Europeans began to settle in Maryland. By the mid-1600s, farms and plantations lined the Patuxent and

Potomac rivers within the original boundaries of Calvert and Charles counties. By 1695, the area population was between 1,600 and 1,700 people of European descent. Prince George's County was established the following year. Agricultural and farming pursuits continued to dominate the area through the mid-twentieth century.

For many years Accokeek's location, isolated from major transportation routes, limited development. However, as Charles County continued to develop and as MD 210 (Indian Head Highway) became a commuter route to centers of employment such as Washington, D.C., Accokeek became increasingly attractive for residential development in the mid-to-late twentieth century and continues to attract new residents in the twenty-first.



Accokeek post office and store owned by the Dyer family ca. early 1900's  
Source: M-NCPPC archives, courtesy of the Copeland Family.

# Planning Background

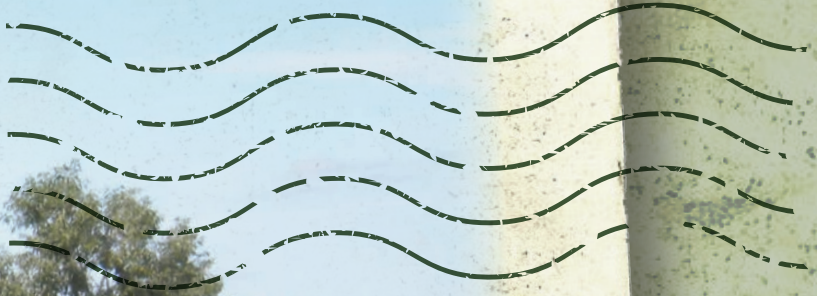
In addition to strategies for developing a countywide heritage tourism plan, the 2014 *Plan Prince George's 2035 Approved General Plan* encourages planning and coordination between local cultural resources and heritage organizations, and partnering to pursue grants, loans, and tax credits to promote cultural and heritage tourism. The 2013 *Approved Subregion 5 Master Plan* includes policies to support historic preservation and heritage tourism:

- Public awareness and appreciation of historic sites and resources is promoted.
- Participation and use of existing historic preservation programs and the creation of new incentive programs is encouraged.
- Economic development is promoted through heritage tourism and recreation.

The plan describes the importance of historic preservation to this area of Prince George's County: "Historic communities and buildings provide an appealing sense of place that is often absent in newer areas. They are important elements of an area's cultural heritage and enhance quality of life. (Accokeek) is dotted with farms, outbuildings, barns, farmsteads, scenic roads, and vistas; all of which offer opportunities to promote the region's heritage through education and recreation. Increased public awareness and appreciation for historic sites and archaeological resources, as well as the promotion of cultural assets and heritage tourism, can instill a sense of community pride and help safeguard significant historical remnants. Encouraging maintenance of resources can lead to considerable economic returns for the county."



**Visitors at National Colonial Farm**



**SECTION**  
**2**

**Heritage  
Tourism**



# Principles of Cultural Heritage Tourism

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“A real place feels as though it belongs where it is, as though it had grown there, shaped by weather and geography, rather than being imported and set down like a mail-order kit. —Scott Russell Sanders, *Staying Put: Making a Home in a Restless World*”

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In 1990, the National Trust for Historic Preservation developed a set of principles to guide cultural heritage tourism development. The principles have been used by hundreds of communities across the country and continue to be valuable as destinations focus on asset-based tourism planning.

- Principle **1** **Focus on Quality and Authenticity**

Research confirms that cultural heritage travelers want to visit destinations that retain their authentic sense of place and that offer a high-quality experience. In addition, destinations must be prepared to present the story of the place in context with the larger American story.
- Principle **2** **Preserve and Protect Resources**

Stewardship of historic, cultural, and natural resources is essential to accomplishing Principle 1—an authentic, high-quality destination. Preserving and protecting resources must be undertaken in balance with tourism promotion.
- Principle **3** **Make Sites and Programs Come Alive**

Studies repeatedly show that visitors are seeking experiences that are engaging, interactive, and memorable. Destinations make this happen by researching and documenting their history, identifying primary themes and stories, and developing places, programs, events, and other opportunities for visitors of various ages and interests to enjoy.



Principle

## 4 Find the Fit between the Community and Tourism

Cultural heritage tourism should make a community a better place to live as well as a better place to visit. The planning process should include many considerations to ensure that inviting visitors to a community enhances rather than detracts from residents' quality of life. An essential consideration is identifying places that residents do not want to include in tourism promotions, such as residential neighborhoods or a cemetery. In addition, planners must consider the carrying capacity of a community. How many visitors can be accommodated before negative effects are felt by residents? These considerations will help guide decisions about target audiences as well as where to focus and how to scale promotions. It is also important to have a plan to educate residents about the benefits of cultural heritage tourism including the creation of jobs, increased tax revenues, volunteer opportunities, and new activities and destinations that residents can enjoy.

Principle

## 5 Collaborate

By its very nature, cultural heritage tourism requires effective partnerships. As communities and states have increased their focus on cultural heritage tourism in the past few decades, more partners have become involved in planning, implementation, management and promotion of the destination. These may include government agencies at the state and local level; nonprofit organizations managing historic, cultural, and natural resources; and businesses including lodging, restaurants, shopping, tour guide companies and receptive operators (local tour operators specializing in organizing group tours for tour companies), event management companies; and many others.



Source: M-NCPPC



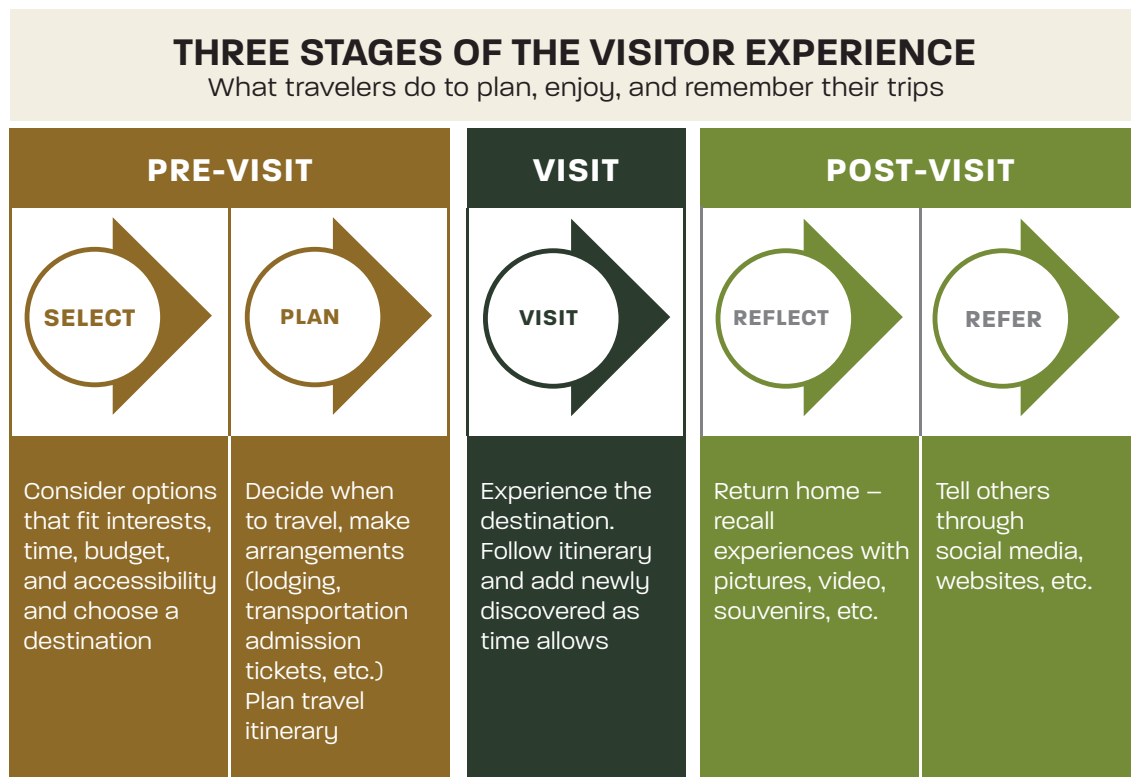
Source: M-NCPPC

## Heritage Development

Heritage development is the process of preserving historic, cultural and natural resources, planning for their long-term protection and interpretation, and preparing to receive visitors. Once preservation and protection are addressed, a destination can plan and prepare for visitors. Preservation and conservation of historic, cultural, and natural resources is essential for a community's sense of place and for a successful cultural heritage tourism program. It is understood that stakeholders in Accokeek have many projects and programs currently underway. This study considers current activities and makes recommendations to either revise or build on those activities or to replace them with new activities that may attract more heritage tourists. An Implementation Matrix is provided to identify priority actions, partners and funding sources.

## Three Stages of the Visitor Experience

These three stages apply to all travelers—individuals, families, or tour groups. The following sections focus on how to prepare for each stage, the identification of heritage themes, and target tourism markets.



Source: Carolyn Brackett, Cultural Heritage Works, content; Jeff Dawson, Dawson and Associates, graphic design, 2021.

# Intersection of Tourism, Cultural Heritage Tourism, Ecotourism, Agritourism, and Sustainable Tourism

Although this project is defined as a heritage tourism study, it is important to understand the larger tourism industry and the connections between cultural, historic, natural resources, and outdoor recreation that can collectively constitute sustainable tourism. Accokeek offers all these resources in abundance. This section examines current trends in the tourism industry and provides definitions for tourism industry segments that are applicable. (Note: Data on the tourism industry are pre-2020 unless otherwise noted.)



## A Dynamic Economic Sector

Data from the U.S. Travel Association indicate an increase in travel in the United States in 2019 (pre-COVID-19 pandemic) over the previous year:

- Leisure travel accounted for 80 percent of all U.S. domestic travel;
- Domestic travel increased 1.7 percent to 2.3 billion person-trips; and
- Domestic leisure travel increased 1.9 percent to 1.9 billion person-trips.<sup>2</sup>

Worldwide, travel/tourism is one of the most dynamic economic sectors, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). WTTC 2019 data show that tourism accounts for 10.4 percent of the global gross domestic product (GDP) and 8.6 percent of the GDP in the United States. Projections for future travel (post-pandemic) show continued growth.

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<sup>2</sup> A person-trip is defined as one person on a trip away from home overnight in paid accommodations or on a day or overnight trip to places 50 miles or more, one-way, away from home. Domestic leisure travel includes visits to friends and relatives as well as trip taken for outdoor recreation and entertainment purposes. U.S. Travel and Tourism Overview, U.S. Travel Association, 2019.

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“Tourism at its best can be a kind of vision quest, in which we journey away from the familiar world to encounter some alien setting, some natural or cultural spiritual presence that enlarges our understanding, and then we journey home to act out that larger vision...”

—Scott Russell Sanders, *Staying Put: Making a Home in a Restless World*

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Pre-pandemic data from the National Travel and Tourism Office show that tourism is the single largest services export industry in the United States, accounting for 31 percent. In 2015, international visitors who stayed one or more nights in the U.S. reached a record 77.5 million, supporting a total of 1.1 million jobs.

## Defining Travel Industry Segments

Although people have been traveling for vacations in the United States since the late-nineteenth century, defining travel industry segments only began in the late-twentieth century. In the ensuing decades, the desire to promote cultural, historic, and natural resources and outdoor recreation moved to the forefront for many tourism agencies, who recognized it as a way to generate economic revenue based on a community's authenticity and to support a high quality of life for residents.

Among the most prominent travel industry segments are cultural heritage tourism and ecotourism, also referred to as geotourism.

While this segmentation is helpful to tourism planners and promoters to understand and address the specific interests of tourists, the intertwining of these terms is clear in the definitions for each:

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines cultural heritage tourism as traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic, and natural resources.
- The International Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of local people, and involves interpretation and education.

These definitions share the goal of sustainable tourism: tourism that sustains the community or region while generating beneficial economic impact. Sustainable tourism is particularly attractive for communities interested in maintaining or enhancing their community's character and sense of place. In addition to economic impact and job creation, sustainable tourism increases the area's attractiveness to outside industries and people seeking to relocate to locales rich in historic, cultural, and natural amenities, which results in more civic pride, and can offer residents more activities and amenities the existing market alone might not be able to support.

## Sustainable Tourism

- Supports cultural, historic, and natural resource asset-based development
- Shares the stories of the region's unique identity in a variety of venues
- Preserves natural resources to share with current and future generations
- Supports new and existing local businesses that reflect the area's sense of place
- Offers activities for outdoor recreation that also sustain the environment

Cultural heritage travel has clear implications for positive economic impact and enhanced quality of life for a community's residents. Over the past three decades studies have consistently shown that people who want to experience culture and heritage are frequent travelers who spend more than general leisure travelers. They are more likely to stay in a hotel, motel, or bed-and-breakfast, and almost half of their expenditures are spent on activities, dining and shopping. A national study, published in *The Cultural and Heritage Traveler*, (2013 Edition), determined that cultural heritage travelers want:

- Travel experiences where the destination, its buildings and surroundings, have retained their historic character
- Travel to be educational; they want to explore and learn about local arts, cultural, environment and history
- To participate in experiences rather than be a spectator
- To engage with locals
- To stay in lodging that relates to the culture or heritage of the destination

The growing interest in outdoor activities and experiences also creates new opportunities for the tourism industry. To experience nature, most Americans must leave home. A 2020 report estimated that 83 percent of the U.S. population lives in urban areas, up from 64 percent in 1950. This number is projected to reach 89 percent by 2050.<sup>3</sup> For ecotourism, the implications are clear. Areas that conserve their traditional heritage (nature, culture, history) and accommodate visitors can benefit economically.

## Post-Pandemic Travel

Although the purpose of this report is to consider tourism development opportunities, it is important to acknowledge that the tourism industry is likely to be in recovery for the near future due to the pandemic, staffing challenges, fuel prices and other factors. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. travel industry experienced 10 years of growth in domestic leisure travel, domestic business travel and international inbound travel segments. In May 2022, the U.S. Travel Association reported that the previous year's domestic leisure travel was still recovering with total expenditures of \$751 billion (104 percent over 2019), but domestic business travel spending was 56 percent below and international travel was 78 percent below 2019 levels.

<sup>3</sup> "U.S. Cities Fact Sheet." Pub. No. CSS09-06, Center for Sustainable Systems, University of Michigan, 2020.

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“Our happiest moments as tourists always seem to come when we stumble upon one thing while in pursuit of something else. —Lawrence Block

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# Tourism in Maryland and Prince George's County

Maryland's Office of Tourism and Experience Prince George's, the County's official DMO (Destination Marketing Organization), capitalize on the cultural heritage and ecotourism travel industry segments.

According to the Maryland Tourism Development Board's Fiscal Year 2022 Tourism Marketing and Development Plan, the Maryland Office of Tourism is housed in the state's Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts and directed by the office's assistant secretary. The work of the tourism office is supported by a gubernatorially appointed Tourism Development Board representing lodging, retail, transportation, food service and attractions, and six members of Maryland's General Assembly. The annual budget of the Office of Tourism and Tourism Development Board for fiscal year 2022 is \$10.6 million. The Tourism Promotion Act legislated that \$2.5 million be distributed to the Destination Marketing Organizations in each county. The remainder (\$8.1 million) is expended by the state tourism office to market Maryland to visitors.

The tourism office's work centers on four core strategic objectives: Market Expansion, Maximizing Opportunities, Leveraging Partnerships and Transactionable Outcomes. The tourism office works with partners to develop and promote recreational, historic, and cultural attractions. Activities include public relations, advertising, travel industry sales, and technical aid for product development.

For the purposes of funding distribution and promotion, the state is divided into five tourism regions. Prince George's County is in the Capital Region, with Frederick and Montgomery Counties. Accokeek also borders the Southern Region of Charles, St. Mary's and Calvert counties. In 2020, the Capital Region ranked third of the five regions in visitation.

Maryland's Office of Tourism promotes the state's scenic beauty and opportunities for outdoor activities. The state's extensive system of scenic byways and recreational activities available throughout the state's diverse landscape—from mountains to countryside to shorelines—are among the focuses of the state's promotions. This promotion complements and supports the Maryland Department of Natural Resource's December 2019 Maryland Outdoor Recreation Commission Final Report. The report notes "Outdoor recreation is an economic engine in the state of Maryland. Given that key outdoor recreation destinations are within a four-hour drive of major metropolitan areas (New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.), in the Mid-Atlantic and the Midwest (Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Columbus, Ohio), there is substantial potential for Maryland to increase its share of the outdoor recreation economy."

The Maryland Office of Tourism's promotional focus is in two areas:

### **The Big Four**

Promoting Maryland's unique history, culture and natural resources in four categories: The Most Powerful Underground Railroad Storytelling Destination in the World; The Chesapeake Bay Storytellers; Trail System Second-to-None; and Open Road Scenic Byways.

### **OPEN**

As Maryland and the nation emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, this promotion focused a message that the state was open and ready to welcome visitors. The program offers a variety of ways to partner with the tourism office to promote destinations and attractions.



Songwriter Lynn Hollyfield performs with Steve Wolf at Accokeek Artists Alliance art show  
Courtesy: Accokeek Artists Alliance

The Maryland Office of Tourism targets media buys to adults 25-64 with a strong skew toward women, who tend to select the destinations for travel consideration. Currently, more than 70 percent of all visitors are ages 50 or older. Approximately 44 percent of households traveling to Maryland have children present. The office's Fiscal Year 2022 Tourism Marketing and Development Plan reports key demographics for Maryland visitors include:

### **Day Trips**

- People 65 and older took 42 percent of all day trips.
- Two-member parties take 59 percent of day trips.
- 24 percent of day trips have three or more members; 54 percent have children present in the travel party.

### **Overnight trips**

- People ages 50-64 represented the largest share of overnight trips, 41 percent, followed by people aged 65 and older at 30 percent.
- Two-member parties represent the largest share of overnight trips (36 percent).

Most travelers are Maryland residents traveling within their own state, totaling 63 percent of day travelers and 39 percent of overnight travelers. Other travelers come from nearby including Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Washington, D.C. The top four activities for day and overnight travelers are visiting friends and relatives; culinary/dining experiences; shopping; and enjoying the beach/waterfront. Other popular activities include visiting historic sites; touring/sightseeing; visiting national or state parks; enjoying live music and attending festivals or fairs.

Maryland's Tourism Development Board offers grants to Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs). Grants are awarded annually to the state's 23 counties and Baltimore City for sales and marketing activities that meet tourism's goals of increasing visitation, visitor spending and visitor length of stay resulting in the growth of tourism sales tax revenues. For fiscal year 2021, Experience Prince George's was awarded a grant of \$120,764.

As the County's official DMO, Experience Prince George's is funded through a part of the hotel-motel tax (excluding lodging at National Harbor). The agency's fiscal year 2021 budget was \$1,383,400. (Note: For fiscal year 2021, the governor's office supplied an additional \$3 million to support DMO marketing activities across the state to address the decline in visitation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.)

Experienceprincegeorges.com is a membership organization. Services provided to members include:

- Acting as an information clearinghouse for tourists, visitors and residents on accommodations, restaurants, attractions, recreation, event and meeting facilities, and events
- Promoting and distributing members' information on website, social media, visitors guide, newsletter, ExPGC (Experience Prince George's) app and other marketing tools

- Offering a "Featured" detailed listing on the website and in the visitor guide to display promotions, special events, packages and discounts linking directly to the member's website
- Offering cooperative advertising, sponsorship and exhibition opportunities Providing public relations and media exposure through familiarization tours and direct contact with local, regional and national publications
- Distributing members' brochures to state and county information centers, consumer travel and trade shows, conferences, meetings, and seminars
- Promoting members to potential groups and event professionals at local and national tradeshows and distributing leads and referrals to its members.

An additional resource is National Harbor, a 360-acre property including more than 160 shops, 40 restaurants and 2,000 rooms in eight hotels. The waterfront destination is located approximately 10 miles from Accokeek. Although not recognized as a DMO by the state, it operates its own tourism agency and retains hotel-motel tax revenue from lodging at the attraction. A representative of National Harbor serves on the board of Experience Prince George's. The Accokeek Foundation is a member of the National Harbor Convention and Visitors Association.



Pages from Experience Prince George's Destination Guide  
<https://www.experienceprincegeorges.com/explore/visitor-guide/>

# Maryland Heritage Areas and Heritage Tourism

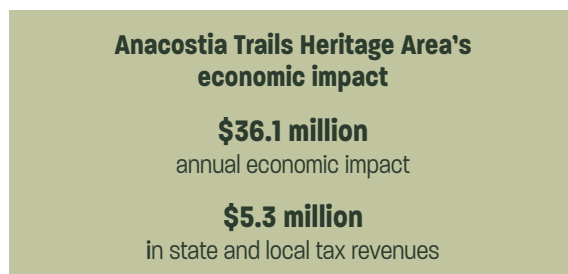
Soon, Accokeek will have an opportunity to be a part of two heritage areas: the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area (state certified) and the Southern Maryland National Heritage Area (emerging from the state-certified Southern Maryland Heritage Area).

The Maryland Heritage Areas Program is overseen by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority and administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. The Maryland Heritage Areas Program was created in 1996 to help communities use heritage tourism to strengthen their economies through the development, protection, and promotion of cultural, historical, and natural resources. The state's Program Open Space provides \$6 million in annual funding for the Maryland Heritage Areas Program. In 2019, approximately \$5.1 million was allocated in grants for heritage area staffing, marketing, and capital and non-capital projects statewide. Program Open Space is a land preservation program managed through the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Funds are generated by a transfer tax of 0.5 percent for every real estate transaction in the state.

The program supports 13 state-certified heritage areas and focuses on heritage tourism. Local partners within heritage areas may be eligible for a variety of benefits designed to support economic development through heritage tourism, including grants, tax credits and loans.

Each of Maryland's 13 certified heritage areas is defined by a distinct focus or theme. These distinctive places exhibit tangible evidence of the area's heritage in historic buildings and districts, archaeological sites, cultural traditions, natural landscapes, as well as other resources such as museums, parks, trails, and traditional lifeways. The uniqueness of each heritage area attracts not only out-of-state visitors, but locals who want to learn more about their heritage and take pride in their community's unique sense of place. A strategic plan for the state's heritage areas summarized work in three key areas: developing heritage tourism product, building partnerships, and sustaining regional identity.

In 2021, the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority released an economic impact study of the state's 13 certified heritage areas, providing an assessment of the total economic impact including employment and state and local revenues. The study found that collectively the state's 13 certified heritage area programs generated a \$2.4 billion economic impact in FY19.



4 *Maryland Heritage Areas Economic Impact Analysis, 2020, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority*

# Anacostia Trails Heritage Area Boundary Expansion Feasibility Study

Certified in 2001 by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA), the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area (ATHA) covers about 100 square miles in northern Prince George's County near US 1 and the Anacostia Tributary Trail System. The heritage area thematically links unique historical innovations, major community moments, and local tourism resources under the brand Maryland Milestones. ATHA, Inc., is a 501(c)3 organization with offices in Hyattsville. ATHA operates the Maryland Milestones Heritage Center that introduces visitors to the area through exhibits, art shows and information on attractions, places to stay and other trip-planning information. The heritage area currently includes the municipalities of Laurel, Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, Edmonston, Berwyn Heights, Bowie, Cheverly, Greenbelt, College Park, Mount Rainier, Hyattsville, Brentwood, North Brentwood, Riverdale Park, and the neighborhoods of University Park, Beltsville, and unincorporated areas in and around Glenn Dale.

In 2020, with funding support from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, ATHA undertook a study to consider a boundary amendment to potentially include sites and communities in southern Prince George's County. The study included multiple site and community visits, meetings with stakeholders

and elected officials, and assessment of the connections of sites to ATHA's interpretive themes. The study resulted in the identification of four cluster areas to be included in the potential boundary amendment. One of the cluster areas is Accokeek, Fort Washington, and Oxon Hill. The cluster area includes multiple sites with stories of Piscataway, African American, and women's history. Significant archaeological sites are in this area. The largest site in the area is Piscataway Park, which stretches for six miles from Piscataway Creek to Marshall Hall on the Potomac River. Also identified as resources in Accokeek are Hard Bargain Farm, the Moyaone Reserve and Christ Church. Although not a historic site, National Harbor is included in the inventory of resources as a source of visitor services and for its substantial number of visitors.

In the next phase, ATHA will update its management plan, interpretive plan, and marketing plan to include a larger boundary area. The new plan will include the expanded boundary area, revisit and update heritage area goals, revise interpretive themes, identify new partners, and revise the management structure and budget to accommodate a larger boundary.

# Southern Maryland National Heritage Area

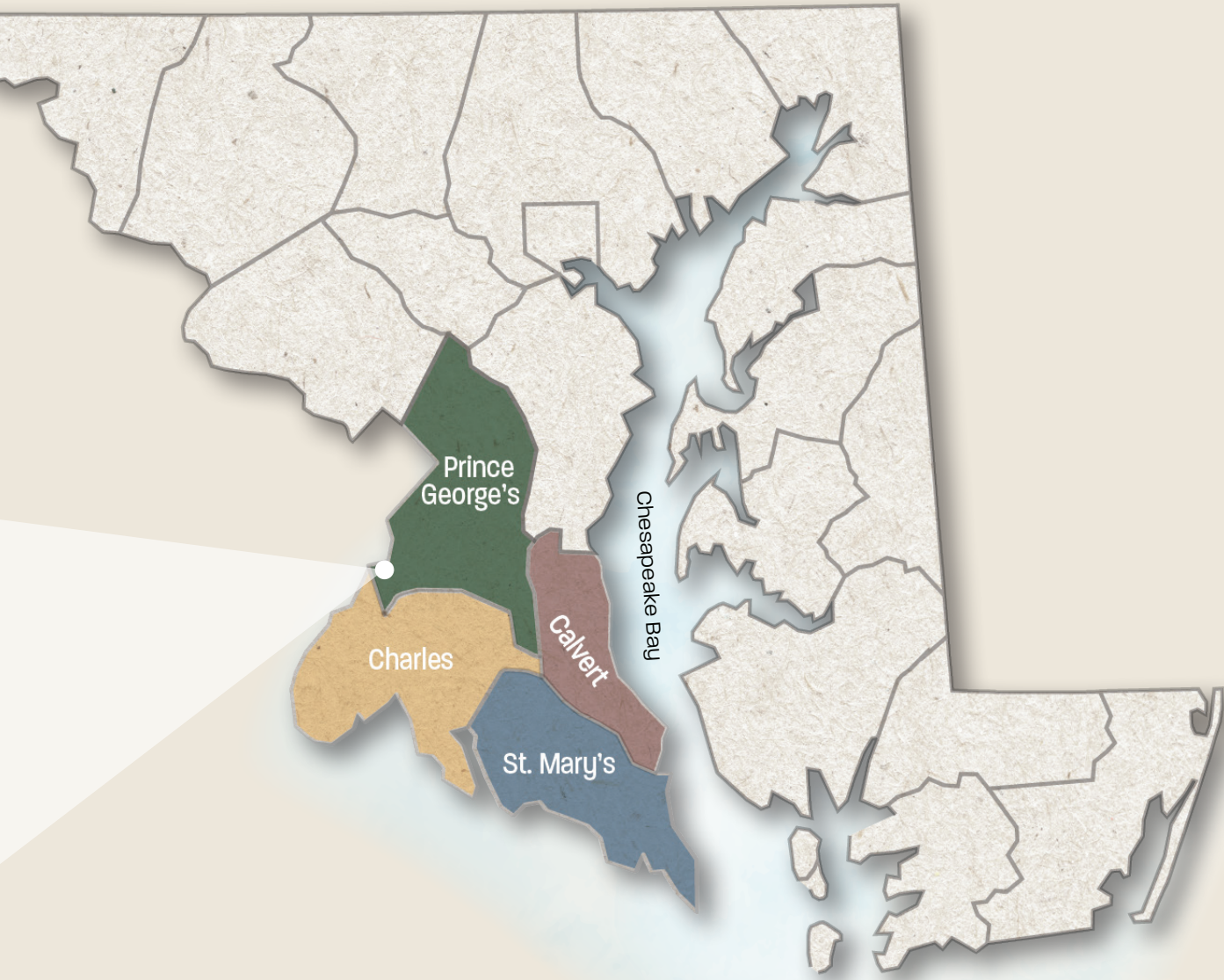
In 2004, Southern Maryland, including the counties of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's, was certified as a state heritage area. Operating with the public-facing name Destination Southern Maryland, and the marketing brand Where Time and Tide Meet, the foundation of the state heritage area's mission is "to enhance Southern Maryland through innovative heritage tourism experiences, comprehensive cultural and natural resource conservation, and excellence in educational opportunities."

In 2020, the state-certified Southern Maryland National Heritage Area under the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland initiated a feasibility study for designation as a National Heritage Area. The study area began with the three counties that currently make up the Southern Maryland Heritage Area—Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's. It was agreed by the program committee and in the first public meetings that southern Prince George's County should be included in the study area as the county's culture and history were strongly connected to Southern Maryland, including the resources found in Accokeek.

The Southern Maryland National Heritage Area Act was included in the 2022 year-end government spending bill and will be signed into law by President Biden.

## Map of Maryland Counties







**Icelandic Chickens at Piscataway Park**





**SECTION**  
**3**

**Accokeek's  
Heritage  
Tourism  
Resources**



Source: M-NCPPC

*Reviewing Accokeek's anchor heritage attractions and the current visitor experience is essential for developing the area's heritage tourism potential.*

### **Accokeek Foundation at Piscataway Park/Piscataway Park Visitor Center**

The Accokeek Foundation stewards a 200-acre section of Piscataway Park managed by the Accokeek Foundation in partnership with the National Park Service includes National Colonial Farm. The Accokeek Foundation is a nonprofit organization founded in 1957 as one of the nation's earliest land trusts. Among the foundation's early plans was establishment of a colonial farm and agricultural museum, which the foundation has managed since the early 1980s. In "Preservation and Partners: A History of Piscataway Park," (National Park Service administrative history, 2020) Janet A. McDonnell, PhD, states that annual overall visitation to the park is slightly less than 200,000 with an average of 25,000-30,000 annually at National Colonial Farm.

The site is open for scheduled days/ hours and there is no admission charge to walk through the property. The Accokeek Foundation works closely with the Piscataway Tribal representatives and community members and acknowledges the property as the Indigenous people's homeland. As [www.accokeek.org](http://www.accokeek.org) states, *"The Accokeek Foundation is located in Piscataway Park, within the traditional ancestral homelands of Piscataway People both past and present. We acknowledge and honor with gratitude the land and waterways, and the people who have stewarded this land throughout the generations."*

Plans are underway to develop new interpretive signage. The signage will replace existing signs that are worn and faded and will include information to tell a broader, more inclusive story of the site. Interpretive signs must have approval from the National Park Service and placement must meet required environmental standards for federal property.

**Accokeek Foundation's offerings, programs and engagement activities include:**



**COLONIAL FARM**

Visitors can take self-guided tours or a farm tour (offered periodically). School tours are presented as a time-travel experience and incorporate first-person interpretation of slavery on a tobacco farm along with environmental lessons. The farm includes a homestead, garden and barn. Interpretive signage is located throughout the site.



Source: M-NCPPC



**ECOSYSTEM FARM**

A community supported farm uses principles of sustainable agriculture and includes growing vegetables from heritage seeds.



Credit: accokeek.org



**EDUCATION**

Trained educators give educational programs and tours. Topics include heritage breeds, eco-time traveler, life in the colonial era, and others. Programs are geared to specific grade levels. An education building provides classroom space, kitchen facilities, and restrooms.



**FISHING PIER AND BOAT DOCK**

Access to water recreation is provided at no cost for fishing, boating and kayaking. Bait is sold at the visitor center.



**GARDEN**

The kitchen garden is in full production and growing culturally significant and heirloom seeds.



Source: M-NCPPC



## GROUP SERVICES

In addition to school programs, the Accokeek Foundation offers programs for corporate team building and facility rentals for community events, social gatherings, trainings, and meetings.



Source: M-NCPPC



## NATURE TRAILS

Seven themed trails take visitors through different areas of the park including along the Potomac River shoreline. All Piscataway Park trails including the Accokeek Connector Trail, are part of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail.



## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

A variety of special programs, described as small-scale demonstration programs, engage visitors. An example is the Fairy Trail. Intended as a whimsical way to experience the park, visitors can purchase a guidebook and map which leads them through the park's trail to learn about animals, birds, flora and fauna.



Source: M-NCPPC



## VISITOR CENTER

The center includes interpretive signage, an activity area for children, and mission-aligned merchandise such as apparel, books and other items, and restrooms.



Credit: accokeek.org



## HERITAGE BREEDS

Heritage breeds of cattle, hogs, sheep and chickens are also on the property. The foundation sells livestock to farmers who want to raise heritage breeds and sells wool fleece and fiber to artists.



## VOLUNTEERING

The foundation offers opportunities to volunteer including monitoring bluebird nest boxes, native plant revitalization/invasive plant management and shoreline cleanup. The most active volunteer group is the fiber arts club, Stitch 'n Time.

## Moyaone Sacred Site

The vision for telling the story of the Piscataway is described in the *Through Piscataway Eyes (TPE™) Master Plan 2016*: “...as Maryland’s own Indigenous people, we will shape the Native interpretive program—from conception to implementation to sustainable long-term management.” Development of the master plan, which was completed in 2016, was guided by a steering committee with representatives from the National Park Service, Piscataway Conoy Tribe, Piscataway Indian Nation, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, Maryland Historical Trust, Maryland Indian Tourism Association and the Southern Maryland Heritage Area.

The master plan outlines an interpretive framework that includes themes, story topics, places throughout the region where stories can be told, and an implementation plan. Target audiences identified for the *Through Piscataway Eyes* experience include cultural heritage travelers, educational visitors (school groups, youth organizations, life-long learners), area residents, recreational visitors and weekend explorers.

Five areas of focus were identified for initial implementation with anchor and satellite sites for each area. Focus Area #1 is **Accokeek Foundation at Piscataway Park** as an anchor site, and **Moyaone Sacred Site at Piscataway Park** as a satellite site. The plan notes that the area of Piscataway Park managed by the Accokeek Foundation provides an outdoor living history museum with visitor services including parking, a visitor center with gift shop, restrooms and picnic facilities and is open year-round from dawn to dusk with free admission.

The Moyaone Sacred Site (Accokeek Creek Site) is described as a highly significant ceremonial site located on 20 acres and managed by the National Park Service and the Alice Ferguson Foundation. The site includes the grave of Philip Sheridan “Turkey Tayac” Proctor, chief of the Piscataway. The site does not currently offer interpretive programming except for one interpretive panel entitled “First People and the Potomac.”

The *Through Piscataway Eyes Master Plan* recommends development of the TPE™ experience on Accokeek Foundation-managed property to share with visitors the Piscataway story and associated sites in the Upper Potomac area. The plan also recommends development of events and programs at the Ecosystem Farm. The master plan outlines a self-guided tour of the Moyaone Sacred Site with additional directional signage and an interpretive guidebook. The tour includes the Mockley Point Trail, the site of the Susquehannock Fort and Piscataway Creek Water Trail.

Since completion of the master plan, plans for four interpretive signs focused on the Piscataway story have been submitted to the National Park Service and are under review. Members of the Piscataway periodically give tours of the area and share stories of their history.



## Hard Bargain Farm

Hard Bargain Farm is owned and managed by the Alice Ferguson Foundation (AFF). The foundation, a nonprofit organization established in 1954, is named for Alice Ferguson, who purchased the property in 1922. The site is only open by appointment or public events. Hard Bargain Farm encompasses 330 acres of forests, wetlands, hills and shoreline. A variety of buildings are located throughout the site, including the Ferguson Farmhouse (right), barns, and the self-sufficient, sustainable Cafritz Environmental Education Center (a Living Certified building). In addition, two cabins offer bunkhouse-style overnight lodging. Each can accommodate up to 20 people.



Source: M-NCPPC

### Alice Ferguson Foundation's programs and engagement activities include:

- **Membership:** Five categories range from \$55 to \$1,000 with benefits in each category such as invitations to members-only events, special tours and designated space for gardening.
- **Special Events:** Events appeal to many interests including concerts in the amphitheater, guided bird watching walks, Yoga With Pigs and other activities.
- **Cleanups:** The commitment to environmental stewardship is seen in a regular schedule of clean up events along the Potomac River watershed.
- **Educational Programs:** Elementary, middle and high school programs focus on science and environmental stewardship. Day and overnight programs are offered.
- **Volunteering:** Volunteers can support the farm through trail maintenance, gardening, caring for animals, providing office support and other activities.
- **Group Services:** Corporate retreats and business meetings are often held at the site.

### Alice Ferguson Foundation's 2019-2023 strategic plan identifies four priority action areas:

- **ENGAGE:** Maximize opportunities for individuals, schools, partners and communities across the broader Potomac River Watershed to experience AFF programs and events.
- **EDUCATE:** Provide innovative, interactive and experiential programs/curricula that promote a sense of wonder about, respect for, and responsibility toward the natural world.
- **ACTIVATE:** Inspire attitudes, behaviors and policies that promote commitment and actions to preserve the natural world.
- **GROW AND SUSTAIN:** Position AFF's finances, people and infrastructure for success, impact and longevity.

Each area has objectives to accomplish the action. Although the focus is on science and environmental stewardship, one objective is to "Incorporate Culture/History: Drive engagement and program differentiation through highlighting unique cultural and historical elements of AFF."

## Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail

The 3,000-mile historic trail (extending from Cooperstown, New York to Suffolk Virginia) traces the voyages of Captain John Smith in 1607 and 1609 passes through Piscataway Park and the Potomac River. An interpretive sign for the trail at the park titled “Cherished Homeland” tells visitors: “This place has been the heart of the Piscataway people’s homeland for many centuries.” The sign includes pictures, maps and brief historical information and states “Piscataway people still live in this area and have strong ties to this land. They meet here for ceremonies and gatherings.”



Credit: NPS

## Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail

This trail offers opportunities for outdoor recreation and exploring the history of the Maryland, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania region, beginning at the mouth of the Potomac River at the Chesapeake Bay and terminating in the Allegheny Highlands of Pennsylvania. The trail includes more than 700 miles of existing and planned trails. In the Accokeek area, the trail takes the form of an on-road bicycling route on Livingston Road and Bryan Point Road, terminating at the Piscataway Park/Accokeek Foundation Visitor Center.



Credit: NPS



## Christ Church Accokeek and Charles A. Baldwin Grave



Source: M-NOPPC

Christ Church Accokeek (Prince George's County Historic Site 83-008) was established in 1698 by the Church of England. Christ Church is currently a congregation of the Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic of the Anglican Church in North America and a member of the worldwide Anglican Communion. Christ Church Accokeek is architecturally significant, displaying features from its two major periods of construction, 1744 and 1857. Construction of the church building began in 1747 and the church opened on January 1, 1748. On December 23, 1856, the brick chapel burned, leaving only the exterior brick shell. A reconstructed chapel was dedicated on June 18, 1857. The adjacent cemetery has been in use since the Revolutionary War. The oldest known burials are William R. Webster (1775), John Webster (1783) and Joanna Cox (1797).

Christ Church's cemetery is also the resting place of Charles A. Baldwin (1839-1911) a U.S. Navy coal heaver during the Civil War, who served on the USS Wyalusing. Baldwin was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for participating in a plan to destroy the Confederate ironclad CSS Albemarle in the Roanoke River in May 1864. "Volunteering for the hazardous mission, C.H. Baldwin participated in the transfer of two torpedoes across an island swamp. Weighted by a line which was used to transfer the torpedoes, he swam the river and, when challenged by a sentry, was forced to abandon the plan after erasing its detection and before it could be carried to completion. Escaping the fire of the muskets, C.H. Baldwin spent two days and nights of hazardous travel without food, and finally arrived, fatigued, at the mother ship." Following the war, Baldwin married and fathered a son. In the 1900 US Census, he was living in Washington, D.C. and his occupation is listed as ship's carpenter. In the 1910 US Census he was living in Piscataway on Accokeek Road. During World War II, the USS Baldwin (DD-624) was named in his honor. The warship was launched on June 14, 1942, commissioned on April 30, 1943, and decommissioned on June 20, 1946. The USS Baldwin was awarded three battle stars for her WWII service.

## Moyaone Reserve

The Moyaone Reserve is a 1,400-acre wooded, residential community situated in Piscataway Park and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Among the 189 dwellings are a variety of architectural styles including Victorian, Craftsman, Colonial revival and contemporary. Of predominant significance (more than 60 percent) are the Mid-Century Modern dwellings, many by architect Charles Wagner. Two of these are protected as Prince George's County Historic Sites.

The Moyaone Association is the volunteer-funded homeowner group established in the 1950s after founding residents Henry and Alice Ferguson donated portions of their farm and surrounding lands to the residents of the Moyaone Reserve in 1952. Today, the Moyaone Association is charged with preserving the Ferguson's legacy of land conversation through upkeep of the community's infrastructure: common buildings and grounds, public relations, resident relations, and roads. A home and garden tour is held periodically. A successful tour of nine homes was held in April 2022 and included music and a wine social. A new feature of the tour was an art show and sale sponsored by the Accokeek Arts Alliance.



Credit: M-NCPPC



Wagner House, 2015  
Credit: M-NCPPC

## Accokeek Artists Alliance

The Accokeek Artists Alliance is an all-volunteer organization of artists, writers and musicians and supporters of the arts. The mission is to enhance and invigorate the community through the arts. The Alliance has many activities including marketplaces and workshops. Recent events included an art show and sale as part of the Moyaone Reserve home tour, workshops in collaboration with the Accokeek Foundation's Latte with Lambs event, a silent auction at the Alice Ferguson Foundation's "Pinot on the Potomac" event, and art shows at the Moyaone Association's Wagner Community Center on Bryan Point Road. The Alliance's signature event is the yART (portmanteau of yard [sale] and art.) Sale held at Moyaone Association Commons. Artists are invited to set up tables to sell new or vintage art; art supplies; musical instruments, sheet music; fiber-arts materials; ceramics materials; jewelry, glass work and other art and art materials.



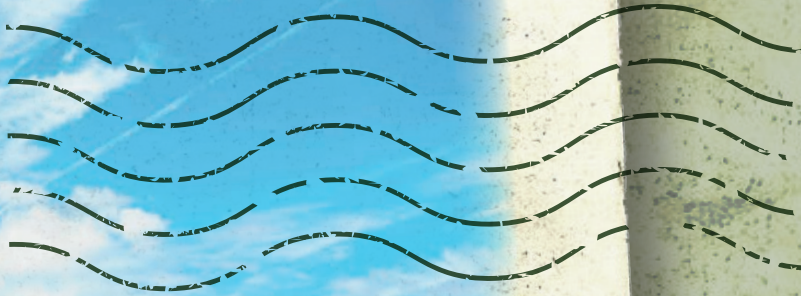
*Tired*, Alice L.L. Ferguson, ca. 1930s, Oil on panel  
Credit: Alice Ferguson Foundation



Photo of Alice Ferguson lounging and inspiration for *Tired* painting  
Credit: Alice Ferguson Foundation



**Shoreline at Piscataway Park**



**SECTION**  
**4**

**Accokeek's  
Potential for  
Heritage  
Tourism  
Development**





Credit: M-NCPPC

Accokeek's abundance of historic, cultural and natural resources, and the interest of leaders in sharing Accokeek with visitors through careful planning combine to create great potential for sustainable heritage tourism development. The strength of partnerships—and the willingness to forge new partnerships—will be the foundation of a successful and sustainable heritage tourism program. Accokeek's leaders are focused on the preservation and conservation of the community's irreplaceable resources and in ensuring a high quality of life for residents.



Tobacco garden at National Colonial Farm  
Credit: <https://www.accokeek.org/>

## Strengths

### Scenic Beauty

Travelers will be drawn from major highways to explore Accokeek's rural vistas and forested roadways. Scenic America, a nonprofit organization which advocates for the scenic conservation of communities, has recently formed a chapter in Prince George's County which offers an opportunity for new partnerships for Accokeek.

### Diverse History and Places

Accokeek's multiple layers of history—from the Piscataway homeland to European settlements, to agricultural practices, to the importance of the Potomac River for commerce, to the leadership of women in establishing Hard Bargain Farm, the Moyaone Reserve and Piscataway Park, to the more recent focus on conservation and stewardship of the land and recreational offerings—provide opportunities to engage visitors with a variety of interests. The many unique stories create an outstanding marketing opportunity to tell visitors they can have these experiences “only in Accokeek.”

### Appeal to Niche Markets

Accokeek has much to offer travelers with specific interests creating opportunities for new programs and promotions. Photographers will find unlimited opportunities to capture images of landscapes or historic structures, artists

will discover new settings to capture with their paint brushes, bird watchers will spot a wide variety of birds, and history buffs will explore historic sites to learn about Accokeek's history.

### Effective Tourism Partners

Experience Prince George's, the county's official Destination Marketing Organization, and the Maryland Office of Tourism, the state's tourism office, are agencies which provide research, programs and promotions in all areas of tourism development and marketing, and a network of partners in the County and state.

### Partnerships

Accokeek's leaders have developed strong partnerships with the Piscataway, staff at George Washington's Mount Vernon, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and others who share an interest in preserving the area's unique resources and sharing places and stories with visitors. Heritage Areas—Accokeek has an opportunity to be included within the boundaries of two heritage areas—the state-certified Anacostia Trails Heritage Area and the Southern Maryland National Heritage Area. The heritage tourism focus of both areas will expand opportunities for funding, programs and promotions for Accokeek.

### Proximity to Urban Areas and Growth of Outdoor Recreation Tourism

One of the key motivating factors for considering a rural destination is to experience a unique place— “what I can’t see or do anywhere else.” This desire aligns perfectly with the uniqueness of Accokeek. Located approximately 20 miles from Washington, D.C. and 60 miles from Baltimore, Accokeek is an easily accessible destination for a day trip. Although the COVID-19 pandemic had an extremely negative effect on the tourism industry, outdoor recreation activities grew during 2020. The *2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report* (Boulder: Outdoor Foundation, 2021), found “in 2020, 53 percent of Americans ages 6 and over participated in outdoor recreation at least once, the highest participation rate on record. Remarkably, 7.1 million more Americans took part in outdoor recreation in 2020 than in 2019.” The report noted that it is still to be seen if these trends will continue, however, outdoor recreation promoters are “positioned

to champion new ways to engage outdoor participants and invest in making the outdoors accessible and welcoming to all Americans.”



Kayaking event  
Credit: Alice Ferguson Foundation

## Challenges

### Gateway

Despite efforts over the years to improve the approach to the community, travelers still reach the major intersection in Accokeek with no sense of having arrived at a destination.

### Limited Accessibility

Accokeek has two anchor attractions: Piscataway Park/National Colonial Farm and Hard Bargain Farm. The park is open year-round with regularly scheduled hours (the visitor center is closed from December through mid-March). However, Hard Bargain Farm is only open by appointment unless a special event is scheduled, such as the recent concert at the amphitheater. The Moyaone Reserve is a nationally significant historic district of private homes which are only open to visitors for periodic tours. Tours focusing on Piscataway history given by Piscataway people can only be given when a volunteer is available.

### Limited Visitor Services

Food services and lodging are the top two spending categories by domestic and international travelers in the United States. The U.S. Travel Association’s U.S. Travel and Tourism Overview found that nationally, 2019 expenditures at restaurants, grocery stores and bars accounted for 25 percent of total traveler spending. Lodging, including hotels, motels, bed-and-breakfast establishments, vacation homes and campgrounds made up 22 percent of traveler spending. The most challenging obstacle to Accokeek’s development as a tourism destination is the lack of overnight accommodations, which limits the ability to encourage longer stays and to generate greater economic impact. Currently, lodging is found at Hard Bargain Farm which has two cabins which



Credit: M-NOPPC



can house 20 people each in bunk beds. There are several restaurants—take-out and fast-food—but currently no destination-worthy dining establishments.

#### **Promotion of Foundations**

Accokeek's two anchor attractions are managed by foundations—National Colonial Farm is managed by the Accokeek Foundation and Hard Bargain Farm is managed by the Alice Ferguson Foundation. Both sites are promoted as foundations—not destinations. Websites, collateral materials and signage all invite and welcome visitors to the foundation, not the site.

#### **Airplane Noise and Air Pollution Concerns**

Accokeek's proximity to Washington, D.C. also places the community near Ronald Reagan National Airport (DCA). Accokeek is in the direct flight path of DCA and therefore planes, and the accompanying noise, are seen and heard day and night. Flightpaths over Accokeek show a plane entering through the airspace every 30 minutes. During peak travel times, it has been observed that planes travel this airspace at a higher frequency, as often as every 30 seconds. The problems have been occurring for decades and continue to be an ongoing issue. The current situation dates to 2015 when the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) planned for the safe arrivals of planes from multiple directions, resulting in lining up flights from LaPlata to DCA—directly over Accokeek.

The Metropolitan Airport Authority's Citizens Working Group includes a representative from Prince George's County. The group, along with Maryland members of Congress, have urged the FAA to expand the number of flight paths to "share the noise."

#### **Piscataway Creek Pollution**

In addition, as described in the planning assistance request for this study, there are significant conservation needs: "Piscataway Creek was once a popular location for many outdoor recreational activities...Unfortunately, years of siltation as well as frequent overflows from the Piscataway Water Treatment Plan make the creek a less desirable location." A 2005 agreement between the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency required WSSC to monitor, report, and perform repairs for the sewer system including monitoring water quality. Stakeholders reported problems with water quality and the need to not only address these problems, but to inform visitors of exposure to health hazards. The issues of water and soil quality and safety must be addressed to not only ensure the quality of life for residents but to prevent a negative impression by potential visitors that Accokeek has water pollution.



## **THE SOUTHERN MARYLAND FAIR SKIES COALITION**

**The coalition was founded to seek solutions to decrease aircraft noise and air pollution south of DCA. It is endorsing the FAA's new Global Positioning System (GPS) approach procedure that is expected to provide some noise mitigation for communities, including Accokeek.**

**It should also be noted that the FAA is required to consider the impact on national or state historic sites when planning flight paths via Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (54 U.S.C. § 306108), as amended. Section 106 review is undertaken by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)—the Maryland Historical Trust.**

**<https://www.southernmarylandfairskiescoalition.com/>**

## Primary Themes/Stories

Heritage tourism themes serve as a guide in planning for exhibits, experiences, activities, programs and presentations; help identify target markets; shape marketing messages; and provide a foundation for training staff and volunteers. Common categories of heritage themes include Historic and Recent Events; Culture and Living Traditions, the Landscape, and Built Environment and/or Architectural Resources. This study identified four primary themes or stories that are currently part of the visitor experience and/or could be developed into new heritage tourism experiences using sub-themes:

### Accokeek History

- Piscataway—Indigenous homeland
- European Arrival and Impact
- Women's Leadership and Achievements
- Faith-Based Traditions
- American Civil War
- African American History

### Architecture

- Mid-Century Modern Dwellings and Land Conservation

### Arts and Artisans

- Creative Tourism and Historic Women Artists

### The Rural Landscape and Outdoor Experiences

- Birdwatching
- Bicycling
- Photographing/Viewing Nature
- Agritourism and Culinary Experiences
- Fishing
- Trails
- Boating/Kayaking



## Primary Recommendation: Special Interest Group Tourism

To develop and manage heritage tourism in Accokeek, the primary recommendation is to **prepare for a variety of special interest small groups, often referred to as niche markets**. Access to major attractions could limit successful heritage tourism efforts if not incorporated into the overall program approach.

### Why niche markets?

- The appointment-only accessibility of one of Accokeek's two major attractions, Hard Bargain Farm, prevents marketing through promotional formats aimed at individual travelers (families, couples, individuals).
- Moyaone Reserve is a nationally significant historic district of private homes which are only open to visitors for periodic home tours.
- Educational programs, participation in special events, and tours given focusing on Piscataway history are given by Piscataway people are currently given by Piscataway people on a volunteer basis.

Targeting niche markets is compatible with the goal of sustainable tourism as it focuses on attracting visitors who want to experience the unique and authentic attributes of Accokeek. The various subsets of sustainable tourism often attract small groups who are primarily interested in a specific activity (for example, photography or cycling) but who may enjoy a variety of activities. The same visitor might be an adventure tourist one day, enjoying a nature trail hike, and a heritage tourist the next day, exploring a museum. The existing offerings and programs provide an excellent foundation to develop new opportunities for special-interest groups.

# Benefits of Targeting Special Interest Visitor Groups



Allows targeted programming and marketing designed to get maximum results—especially important with limited budgets and staff.



Addresses carrying capacity concerns by controlling the size and number of groups, allowing for scheduling of staff and volunteers.



Ensures visitors have a strong interest in the topic (for example, photography, cycling, history) and a desire to participate in programs and activities.



Creates a system of control on site to know when visitors are coming, how long they will stay, and what their expectations are.



Source: M-NCPPC



Offers a defined tourism product which can be sold or promoted by partners such as the Maryland Office of Tourism, Experience Prince George's, and/or tour operators.



Generates economic impact by providing organized programming with a schedule of prices for tours, meals, programs, memorabilia, et cetera.



Provides a system to track which groups are most productive to prioritize marketing and to make the best use of funds and staff capacity.



Overlapping interests of niche market groups expands opportunities for programming and economic benefits.

# Heritage Tourism Roles, Organization and Options

As planning for heritage tourism moves forward, it will be essential to clearly identify the roles of all partners and to determine whether the current informal structure—a loose affiliation of partners who all have the same desire to see tourism develop—will continue or if establishing a formal organization is necessary.

The diversity of partners who participated in this heritage tourism study and who are committed to working together to build a heritage tourism program is a strong indicator of the potential for Accokeek’s success. For the near future, a small committee of leaders from this study could continue to represent Accokeek in implementing action steps in this report.

## HERITAGE TOURISM STRUCTURE OPTIONS

	FORMAL	INFORMAL
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visibility of an organization dedicated to Accokeek’s heritage tourism program</li> <li>• Ability to fundraise</li> <li>• Staff dedicated exclusively to heritage tourism development in Accokeek</li> <li>• Creates an “umbrella” for partner organizations to work within committee structures</li> <li>• Provides a clear point of contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bypasses process of obtaining and maintaining 501(c)3 status</li> <li>• Doesn’t require additional fundraising for staff</li> <li>• Continues operations in a format that partners are used to</li> </ul>
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires raising funds to pay staff and administrative costs</li> <li>• Paperwork to file for 501(c)3 and to maintain tax exempt status</li> <li>• Management of a new organization: creation of a board, bylaws, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No single organization is dedicated to the success of Accokeek’s heritage tourism program</li> <li>• No clear areas of responsibility for fundraising, marketing plan development, or memberships</li> </ul>



**Piscataway Park Entrance**



SECTION  
**5**

**Welcome to  
Accokeek**





Credit: M-NCPPC



# Approaches to Accokeek

MD 210 (Indian Head Highway), a north-south, four-lane, divided highway, is the major connecting road from Washington, D.C., where it can be accessed from exits on the Capital Beltway. From the south, the state highway begins in Charles County. Traveling north, the route passes through Accokeek, Fort Washington, Oxon Hill and Forest Heights, connecting to the Capital Beltway. In Accokeek, MD 210 intersects with MD 373 (Livingston Road.) MD 210 is classified as a principal arterial roadway by the Maryland Department of Transportation. An average of 48,000 cars travel on the road each day. Through Accokeek there is a consistent speed limit of 55 miles per hour with stop lights at the major intersections of Livingston Road and Farmington Road. There are currently no roadwork projects planned for this section of MD 210.

Other state highways are MD 228 (Berry Road) and MD 229 (Bensville Road). Beginning in Accokeek, MD 228 runs approximately seven miles to US 301 and MD 5 Business in Waldorf, a major commuter route from southern Prince George's County. MD 229 extends from Charles County into Prince George's County, terminating at MD 228 in Accokeek.

Several local roads also pass through or are adjacent to the Accokeek community including Manning Road, Farmington Road, Menk Road, Bryan Point Road, Old Marshall Road, Wharf Road, and Accokeek Road.

The corridors of MD 210 (Indian Head Highway) and the other main roads of Accokeek are lined with oak and pine forests with a profusion of invasive plants along the main corridors. A recent planting project of slower-growing oaks and fast-growing tulip poplars will create a healthy canopy and understory and strengthen the buffer along MD 210 near Livingston Road. Successional plantings like these are the best ways to ensure a healthy reforestation effort.

The density and uninterrupted size of the forests of Accokeek have the potential to hold high wildlife value as the minimally fragmented forest has proximity to urban areas, making this an important migratory stopping point and habitat for year-round resident wildlife. A majority of this corridor is forested, except for major intersections, at which are found gas stations, fast-food restaurants and auto-repair shops. Along the corridor, all median strips are in good repair and are well maintained by the Maryland State Highway landscaping crews.

The intersection of MD 210 (Indian Head Highway) and MD 373 (Livingston Road) is the arrival point to Accokeek. The roadway and intersection are in good condition; well-paved with clearly marked crosswalks, sufficient traffic lights and turn-lane signs. Along MD 210 leading to the intersection, landscaping includes trees and flowering bushes. However, travelers arrive at this major Accokeek intersection with no sense of having arrived at a destination. A brown National Park Service/Maryland sign approximately 500 feet west of the intersection directing visitors to Piscataway National Park and Colonial Farm Museum is the only indication that visitor experiences could be enjoyed nearby.

The Greater Accokeek Civic Association has been active for many years in improving the community's entrance. The association has planted thousands of trees and plants along MD 210, installed a crosswalk, reclaimed the abandoned Maryland State Park and Ride lot, and requested red light cameras to control speeding. The association has also sponsored clean-up days. A landscape design schematic includes a wide variety of plants to beautify MD 210 including crape myrtle, daffodils, daylilies, purple cone flowers, Black-eyed Susans, and others.

Every two years, NEA seeks rural communities of 50,000 people or fewer to apply for the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) program. The next opportunity to apply is early 2023. As described by CIRD: "Design workshops bring together residents and local leaders from non-profits, community organizations, and government to develop actionable solutions to a specific

design challenge. Workshops are facilitated by CIRD's experienced resource team members in partnership with and driven by local people who are deeply invested in their community." Gateway or entrance feature concepts are also eligible for funding by the Prince George's County Planning Department's PAMC (Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities) program.

## **ACTION STEP W1: Develop a Gateway Plan**

It has long been observed that MD 210 divides Accokeek into two parts, and, in some respects, into two communities.<sup>5</sup> For example, the majority of the approximately 7,000 acres to the northwest of the highway is either zoned AG (Agricultural and Preservation) or ROS (Reserved Open Space), while there are only 142 acres of ROS southwest of it, and no AG-zoned lands. Considering this aspect, it was determined by residents that the highway could not be reimagined as Accokeek's "main street." Nevertheless, MD 210 has a major visual impact on Accokeek's landscape. With that in mind, a shift in mindset is suggested: to not consider MD 210 as a divider but instead to focus on the highway as a gateway to Accokeek. From this perspective, MD 210 and the intersection with MD 373 (Livingston Road) presents an opportunity to communicate to visitors that they have arrived at a special place and that their presence is welcome.

Gateways provide information by directing visitors to areas of interest and providing clues to the historical, cultural and economic foundation of a community. Visitors assess the landscape (Is it scenic or trash-strewn? Are there subdivisions or rolling hills?), vegetation (Are there trees or is it barren?), and the overall sense of welcome (Is there a sign or not? Is it attractive? Is it distinctive or standard?). A "gateway" as envisioned for Accokeek would take the form of understated landscape and signage elements that are compatible with Accokeek's character.

A gateway signage system helps to improve the overall appearance of the streetscape, while adding to the safety of visitors. Signage should have a uniform look to help create a sense of place. Accokeek leaders should investigate the potential to apply for gateway planning assistance from the Citizens Institute on Rural Design (CIRD). The Institute is a leadership initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Housing Assistance Council.

<sup>5</sup> In 2003 GACA was awarded a Neighborhood Improvement Grant from the Redevelopment Authority (RDA) of Prince George's County to reclaim and beautify the site of the abandoned Park and Ride in Accokeek, located in the right-of-way at the northeast side of the intersection of MD 373 (Livingston Road) and MD 210 (Indian Head Highway). The old Park and Ride was abandoned when the current Park and Ride was created next to the Accokeek Branch Library (15773 Livingston Road). The old site became a magnet for trash and abandoned vehicles. The scope of work as described in the grant included "Recovery & Maintenance: Curb and gutter removal, pavement removal, silt fence, topsoil, seeding and mulching, stabilize construction entrance; planting and landscaping: install various trees, mulch; remove light poles. SHA was to finalize the landscape design, coordinate acquisition of plant material, and secure a qualified contractor. The scope of work included a component that was never undertaken: the installation of a Community Gateway Sign. GACA worked closely with the Office of Environmental Design, MDOT, the MDOT Upper Marlboro shop, and the RDA in carrying out the grant and reclaiming the area.

## Destination Signage

Signage throughout Accokeek informs visitors that attractions are closed to the public, that many roads are private and driving on them is trespassing. Although the primary recommendation of this study is to develop and package experiences for small, pre-scheduled groups, it is still necessary to create a welcoming atmosphere for these groups. Welcoming signage can inform other visitors about the opportunities for groups to visit.



Credit: M-NCPPC

### **ACTION STEP W2:** Inventory and Revise Signage at Destinations

Take an inventory of existing signage and identify “closed” signs at Hard Bargain Farm. As budgets permit, create and install new signs reading “We Welcome Pre-Scheduled Groups: To find out more scan....” Include a simple URL, phone number and QR Code to take potential visitors to a website that provides information about the various small group tour experiences that can be scheduled. At Piscataway Park, place larger signs identifying the Visitor Center (the study tour team did not realize it was a visitor center until entering the building) and directional signs leading to the center. The visitor center sign could include the same QR Code leading to the website with information about small group experiences. Because Moyaone Reserve is a private neighborhood, it is understood that signs must inform the public not to trespass. Information on the home tour and small group tours could be included when visitors follow the QR Codes to websites at Hard Bargain Farm and Piscataway Park.



## **National Colonial Farm Tour**



**SECTION**  
**6**

**Documentation,  
Planning, and  
Programs**



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“When the historical complexity of a place is not fully represented in public documents like National Register nominations, the characteristics associated with its unrecognized history may be put at risk or even lost.”<sup>6</sup>

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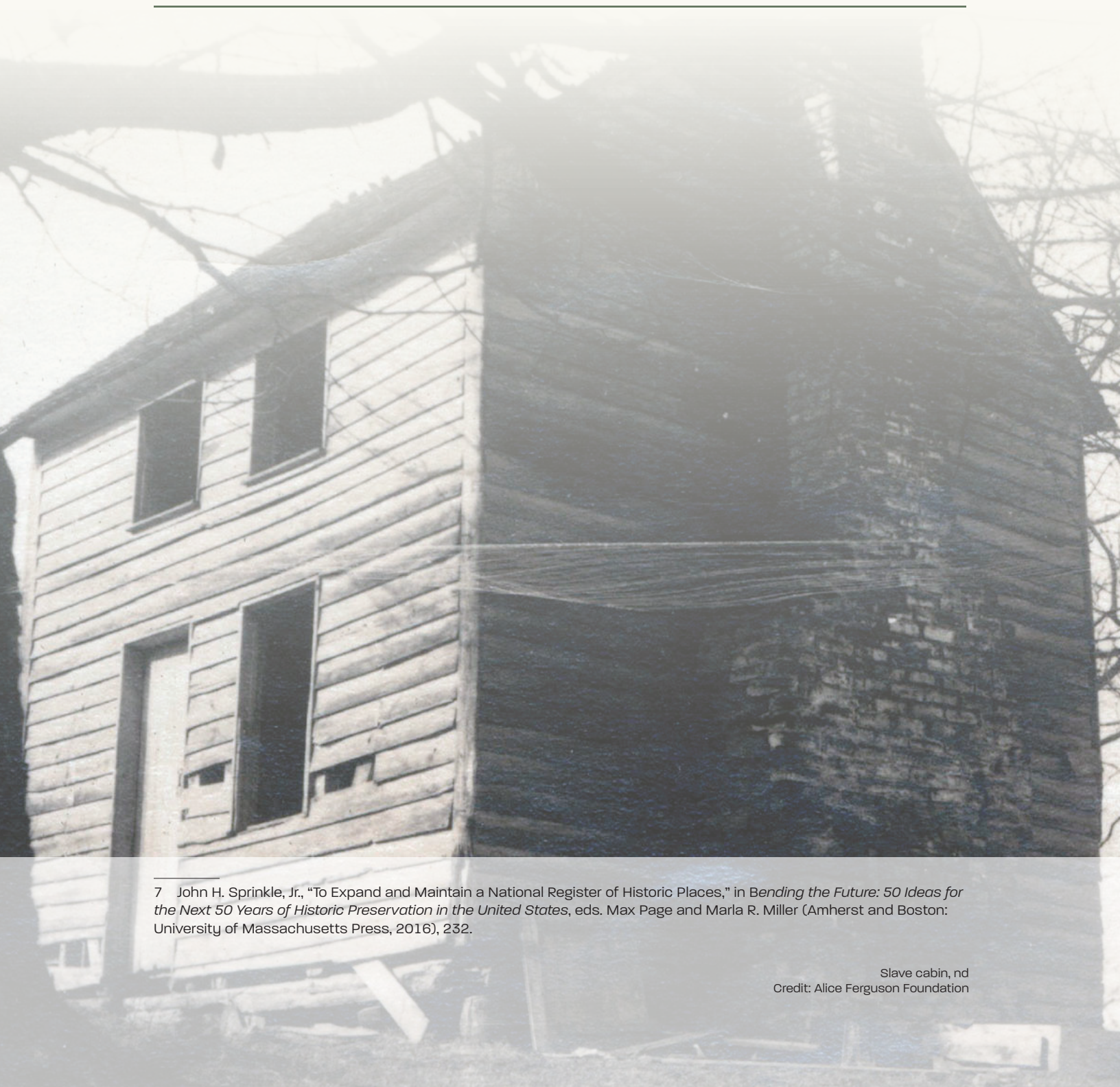


6 Kautz, S., Leibowitz, R., and Doherty, J. (n.d.). Repairing national register nominations: Underrepresented communities and integrity. National Council on Public History. Retrieved October 13, 2022, from <https://ncph.org/history-at-work/repairing-national-register-nominations-underrepresented-communities-and-integrity/>

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“No one would expect a history textbook from the 1960s to reflect the current narrative of American history without significant revision, but the fact is that only 3 percent of the ninety thousand listings in the National Register have even been updated for content.”<sup>7</sup>

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7 John H. Sprinkle, Jr., “To Expand and Maintain a National Register of Historic Places,” in *Bending the Future: 50 Ideas for the Next 50 Years of Historic Preservation in the United States*, eds. Max Page and Marla R. Miller (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016), 232.

## Federal: The National Register of Historic Places

**Piscataway Park** was established for the protection of the **Mount Vernon Viewshed**, home of President George Washington, and a National Historic Landmark. A strong partnership between the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association and the Accokeek Foundation has been important in the

success of this goal. Mount Vernon's staff confirmed that the park has secured the viewshed against major threats, but the work continues to monitor future developments along the Potomac River that are not within the grounds of Piscataway Park.



Dedication Ceremony for Piscataway Park, 1968  
/ to r: Frances Bolton, Chief Turkey Tayac, Belva Jensen, Robert Ware Straus, Rosamond Bierne, Gladys Spellman, and Hervey Machen  
Credit: NPS; PISC-24344 Image # 2509



**The Moyaone Reserve National Register Historic District** encompasses approximately 1,320 acres in Prince George's and Charles' counties: "The historic district which comprises primarily single-family houses situated on large, wooded lots, is located entirely within Piscataway Park....Within the district are 189 single-family houses, most dating after 1945; around 50 undeveloped parcels, including a 29-acre tract of protected marshland owned by the Alice Ferguson Foundation; and the Wagner Community Center...." Response to development pressures began in the 1950s with deed restrictions and covenants required in property purchases to control density, preserve the area's rural character, protect tree canopy, and prohibit incompatible land use. Residents also formed the Accokeek Foundation to partner with the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association to establish Piscataway Park. Properties within the reserve are bound by scenic easements held by the National Park Service. The National Register nomination

states that the district is significant at the national level for the period 1945 to the present in conservation for its role in the protection of the viewshed from Mount Vernon. The nomination also states that the district is significant for the period 1900-1958 for community planning and development that protects natural resources. The district is also significant for its domestic architecture in the period of 1946-1976 with dwellings featuring outdoor-indoor interpenetration that are in harmony with the landscape. Largely honorary, the designation does offer some protection in the review of state and federal undertakings that could affect the district, via Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.



Sign designating the Moyaone Reserve as a National Register of Historic Places site  
Wikimedia Commons  
Contributor: Sorendayton

**ACTION STEP D1: Update Piscataway Park National Register Nomination**

The National Register of Historic Places nomination for Piscataway Park, completed in 1979, does not recognize the land as the homeplace of the Piscataway. The nomination focuses on the viewshed to Mount Vernon and states the areas of significance are conservation and scenic protection: "Piscataway Park is principally significant for its role in maintaining the historic vista across the Potomac River from Mount Vernon." Today's National Register nominations identify additional areas of significance including Native American history. It is recommended that the National Register nomination for Piscataway Park be updated to include the following considerations:

- Period of significance—The existing nomination notes 1700-1799 and 1900 onward.
- An inventory of all structures on the property with assessments of integrity and whether they are contributing buildings, with special focus on National Colonial Farm.
- Photographic documentation of the property including landscape and structures.

# State: The Maryland Historical Trust

The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), Maryland Department of Planning, maintains the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, a database of information on districts, buildings and archaeological sites throughout the state. The inventory is for documentation purposes and does not convey protection. There are 65 entries for

Accokeek. Many were completed decades ago and the amount of information varies. MHT's Preserve Maryland II, The Statewide Preservation Plan 2019-2023, includes objectives specific to each region of the state. (Prince George's County is included in the Southern Maryland region.) Goals and objectives relevant to Accokeek's heritage tourism efforts include:

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES
<b>Connect with Broader Audiences</b>	Enhance opportunities for residents, particularly youth, to experience and learn local heritage	Develop oral history programs, utilizing young people, particularly related to African American heritage
		Produce online interpretation and paddling maps to enhance the visitor experience
<b>Improve the Framework of Preservation</b>	Expand outreach and training programs to increase participation in and knowledge of preservation	Increase outreach efforts for existing programs (e.g., tax credits, commission trainings)
<b>Expand and Update Documentation</b>	Research and document historic properties and cultural sites significant to recreational heritage and agricultural heritage	Collaborate on documentation of waterfront communities
		Collaborate to prioritize areas for research and seek funding for documentation
<b>Build Capacity and Strengthen Networks</b>	Ensure inclusion of Native American interests in networks and preservation strategies	Promote the implementation of <i>Through Piscataway Eyes</i>
<b>Collaborate Toward Shared Objectives</b>	Enhance the ability of historic preservation to promote public health and education	Collaborate on the development and implementation of nature-based recreational activities
	Identify and pursue opportunities to protect and enhance the rural character of the region	Develop technical assistance for protecting and enhancing historic roads (e.g., case studies, guidance documents)

## ACTION STEP D2: Expand and Update Documentation of Historic Properties and Sites

New research can provide opportunities for interpretation. Working with County and state historic preservation research and survey staff, identify documentation in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties that needs updating or expansion, and undertake research for previously undocumented resources.

## ACTION STEP D3: Take Advantage of the Statewide Preservation Plan

Use the statewide preservation plan's relevant goals, objectives and strategies to support action steps and secure funding for initiatives. Engage with MHT when the plan is updated.

## County: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

The **Accokeek Development Review District Commission (ADRDC)** reviews and provides comments on applications for subdivision of land within the Accokeek Road Corridor boundaries. ADRDC members are appointed by the county executive. The commission comments on property proposals brought before the zoning hearing examiner, Planning Board or District Council. The ADRDC considers issues including safety, environmental concerns, traffic impact, protecting the viewshed on the Potomac River, and compatible development that respects Accokeek's history while not inhibiting appropriate growth. The Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance now requires developers to hold a Pre-Application Neighborhood Meeting about proposed development applications (Section 27-3402.) These meetings can become an important venue for influencing development.

The **2013 Approved Subregion 5 Master Plan**, prepared by M-NCPPC, Prince George's County Planning Department, includes policies to support historic preservation and heritage tourism. Other related M-NCPPC publications include the **2012 African American Historic and Cultural Resources of Prince George's County** and the **2010 Approved Prince George's County Historic Sites and Districts Plan**.

The inventory database for the plan identifies 83 properties in Accokeek. The Planning Department's PAMC (Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities) program offers funding for non-capital planning activities.

**The Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)**, with members appointed by the County Executive, is responsible for administering the county's preservation ordinance and preservation tax credit program. The HPC oversees two grant programs: the **Prince George's Historic Property Grant Program** helps fund rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, or acquisition of historic property. Capital grants from the program are designed to preserve, protect and enhance historic properties; encourage others to preserve, protect and enhance historic properties; and promote interest in, and the study of, historic properties. The **Prince George's County Non-Capital Grant Program** supports projects that identify, preserve, promote and protect the historic, cultural, and archaeological resources for the benefit of the public and to encourage the revitalization of communities.

### **ACTION STEP D4:** Ensure Heritage Tourism is Included in Future Approved County Plans

When master and sector plans and functional master plans such as the Historic Sites and District Plan are updated, work with County staff to include polices and strategies that incentivize and promote heritage tourism in Accokeek.

## Local: Accokeek and Alice Ferguson Foundations

The **Accokeek Foundation's** mission is to “cultivate a passion for the natural and cultural heritage of Piscataway Park and commitment to stewardship and sustainability.” Originally formed to advocate for the establishment of Piscataway Park, the foundation is a partner of the National Park Service in stewarding 200 acres of the park. The Accokeek Foundation manages **National Colonial Farm**, a historic farm museum created in 1958. The farm includes recreations of a late eighteenth-century dwelling, tobacco barn and kitchen. The property includes vegetable gardens, walking trails, barns, and heirloom livestock.

**Hard Bargain Farm**, managed by the **Alice Ferguson Foundation**, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The property includes 47 contributing structures (25 of them buildings). The landscape is equally significant, as described in the National Register nomination: “The property is distinguished by its diversity of terrain, which includes steeply rolling hills, heavy forest growth, agricultural fields, and landscaped gardens. Further, overlooking the confluence of the Potomac River and Piscataway Creek, Hard Bargain Farm has an unparalleled viewshed that includes Virginia’s Mount Vernon Estate, Alexandria, Virginia, and downtown Washington, D.C..”

### **ACTION STEP D5:** Prepare a Historic Context Statement for Accokeek

A community’s sense of place is grounded in the built environment and landscape—elements that make it unique and reflect the area’s past and present. An equally important contributor to a community’s sense of place is thorough and accurate research and documentation. Each publication in the bibliography tells part of the history of Accokeek, from the area’s homeland of the Piscataway to settlement by Europeans, to farmsteads, the development of the Moyaone Reserve, to recent planning for conservation, preservation and development. Although these documents are critical resources for understanding Accokeek’s history, none tell the full story, and some are incomplete or obsolete. A new narrative is needed that includes the story of the Piscataway, the leadership of women who led the effort to save this land, the formation of the Accokeek Foundation and development of National Colonial Farm.

To effectively plan for heritage tourism in Accokeek, an accurate, comprehensive historic context statement is needed. Historic context statements tell the history of an area, the contributions of a particular person or people to local, state or national history and/or the importance of a particular architectural style or period or resource type, such as bridges or agricultural properties. Historic context statements typically include archival research and a reconnaissance or intensive level survey. These reports are used for a variety of purposes including evaluating the historic significance of a resource for designation, preservation planning, educational programming, increasing public awareness, fundraising, and interpretive planning.

The Maryland Historical Trust offers grant funding of up to \$75,000 through the Historic Preservation Non-Capital Grant Program. Nonprofits, state government and local jurisdictions may apply. Grants require a dollar-for-dollar cash or in-kind match. Funding is also available through the Maryland Historical Trust through the Certified Local Government Program. Grants are usually between \$5,000 and \$15,000 and do not require a match. PAMC program funding may also be an option.

## **ACTION STEP D6:** Prepare a Cultural Landscape Report for Accokeek

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“Cultural landscapes are landscapes that have been affected, influenced, or shaped by human involvement. A cultural landscape can be associated with a person or event. It can be thousands of acres or a tiny homestead. It can be a grand estate, industrial site, park, garden, cemetery, campus, and more. Collectively, cultural landscapes are works of art, narratives of culture, and expressions of regional identity. —The Cultural Landscape Foundation

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Building on the historic context statement, a cultural landscape report (CLR) will assess Accokeek’s current landscape. The National Park Service undertakes cultural landscape studies for parks to provide information for management decisions and compliance with preservation law and maintenance, assist in determining appropriate treatment and support interpretive programs

At its website [nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov), the National Park Service describes cultural landscape reports as “Typically interdisciplinary in nature, the CLR includes documentation, analysis, and evaluation of historical, architectural, archaeological, ethnographic, horticultural, landscape, architectural, engineering, and ecological data. It analyzes the landscape’s historical development, evolution, modifications, materials, construction techniques, geographical context, and use in all periods. Based on the analysis, it makes recommendations for treatment consistent with the landscape’s significance, condition, and planned use.”

A cultural landscape study and report for Accokeek will provide the opportunity to collate the many resources for preservation and conservation, to understand the current threats to Accokeek’s unique sense of place, and to serve as the foundation of a holistic community-wide cultural landscape preservation and conservation plan. In addition, individual sites may be identified that will require site-specific preservation plans.



**Laurel Branch House, Piscataway Park**



**Accokeek  
Heritage  
Tourism  
Themes**

These themes have potential for development and promotion for Accokeek. Although many of the activities are currently dependent on

volunteers, experiences can be packaged and sold to generate income and create jobs for the organizations.

## Accokeek History

The stories of Accokeek reflect those of Indigenous peoples who revered their homelands as sacred, the arrival of Europeans and establishment of a new nation, the enslavement and emancipation of African Americans, the role of faith-based beliefs and traditions in shaping a culture, women's leadership in early nature conservation and preservation movements, and others. Many of these stories are currently interpreted at Piscataway Park, National Colonial Farm and Hard Bargain Farm

through educational programs, interpretive signage, publications and websites. The experiences that can be offered to visitors related to Accokeek's history embody the interests of cultural heritage travel and have clear implications for positive economic impact. Studies over the past three decades have consistently shown that people who want to experience culture and heritage are frequent travelers who spend more than general leisure travelers.

## Piscataway–Indigenous Homeland

### **ACTION STEP T1:** Implement Through Piscataway Eyes Master Plan

Implementation should be led by Piscataway leaders with support from the Accokeek Foundation, Alice Ferguson Foundation, the National Park Service and other partners.

### **ACTION STEP T2:** Develop Piscataway-Led Group Tours

Led by Piscataway interpreters, the tours would share the history and stories of the homeland. Tours should be priced to include appropriate payment for Piscataway interpreters and to support further interpretive development.

### **ACTION STEP T3:** Join AIANTA

The **American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA)** was founded in 1998 by tribes for tribes to address inequities in the tourism system. AIANTA provides training, research and technical assistance to American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian communities engaged in tourism. AIANTA works to create awareness and interest in visiting and experiencing authentic Native destinations. AIANTA's publication, *Cultural Heritage Tourism: A Planner for Indigenous Professionals*, is a helpful resource for planning. AIANTA also maintains a consumer-focused website <https://nativeamerica.travel/> with maps, itineraries, and information about travel destinations.



## European Arrival and Impact

European arrival and impact is interpreted at National Colonial Farm. Additional opportunities are discussed under Agritourism and Culinary Expressions

### **ACTION STEP T4:** Promote National Colonial Farm's New Interpretive Signage

New interpretive signs have been developed and are under review by the National Park Service. When installed they can provide opportunities for revitalized tour activity.

## Women's Leadership and Achievements

The leadership of Alice Ferguson, Congresswoman Francis P. Bolton, and the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association represent the importance of women's leadership in Accokeek's historic preservation and conservation movements of the early- to mid-twentieth century. Although their importance is reflected in the names of some organizations, the stories are currently shared only through minimal interpretive signage and markers. The role of women in these movements across the country—and particularly in the northeast and south—is

significant and has been unheralded. As programs and tour packages are developed for Moyaone Reserve, National Colonial Farm/Piscataway Park and Hard Bargain, an emphasis on the stories of these women leaders should be incorporated. The work of sculptor Lenore Thomas Straus (1908-1988), could also be explored and interpreted (Straus and her husband, Robert Ware Straus, lived at 1611 Bryan Point Road in a Moyaone Reserve house designed for them by Charles M. Goodman c. 1941.).

### **ACTION STEP T5:** Develop Women's History-Based Tours

A potential partner for tours focused on women's history is [A Tour of Her Own](#), a Washington D.C.-based tour company exclusively for women's history. Tours currently focus on Washington, D.C., but the company also provides customized tours. The proximity of Accokeek to this market could lend itself to expansion. Another potential partner might be the Maryland [Women's Heritage Center](#).

Lenore Thomas sculpture, *Mother and Child*, 1939  
Credit: M-NCCPC





Credit: M-NCCPC



Credit: M-NCCPC

## Christian Traditions

Historic Christ Church Accokeek and its cemetery tell important stories of Accokeek's settlement and faith through three centuries.



Credit: M-NCCPC

### **ACTION STEP T6:** Extend the Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway into Accokeek

The church is one of many historic churches in Prince George's County and can be linked to the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area's interpretive themes "Religion and Early Churches" and "The Geography of Conflict: Civil War." Upon designation as a National Heritage Area, the Southern Maryland National Heritage Area will extend into southern Prince George's County. The heritage area's current boundaries encompass the Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway. The byway travels through Charles and St. Mary's Counties on US 301 and MD 5. Pending National Heritage Area designation, consideration could be given to extending the byway into southern Prince George's County to include Christ Church and other historic churches. The byway's corridor management plan includes recommendations for interpretation and promotion. Experience Prince George's offers opportunities to promote to groups through [Going on Faith](#) to reach travelers seeking an experience that may include attending a service.

## American Civil War

Christ Church Accokeek can be linked to the Anacostia Trails Heritage Areas interpretive theme “The Geography of Conflict: Civil War.”

The cemetery is the burial place of Union Civil War veteran Charles H. Baldwin who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

### ACTION STEP T7: Install a Charles A. Baldwin Grave Interpretive Sign

Baldwin’s story is worthy of an interpretive sign that could be installed via [Civil War Trails](#), Inc. Civil War Trails is a major tourism program that attracts a wide audience. The nonprofit organization was founded in 1994 and interprets more than 1,200 sites in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Pennsylvania. Civil War Trails, Inc. produces 15 map-guide brochures that are distributed at travel centers, historic sites, and other locations. A GPS-based interactive map is available on the organization’s website. The organization’s research shows an increased interest in road trips to rural places and outdoor destinations and that the Civil War-interest tourism market is continuing to grow. A guidebook provides the steps for creating a sign including content development, costs, maintenance agreements and the approval process.

## African American History

In 1848, more than 70 enslaved people attempted to escape from Washington, D.C. by sailing south on the Potomac River, north up the Chesapeake Bay and Delaware River to freedom in New Jersey. After sailing on the Potomac in adverse weather, they were

captured near Point Lookout, Maryland. The story is told at the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park in Massachusetts but is not at Point Lookout State Park in Maryland.

### ACTION STEP T8: Interpret the Pearl Incident

Pending designation as a National Heritage Area, the Southern Maryland National Heritage Area could facilitate a partnership between Point Lookout State Park and the Accokeek Foundation to place interpretive signage and to develop collateral materials to interpret this story. This interpretive project would contribute to one of the “Big Four” goals of the Maryland Office of Tourism to be “The Most Powerful Underground Railroad Storytelling Destination in the World.” This project could also potentially become a part of the National Park Service’s Network to Freedom. The program offers grants to support research and preparation of [Network to Freedom](#) applications for historic sites, programs, or facilities.



Daguerreotype of Mary (standing) and Emily Edmonson (seated), shortly after they were freed in 1848  
Credit: wikicommons.org

# Architecture

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“What makes this a unique style is the amassing of various elements under a rubric of efficiently constructing modern, designed homes so that middle class families could live in a work of art.

—John Klopf, AIA

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## Mid-Century Modern Dwellings and Land Conservation

Mid-Century Modern Architecture emerged in the 1940s following World War II, and continued into the 1970s. The style has surged in popularity in recent years. The relative scarcity and therefore fragility of the future of Mid-Century Modern dwellings has been a catalyst for lovers of the style to rally and advocate for an understanding and appreciation of their importance. This has taken several forms: documenting these resources (as in the case of listing the Moyaone Reserve in the National Register of Historic Places), purchasing properties and protecting them with local ordinances and/or preservation easements (as is the case with two houses in the Moyaone Reserve), and inviting others to experience them through tours and publications.

The Moyaone Reserve Association's successful homes tour has terrific opportunity for growth, dependent upon the desires of homeowners and their willingness

to continue opening their homes to visitors. The neighborhood's unique history and resources, its recognized significance through its National Register listing, and its easy access from major urban cities, position the neighborhood to grow this visitor experience. In 2022, the home tour expanded the experience to include the Accokeek Arts Alliance's art show sale as well as offering music and a wine social. This is an excellent example of the type of tour package that can attract cultural heritage travelers, particularly those with an interest in Mid-Century Modern architecture.

Land conservation, including the efforts of Robert Ware Straus, Charles Wagner and the Fergusons as part of the development of the Moyaone should be incorporated into interpretation to connect the built environment and the landscape for visitors.

Wagner House, drafting table in guest house. nd.  
Credit: M-NCPPC Archives, courtesy Holiday Wagner

### **ACTION STEP T9: Join USModernist**

A resource that can be a valuable partner to the Moyaone Reserve Association is [USModernist.org](https://usmodernist.org), based in Durham, North Carolina.<sup>8</sup> Membership is \$120 annually. The nonprofit 501(c)3 organization offers several resources including curated modernist home tours and events. The Moyaone Reserve Association could investigate the opportunity to promote the home tour through this channel which would reach an audience with a strong interest in Mid-Century Modern architecture. USModernist's Educational Archive contains profiles on architects and documentation on more than 15,000 houses. Information on the Moyaone Reserve and architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr. could be added to this archive. US Modernist's weekly newsletter informs members of upcoming tours and events. [Docomomo-dc.org](https://docomomo-dc.org) is another regional association dedicated to increasing public awareness, appreciation and protection of Modern architecture, landscapes, neighborhoods and sites in Washington, D.C., and surrounding areas in Maryland and Virginia.

### **ACTION STEP T10: Offer a USModernist-Sponsored Moyaone Reserve Tour**

The tour could include a presentation on the history and stories of Moyaone Reserve, Piscataway Park and Hard Bargain Farm. The package could include a tour of homes, history presentation, meal and entertainment. The program and meals could be held at Hard Bargain Farm's Cafritz Environmental Center. A tour package could also be created as part of a larger experience with other attractions and activities. As the tour package is established, it can be promoted to groups with interests in Mid-Century Modern architecture, landscape conservation, or historic preservation, for example. Promotions could emphasize that tour revenues will help preserve this unique resource.

### **ACTION STEP T11: Publish a Monograph on the Moyaone Reserve**

Explore the creation and publication of an oversize, image-rich hardcover "coffee table" publication on the Mid-Century Modern houses in the Moyaone Reserve, combining the abundant historic photographs and drawings with new photographs that illuminates the development of the reserve and its link with nature conservation and the Fergusons. The book would help share the resources and potentially increase awareness and appreciation of them, leading to greater potential for their future protection. A shorter, soft-cover version could also be created to sell during home tours.

<sup>8</sup> <https://usmodernist.org/aboutus.htm>

# Arts and Artisans

## Creative Tourism and Artists

Among the definitions for tourism industry segments is a new one related to the arts: Creative Tourism. “When visitors come to a locale to see a play or hear a concert, they are passive ‘cultural tourists.’ When they come to that place to take a workshop from an artist or to interact with a locale’s artists in some way, they then become active (and interactive) ‘creative tourists.’”<sup>9</sup> The arts in Accokeek offer opportunities for both creative tourists and cultural tourists: The Accokeek Arts Alliance offers periodic workshops and hosts the popular yART Sale. The activities are ready-made for attracting creative tourists by packaging with other activities in the area (such as the Moyaone Reserve Historic District Home Tour and the Accokeek Foundation’s Latte with Lambs event). In addition, alliance membership includes talented musicians and actors.

Hard Bargain Farm also can expand interpretation of Alice Ferguson as an artist. Trained as an artist, Ferguson was active in the Washington arts community where she exhibited her paintings. At Hard Bargain Farm, Ferguson used the log cabin as a studio. Today, her art collection is housed at the farm. The Alice Ferguson Foundation should investigate recognizing this legacy through membership in Historic Arts Homes and Studios. The Historic Artists’ Homes and Studios (HAHS); [artistshomes.org](http://artistshomes.org), program was created by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and is a coalition of almost 50 museums working to preserve homes and studios of American artists. HAHS promotes artists’ homes and studios through its website, media publicity, a guidebook and other venues. HAHS also provides a network to collaborate with other artists homes and studios and to advocate for their preservation.

9 “Tap into the Creative Tourism Market,” *Professional Artist*, 2016, <https://professionalartistmag.com/tourists-art-market/>

### **ACTION STEP T12:** Join Historic Artists' Homes and Studios (HAHS)

The Alice Ferguson Foundation should explore joining HAHS to promote Alice Ferguson as an artist.

### **ACTION STEP T13:** Create an Experiential Arts Package

The Alice Ferguson Foundation and the Accokeek Arts Alliance should explore the creation of an Arts/Artists Getaway experiential arts package that includes a tour/talk of Alice Ferguson's artwork, tour of the log cabin studio, and workshop conducted by Arts Alliance members. The package could also include music or a brief theatrical performance by Alliance members. The package could be a one-day activity or overnight with lodging in the cabins at Hard Bargain Farm or at National Harbor.



Construction of Frog Pond. nd.  
Credit: Alice Ferguson Foundation

# The Rural Landscape and Outdoor Experiences

In addition to being a bucolic place to live, Accokeek offers a great setting for outdoor experiences for eco travelers. Three niche market groups are addressed in this section: birdwatching, bicycling and photography. Existing programming or the creation of new programs that reach targeted audiences are suggested. Promotion of outdoor opportunities are aligned with the Maryland Historical Trust's

strategic plan goals, objectives and strategies for the Southern Maryland Heritage Area: *Collaborate toward shared objectives; Enhance the ability of historic preservation to promote public health and education; and Collaborate on the development and implementation of nature-based recreational activities.*





## Birdwatching

Birdwatching—and all wildlife watching—has long been a popular activity, eclipsing hunting and fishing in national studies. In 2016 there were 86 million wildlife watchers compared to 35.8 million fishers and 11.5 million hunters. Among wildlife watchers, bird watching ranks number one for away-from-home watchers at 72 percent.

A report during the COVID-19 pandemic noted: “A sudden rise in bird watching around the world was one of the rare heartening consequences of pandemic lockdowns last year. Novice birders contributed to a new record for spotting bird species on Global Big Day, an annual bird-watching event run by the eBird program at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Although interest in birds has dropped off in 2022 compared to the northern hemisphere’s summer of 2020, it remains much higher than in years gone by. Our new passion for birds may have staying power.” Hard Bargain Farm already

offers popular bird walks led by a staff expert. There is an opportunity to grow this market. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s K-12 Education ([birds.cornell.edu](https://birds.cornell.edu)) offers a variety of resources for informal and formal education as well as assessments of various apps for identifying and tracking bird species. The Maryland Ornithological Society includes 15 chapters located around the state. The society hosts bird watching trips for youth and adults around the state (as well as outside the state). The society owns 10 sanctuaries around the state including the 82-acre Piscataway Sanctuary in Accokeek.



Credit: iStock

### ACTION STEP T14: Create Accokeek Birdwatching Tours

Partner with the Maryland Ornithological Society ([mdbirds.org](https://mdbirds.org)) to promote field trips to Accokeek. Create packaged/ priced experiences, for example, guided tours, lectures, and meals for both adult and youth groups. Link birdwatching apps to Alice Ferguson Foundation and Accokeek Foundation websites. The Accokeek Foundation has a bluebird trail along with six other thematic trails that could be used for this tour. The Prince George’s Audubon Society ([pгаudubon.org](https://pгаudubon.org)) also hosts birding walks.



Credit: iStock

## Bicycling

Bicycling is one of the fastest-growing outdoor recreation activities in the country, with 48 million people cycling each year. According to the Adventure Cycling Association, “Bicycle travelers tend to be geotourists—interested in experiencing the distinctive characteristics of a place, including its culture, landscape, history, and the well-being of its residents (as defined by National Geographic). They tend to prefer to spend locally, make meaningful connections with locals, and explore off the beaten path.” Research also shows that bicyclists are typically affluent with disposable income for equipment and vacations.<sup>10</sup>

The Tidewater Potomac Heritage Trail On-Road Bicycling Route, which passes through Accokeek as part of the 700-mile Potomac Scenic Heritage Trail, offers the kind of experience described by Adventure Cycling Association. In the Accokeek area, the bicycling route travels along Livingston Road and Bryan Point Road, terminating at the Piscataway Park/Accoek Foundation Visitor Center. The Adventure Cycling

Association and local volunteers mapped this route. Based in Missoula, Montana, the organization collaborates with communities across the country to map safe bicycling routes and provides resources for developing bicycle tourism. The Adventure Cycling Association also offers guided tours, some of which are hundreds of miles long.

Other organizations focused on bicycling are People for Bikes ([peopleforbikes.org](http://peopleforbikes.org)) which offers grants for bicycle-related projects, monitors research on the popularity of cycling, as well as advocating for cycling at the state and federal levels; and the League of American Bicyclists ([bikeleague.org](http://bikeleague.org)) which advocates and works for safe roads for cyclists. The league hosts an annual bicycle summit as well as forums on specific topics such as women’s bicycling. The league also promotes National Bike Month each May. The league ranks Maryland at number 14 among states’ bicycle-friendly ratings and identifies bicycle-friendly communities, businesses and universities.



10 <https://www.adventurecycling.org/advocacy/building-bike-tourism/bicycle-tourism-101/>

### **ACTION STEP T15:** Package a Bicycling Experience for Bicycle Tour Groups

The experience could include traveling the Potomac Heritage Trail, a detailed route map, meals, programs, tours, and history talks, and overnight lodging at Hard Bargain Farm cabins. Investigate submitting a guest blog post to the Adventure Cycling Association. ([adventurecycling.org](http://adventurecycling.org)) When Accokeek is included in the expanded boundary of the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, partner to promote Accokeek's bicycling experiences to visitors who come to enjoy the Anacostia Tributary Trail System, a system of biker/hiker trails along the Anacostia River and tributaries.

### **ACTION STEP T16:** Provide Bicycle Rentals at National Colonial Farm

Rentals would be for individuals or families. Model programs to consider are Wilderness Road State Park in Virginia, which rents bicycles for \$5-8 per hour or \$15-25 for four hours in addition to other recreational equipment. In Prince George's County, bicycles are also available for rent at Bladensburg Waterfront Park for \$10 a day, \$5 a day for those under age 18.

### **ACTION STEP T17:** Join Bicycling Associations

Join the **Washington Area Bicyclist Association ([waba.org](http://waba.org))**, the **Adventure Cycling Association**, **People for Bikes ([peopleforbikes.org](http://peopleforbikes.org))**, or **The League of American Bicyclists ([bikeleague.org](http://bikeleague.org))**, or the **Oxen Hill Bicycle and Trail Club ([ohbike.org](http://ohbike.org))**. Attend conferences and forums to network with other communities developing cycling experiences. Access resources and technical assistance on how to ensure safe biking experiences on roads shared with automobiles.



## Photographing/Viewing Nature

The U.S. Department of Agriculture 2016 study “Federal Outdoor Recreation Trends: Effects on Economic Opportunities” found viewing and photographing nature grew by the following percentages from 1999-2009: flowers—29.4 percent; wildlife—25.4 percent; birds—22.8 percent; scenery—17.9 percent. The study projects continued overall growth of 28.1 percent through 2030, increasing from 189.4 million adult participants to 242.7 million.

Photography is also a great marketing tool. When travelers share photos on social media it can influence friends’ travel plans.<sup>11</sup>

The Maryland Photography Alliance ([mdphotoalliance.org](http://mdphotoalliance.org)) is an association of 26 photography clubs from across the state. Many of the associated clubs plan field trips for groups of photographers. The alliance’s outreach helps to attract new members and to publicize these events. The alliance also maintains an interactive “Great Places to Photograph” map on its website. Currently the map includes National Harbor and George Washington’s Mount Vernon.

Credit: M-NCPPC

<sup>11</sup> “Vacationing the Social Media Way,” *MDG Advertising*, 2018, <https://www.mdgadvertising.com/marketing-insights/infographics/vacationing-the-social-media-way-infographic/>

### **ACTION STEP T18:** Professionally Photograph Accokeek

Work with a photographer to create a photo essay of landscape, scenery, birds, wildlife and other pictures of the Accokeek area. Post on websites for the Accokeek Foundation and Alice Ferguson Foundation.

### **ACTION STEP T19:** Package a Photography Experience for Tourists

The experience would include recommendations for photo locations such as best time of day and angle for best shots, programs (expert photographers sharing insights), meals and entertainment. Using the Maryland Photography Alliance database, contact photography clubs to promote the package as a one-day or overnight field trip. As capacity permits, build databases for other state photography clubs in Maryland travel market and promote the field trip package.

### **ACTION STEP T20:** Participate in Photography Contests

Contact the Maryland Photography Alliance and invite a thematic focus on Accokeek for the annual photography contest. Host a weekend or weekends for photographers to come to Accokeek to take pictures and include tours and meals.



Credit: M-NCPPC



Credit: Accokeek Foundation  
[www.accokeek.org/heritage-livestock-conservation](http://www.accokeek.org/heritage-livestock-conservation)

## Agritourism and Culinary Experiences

Accokeek has exciting potential to tap two popular tourism markets—agritourism and culinary tourism. The Agricultural Marketing Resource Center ([agmrc.org](http://agmrc.org)) defines agritourism as “the act of visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agribusiness operation to enjoy, to be educated or be involved in activities.”

The U.S. Census of Agriculture shows an increasing trend in agritourism and related recreational services and direct sales of agricultural products. The Census of Agriculture first used the term “agritourism” in 2007 with a question about “agritourism and recreational services such as farm or winery tours, hayrides, hunting, fishing, etc.”

Using this limited definition, agritourism income grew by 67 percent between 2007 and 2017 and more than doubled when including direct sales of agricultural products. According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, 28,575 farms offered agritourism and recreational services resulting in \$949 million in sales. The next Census of Agriculture is scheduled for 2022. In the Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance(27-2500).

Agritourism is defined as: “An agricultural enterprise that is intended to attract visitors and provide supplemental income for the owner of a working farm, and that is: (A) Offered to the public or invited groups; (B) Related to agriculture or natural resources; and (C) Incidental to the primary operation on the site. Agritourism uses include, but are not limited to: equine activities, fishing, hunting, wildlife study, holiday and seasonal attractions, corn mazes, harvest festivals, barn dances, hayrides, roadside stands, farmer’s markets, u-pick or pick-your-own operations, rent-a-tree operations, farm tours, wine tasting, educational classes related to agricultural products or skills, and accessory recreational activities provided for guests. Agritourism includes activities such as, but not limited to, picnics, equine facilities, party facilities, retreats, weddings, and farm or ranch stays.” Further, the Rural and Agricultural zones (including the ROS [Reserved Open Space] Zone and AG [Agriculture and Preservation] Zones are intended to: (1) Support and provide lands for agricultural, forestry, agri-business, **agritourism** [emphasis added], agricultural support, and related uses important to the County’s economy and the character of the County’s Rural and Agricultural zones.” The ROS and AG Zones comprise most of the lands in Accokeek north of MD 210 (Indian Head Highway).



Credit: M-NCCPC

Culinary tourism, also known as food tourism, is also growing in popularity, giving rise to the term “foodie” to describe a person with a strong interest in food as an experience. The World Food Travel Association defines culinary tourism as “the pursuit and enjoyment of unique and memorable food and drink experiences.” Market studies show continued projected growth in all areas including culinary trails, cooking classes, food festivals, restaurants and other food experiences. Accokeek is fortunate to have both places and stories to connect and support heritage tourism programs and packages for agritourism and culinary tourism. At Piscataway Park are National Colonial Farm, the Ecosystem Farm, heritage breeds of livestock, a museum garden and a community garden. Hard Bargain Farm offers a variety of programs including “Fun on the Farm” and volunteer opportunities to care for the farm’s animals. The site also has a beautiful barn and several farm outbuildings that convey a sense of how a small family farm operated in the early to mid-twentieth century and how farming has changed over time.

Accokeek offers a “triple heritage” of crops—Indigenous, African, and European, creating opportunities to educate visitors on the ways crops were used as food, medicines and even as cosmetics. The Accokeek Foundation is fortunate to have a board member who is president of nonprofit Steam Onward ([steamonward.org](http://steamonward.org)) and Ujamma Cooperative Farmers Alliance. Steam Onward works with minority and under-resourced youth to provide hands-on experiences in agriculture, natural resources and the environment. Ujamma supports sustainable agricultural practices and sells heirloom seeds. This connection provides the Accokeek Foundation with the opportunity to develop programming that reflects people of color in all aspects of agriculture.

The story of how the Piscataway people cared their homeland, grew food and fished in the river is not currently interpreted but the consultant team was fortunate to have a guided tour by Mario Harley and Anjela Barnes. The tour illuminated the uses of the land and its resources such as using aquatic plants for medicine, cat-tail roots for food, growing corn, harvesting wild rice and maintaining nurseries for shad fish in the Potomac.





## **ACTION STEP T21:** Develop a Legacy Farmlands of Accokeek Event Package

The package could include options for a variety of experiences such as garden and farm tours with guides who discuss food heritage for Piscataway, European and African farming practices, food preservation and preparation and include lunch/dinner by the garden (National Colonial Farm) or in the barn (Hard Bargain Farm) serving locally grown foods and/or historic recipes. Music could also be included. Guided tours could be offered telling stories of the Piscataway's early occupation and how the land and water influenced practices of growing foods, medicinal uses, etc. The package would include opportunities for small groups to work in a garden with an expert in heirloom plants to share farming practices of African Americans and how these practices have changed or continued over many decades. The expert could facilitate a discussion to guide participants in how to plant their own gardens. Heirloom seed packets and plants could be provided to participants. Explore "Seed to Table" programs at Shaker Village, Kentucky (<https://shakervillageky.org>) as a model. Creating this dining experience can address the current lack of a restaurant serving locally sourced foods. [Growandfortify.com](http://Growandfortify.com) is a regional (Annapolis-based) resource supporting value-added agricultural organizations and the businesses they represent.





**'Step into History' Interactive Text Panel**



SECTION  
**8**

**Promote:  
Attract  
Visitors and  
Keep them  
Coming Back**



# Marketing and Branding Accokeek

Developing a successful heritage tourism destination requires marketing that reaches desired audiences, sparks interest and results in a visit. In *Cultural Heritage Tourism: Five Steps for Success and Sustainability* (New York: 2017), author Cheryl M. Hargrove notes, “Great marketing helps destinations and sites distinguish themselves from the competition through dynamic images targeted messages and engaging content.” Target audiences identified by stakeholders at the Accokeek Foundation and Alice Ferguson Foundation during the study tour are heritage/history enthusiasts, environmental doers, nature observers (ecotourists), school groups, families and members. Current visitor origins include the surrounding region—Arlington, Waldorf, Washington, D.C., National Harbor and the Accokeek community.

Marketing outreach for Accokeek is currently coming from the two anchor destinations managed by the Accokeek Foundation and Alice Ferguson Foundation. Marketing budgets are limited but an overview of marketing tools used by one or both organizations includes:

- Social media
- YouTube
- Websites
- Printed materials (brochures, flyers, maps)
- Press releases
- National Park Service brochures and website
- Newsletters
- Direct marketing – email campaigns
- Limited advertising
- Collaboration with National Harbor (Accokeek Foundation)

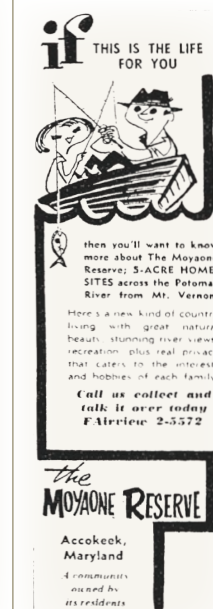
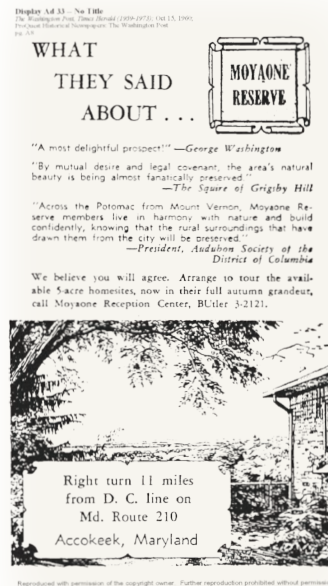
Although Piscataway Park was established to protect the viewshed for George Washington’s Mount Vernon (which receives more than one million visitors annually) there is currently no cross-promotion between the two destinations. Representatives from Mount Vernon who met with the team during the study tour indicated there could be an opportunity for promotion on Mount Vernon’s website and social media platforms.

In 2022, the Moyaone Reserve Association resumed its annual home tour which was promoted through the association’s newsletter, website, social media platforms and the Accokeek Artists Alliance promotional platforms. Because it is a private neighborhood, Moyaone Reserve is not promoted to visitors at other times, and there are multiple signs noting “private property.”

Other attractions including the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail and the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail are promoted through the National Park Service website and brochures as well as other websites and social media platforms. Although Piscataway Park was established to protect the viewshed for George Washington’s Mount Vernon (which receives more than one million visitors annually) there is currently no cross-promotion between the two destinations. Representatives from Mount Vernon who met with the team during the study tour indicated there could be an opportunity for promotion on Mount Vernon’s website and social media platforms.

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Other attractions including the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail and the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail are promoted through the National Park Service website and brochures as well as other websites and social media platforms. Hard Bargain Farm and Piscataway Park are the primary draws for visitors to Accokeek. However, both are presented as the foundations that manage the sites. Hard Bargain Farm is presented as the Alice Ferguson Foundation and National Colonial Farm, including trails and other visitor experiences, are presented as the Accokeek Foundation. Foundation names identify the sites on maps, brochures, promotional materials, signage and websites. This approach is likely to be confusing to visitors as they are told about the location of management organizations, not the attractions.



Moyaone Reserve Ads, l: October 15, 1960; r: August 6, 1957  
Credit: ProQuest Historical Newspapers, Washington Post

## ACTION STEP P1: Transition Major Attractions from Foundations to Inclusive Destinations

It is recommended that these sites transition from positioning as foundations to positioning as attractions. The association of Hard Bargain Farm with Alice Ferguson offers an opportunity to interpret an important women's history story. To stress the recognition of Ferguson's leadership and work, consideration should be given to branding the site as "Alice Ferguson's Hard Bargain Farm," following the example of "George Washington's Mount Vernon." Repositioning the Accokeek Foundation is more challenging. As noted in study tour meetings, interpretation is shifting from a dominant colonial viewpoint and becoming more inclusive in its storytelling; for example, focusing on the Piscataway and enslaved African Americans on an eighteenth-century tobacco farm. This would make positioning the site only as National Colonial Farm difficult. To promote the site as an attraction, not a foundation, consideration should be given to rebranding. Options could include names such as "The Farmstead at Piscataway Park," "Legacy Farm at Piscataway Park," or "The Farm and Piscataway Homelands." Once both sites have made final determination of attraction names, a plan and timeline to transition all tourism-related materials should be developed and implemented.

## Partner Organizations and Affiliates

Collaboration of key heritage tourism partners is required for Accokeek to succeed in attracting small groups. Communication recommendations to support this effort are included.

Accokeek is fortunate to have two partnership opportunities (Experience Prince George's and the Maryland Office of Tourism) and two upcoming partnerships

(Anacostia Trails Heritage Area Inc. boundary amendment and Southern Maryland National Heritage Area) that will provide myriad ways to promote the region, its attractions and experience opportunities. This section focuses on marketing opportunities available through partnership with these agencies.

### **ACTION STEP P2: Join Experience Prince George's**

- Share small-group experiences as programs and packages are developed—request feedback and incorporate recommendations to ensure a saleable product.
- Explore opportunities to promote group packages. Based on financial resources and staff capacity, participate in group travel organizations as members or through Experience Prince George's including SYTA (Student-Youth Travel Association), GLAMER (Group Leaders of America), African American Travel Conference, Going on Faith, Road Scholar, and others.
- Provide information and promotional materials to Experience Prince George's for use at travel trade shows when unable to attend in person.
- Follow-up on leads to tour groups provided by Experience Prince George's.
- Network through Experience Prince George's to package and promote with attractions and visitor services with nearby communities.
- Network through Experience Prince George's to identify nearby hotels to partner with in tour group packages and set rate structures.
- Participate in familiarization tours for small group tour operators.
- Provide Accokeek information for Experience Prince George's website.

### **ACTION STEP P3: Get Involved with the Maryland Office of Tourism**

Place brochures in state welcome centers (the Crain Memorial Center at 12480 Crain Highway, Newburg, Maryland, 20664 is operated by Charles County Tourism.)

- Collaborate with the tourism office ([visitmarland.org](http://visitmarland.org)) to promote Accokeek through three of the four “Big Four” goals: The Most Powerful Underground Railroad Storytelling Destination in the World; Trail System Second-to-None; and Open Road Scenic Byways.
- Explore new promotional opportunities as identified by the tourism office.
- Participate in the tourism offices “Be More Open for More Customers” promotion. The program offers a variety of ways to partner with the tourism office to promote destinations and attractions including meeting with travel counselors at welcome centers, submitting press releases, participating in travel media familiarization tours, host Maryland Office of Tourism staff on a tour and many other opportunities.
- Work with the office's group travel staff to promote small group tour experiences.

### **ACTION STEP P4: Continue to Engage with the Heritage Areas**

As discussed previously, plans are currently in development for a boundary expansion for the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area (ATHA) and for Congressional designation of the Southern Maryland National Heritage Area (SMNHA). Accokeek stakeholders are engaged in both endeavors and are positioning Accokeek to become a strong partner to ATHA and SMNHA. As the process continues, Accokeek stakeholders can continue to engage with organization leaders to seek out tourism marketing opportunities. These include representation on websites and collateral materials, participating in joint marketing and supplying brochures to welcome centers. Most beneficial to Accokeek will be the opportunity to apply for ATHA marketing grants and to generate national awareness through SMNHA.



Credit: Accokeek Artists Alliance



## **ACTION STEP P5: Join Prince George's County Scenic America Chapter**

Engagement with Scenic America's newly formed Prince George's County chapter offers the opportunity to network with others who share Accokeek's desire for landscape conservation and to stay informed about potential National Scenic Byway grants.

[Scenic America](#) is a national nonprofit which works with communities to safeguard the scenic qualities of roadways, the countryside landscape, towns and cities. Issues for advocacy, education and programming include gateway communities to national and state parks, tree conservation, billboard control, and scenic byways. Two opportunities of particular importance to Accokeek are 1) the recently formed local chapter, [Scenic Prince George's](#). The chapter's mission is to preserve, protect, and enhance the visual environment, scenic beauty, and economic development of Prince George's County. Among the chapter's goals is to investigate potential new scenic byways; and 2) the [National Scenic Byways grant program](#) which Scenic America and partners successfully advocated for Congress to reinstate after a 10-year lapse in funding. The first grants were announced in August 2022. The FY2023 bill passed by the House of Representatives includes \$30 million in funding for the National Scenic Byways Program.





**Hog Island Sheep at Piscataway Park**



**SECTION**  
**9**

**Implementation  
Matrix**



<b>ACRONYM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
AF	Accokeek Foundation
AFF	Alice Ferguson Foundation
ATHA	Anacostia Trails Heritage Area
CIRD	Citizens Institute on Rural Design
DNR	Maryland Department of Natural Resources
DOE	Prince George's County Department of Environment
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation, (M-NCPPC)
EPG	Experience Prince George's
GACA	Greater Accokeek Civic Association
HAHS	Historic Artists' Homes and Studios
HPS	Historic Preservation Section, Planning Department (M-NCPPC)
MDOT	Maryland Department of Transportation
MHAA	Maryland Heritage Areas Authority
MHT	Maryland Historical Trust
M-NCPPC	The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
MSAC	Maryland State Arts Council
PAMC	Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities Program (M-NCPPC)
PEPCO	Potomac Electric Power Company
PCC	Piscataway Conoy Council
PCT	Piscataway Conoy Tribe
PGCAHC	Prince George's County Arts and Humanities Council
PGCEDC	Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation
PGMLS	Prince George's County Memorial Library System
PG-HPC	Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission
PM	Preservation Maryland
SHA	Maryland State Highway Association
SMNHA	Southern Maryland National Heritage Area
TBD	To Be Determined
VM	Visit Maryland (Maryland Office of Tourism)
WSSC	Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

The implementation Matrix provides an at-a-glance resource and can provide the foundation of a strategic plan for heritage tourism development to include prioritization of strategies and actions, details on partner responsibilities, identification of resources and funding.

ACTION STEP	LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TIMEFRAME
<b>Welcome to Accokeek</b>				
<b>W1:</b> Develop a Gateway Plan	Accokeek stakeholders		CIRD, PAMC, PGEDC	Medium-Term
<b>W2:</b> Inventory and Revise Signage at Destinations	AFF, Moyaone Reserve Association, Piscataway Park	Accokeek stakeholders	ATHA, PAMC	Medium-Term
<b>Heritage Documentation and Programs</b>				
<b>D1:</b> Update Piscataway Park National Register Nomination	AF	MHT, M-NCPPC, NPS	ATHA; PAMC, PG-HPC	Short-Term
<b>D2:</b> Expand and Update Documentation of Historic Properties and Sites	Accokeek stakeholders	HPS, MHT, NPS	HPS, PAMC	Ongoing
<b>D3:</b> Take Advantage of the Statewide Preservation Plan	Accokeek stakeholders	MHT		Ongoing
<b>D4:</b> Ensure Heritage Tourism is Included in Future Approved County Plans	Accokeek stakeholders			
<b>Accokeek Heritage Tourism Themes</b>				
<b>T1:</b> Implement Through Piscataway Eyes Master Plan	PCC, Accokeek stakeholders	MHT, M-NCPPC, NPS		Ongoing
<b>T2:</b> Develop Piscataway-Led Group Tours	PCC, Accokeek stakeholders	ATHA, PCC, PCT, SMNHA	ATHA, SMNHA	Medium-Term
<b>T3:</b> Join AIANTA	PCC, Accokeek stakeholders			Short-Term
<b>T4:</b> Promote National Colonial Farm's New Interpretive Signage	AF	Accokeek stakeholders	ATHA, SMNHA	Short-Term
<b>T5:</b> Develop Women's History-Based Tours	AFF, Moyaone Reserve Association	A Tour of Her Own		Medium-Term
<b>T6:</b> Extend the Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway into Accokeek	SMNHA, Christ Church Accokeek	ATHA, EPG, Going on Faith	MDOT; SHA; NPS	Medium-Term
<b>T7:</b> Install a Charles A. Baldwin Grave Interpretive Sign	Accokeek Stakeholders, Christ Church Accokeek,	ATHA, Civil War Trails, Inc., VM		Medium-Term
<b>T8:</b> Interpret the Pearl Incident	SMNHA	AF, Point Lookout State Park		Medium-Term
<b>T9:</b> Join USModernist	Moyaone Reserve Association	USModernist, DocomomoDC		Short-Term

ACTION STEP	LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TIMEFRAME
<b>Accokeek Heritage Tourism Themes (cont.)</b>				
<b>T10:</b> Offer a USModernist-Sponsored Moyaone Reserve Tour	Moyaone Reserve Association	USModernist, DocomomoDC Accokeek stakeholders		Medium-Term
<b>T11:</b> Publish a Monograph on the Moyaone Reserve	Moyaone Reserve Association	HPS	PAMC	Long-Term
<b>T12:</b> Join Historic Artists' Homes and Studios (HAHS)	AFF	HAHS		Short-Term
<b>T13:</b> Create an Experiential Arts Package	Accokeek Arts Alliance, AFF	EPG,VM	ATHA	Long-Term
<b>T14:</b> Create Accokeek Birdwatching Tours	AF, AFF	Maryland Ornithological Society, et al		Medium-Term
<b>T15:</b> Package a Bicycling Experience for Bicycle Tour Groups	AF, AFF	ATHA; Washington Area Bicyclist Association		Medium-Term
<b>T16:</b> Provide Bicycle Rentals at National Colonial Farm	AF	A Tour of Her Own		Short-Term
<b>T17:</b> Join Bicycling Associations	AF, AFF	Adventure Cycling Association, People for Bikes or The League of American Bicyclists, et al		Short-Term
<b>T18:</b> Professionally Photograph Accokeek	Accokeek stakeholders			Short-Term
<b>T19:</b> Package a Photography Experience for Tourists	AF, AFF	Maryland Photography Alliance, AF, AFF, EPG		Medium-Term
<b>T20:</b> Participate in Photography Contests	AF, AFF, Moyaone Reserve Association			Short-Term
<b>T21:</b> Develop a Legacy Farmlands of Accokeek Event Package	AF, AFF			Long-Term

ACTION STEP	LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TIMEFRAME
<b>Promote: Attract Visitors and Keep Them Coming Back</b>				
<b>P1:</b> Transition Major Attractions from Foundations to Inclusive Destinations	AF, AFF			Short-Term
<b>P2:</b> Join Experience Prince George's	Accokeek stakeholders	EPG		Short-Term
<b>P3:</b> Get Involved with the Maryland Office of Tourism	Accokeek stakeholders	VM		Short-Term
<b>P4:</b> Continue to Engage with the Heritage Areas	Accokeek stakeholders	ATHA, SMNHA		Ongoing
<b>P5:</b> Join Prince George's County Scenic America Chapter	Accokeek stakeholders	AF, AFF, ATHA, Christ Church Accokeek, GACA, Scenic America, Scenic Prince George's, SMNHA		Short-Term

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