

LANDSCAPE IN PERIL:
A CULTURAL ASSESSMENT
OF
THOMAS'S WHARF AND WOODLANDS FARM,
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, EASTERN SHORE, VIRGINIA
by
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(ABSTRACT)

This thesis develops a philosophy for management, preservation, and interpretation of Woodlands Farm and Thomas's Wharf in Northampton County on Virginia's Eastern Shore. The U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service methodology for historic properties, including cultural landscapes, is used to complete this study. The National Park Service method includes four interrelated steps: (1) historical research, and (2) inventory and documentation of existing conditions, (3) site analysis and evaluation of significance and integrity, and (4) recommendations for future management.

Essential to the future of Woodlands Farm and Thomas's Wharf is continued use of the property while retaining character defining features that make them significant. The most suitable management philosophy for a historic property that allows for protection and maintenance of significant features, as well as future use and development, is *Rehabilitation*.

Thomas's Wharf's significance is derived from fragments of many periods and histories can be read on the landscape; a palimpsest. The U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service evaluates a landscape much as one evaluates a historic building, defining it as a type or from a specific time period. The U.S. Department of the Interior's criteria for significance does not address a landscape, like Thomas's Wharf, as part of the continuum of history. Rather the study of landscapes is limited and the criteria does not acknowledge a site's broader continuum of significance. Landscapes that are records of change and evolution, palimpsests of a people, culture, and place, need to be identified and deemed significant for that quality

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