

**FRAMEWORK FOR IDENTIFYING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA**

**HISTORIC CONTEXT:**

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont/Western shore

Chronological/Development Period(s):

Modern Period (1945-present)

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Military (World War II/Post World War II Era)  
Engineering/Invention

Resource Type:

Category: Buildings

Historic Environment (urban, suburban, village, or rural): suburban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Laboratories for testing and development of  
military (Navy) weapons systems.

Known Design Source:

Eggers & Higgins, Architects, New York, New York  
Taylor & Fisher, Baltimore, Associates

**Maryland Historical Trust  
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

Survey No. M:33-15  
Magi No.  
DOE  Yes  No

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic White Oak Cafeteria/Auditorium

and/or common Building 5

**2. Location**

street & number 10901 New Hampshire Avenue  not for publication

city, town Silver Spring  vicinity of congressional district 4th

state Maryland county Montgomery

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name U.S. Navy - White Oak Laboratory

street & number 10901 New Hampshire Ave. telephone no. \_\_\_\_\_

city, town Silver Spring state and zip code MD 20903-5000

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. \_\_\_\_\_ liber \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ folio \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title \_\_\_\_\_

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state: \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Description

Survey No. M:33-15

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	date of move <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

### Building 5

Building 5 is a large rectangular, two-story structure that is 201-feet long by 127-feet wide. It connects to Building 1 at the midpoint of B-4 opposite the arcade. It was constructed in 1949 to house an auditorium, classrooms, offices, and cafeteria. Original plans show that a different size and shape structure was to be built at this location as part of the initial construction of the main administration/laboratory building (Building 1-4; M:33-14). Building 5 was not built until four years later.

While being similar in design to Building 1-4, Building 5 lacks, or exhibits only simplified, key elements of the architecture that characterizes the surrounding buildings at the White Oak Laboratory.

The exterior entrances are located asymmetrically on the north and south elevations. Neither entrance has the overhang nor granite trim found on the other buildings. Similarly, the windows are in simple unadorned openings, although the 12-light windows have been retained. Simple rectangular coping tops the walls.

A smaller, windowless third story houses utilities for Building 5 and Building 1-4. Heating and air conditioning equipment located behind a dark screen occupies most of the roof of the third story. The second floor of Building 5 centers around a large auditorium with a stage and projection facilities for films. The auditorium is simple with minimal wood trim for decoration. Around the outside of the auditorium are classrooms and offices.

The section of Building 5 that connects with Building 1-4 is generally open and forms the lobby for the auditorium. An open area to each side of the central hall has a marble fireplace against the east wall. The walls are paneled in cherry or maple with marble baseboards. The floors, now covered with carpets, are 6-inch pegged hardwood.

The area on the first floor below the lobby area originally shared similar plans. However, the side areas have been divided into three small rectangular offices on each side of a central hall. The marble fireplaces, which match those on the second floor, can be found on the eastern walls of the small easternmost offices.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. M:33-15

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archaeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archaeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates	1945-1949	Builder/Architect	U.S. Navy/Eggers & Higgins, N.Y.
check: Applicable Criteria:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D		
and/or			
Applicable Exception:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G		
Level of Significance:	<input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input type="checkbox"/> local <input type="checkbox"/> None		

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

### Statement of Significance

Discussions of the potential NRHP eligibility of Building 5 which is one of the eight World War II era structures that comprise the Front Area at the White Oak Laboratory are influenced by three factors:

- The apparent absence of unique and significant events/developments or persons associated primarily with Naval activities at White Oak;
- The absence of unique architectural styles or architecture that embodies the best characteristics of a style or period; and,
- The relatively recent age (e.g., construction of the first structure was begun in 1945) in light of the absence of overwhelming significance as noted above.

### Historical background and significance:

Established when existing facilities of the Naval Ordnance Laboratory became insufficient to meet the increasing need for Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation facilities late during World War II, White Oak was only one of a variety of such facilities established throughout the areas of Maryland and Virginia around Washington, D.C. These technical and administrative centers were developed to maximize accessibility to military headquarters in Washington while being located in areas that provided the environmental conditions necessary for the performance of their missions and the social atmosphere necessary to attract and keep skilled personnel. For White Oak, these resources included the scientific/academic community of Washington and the surrounding area of Maryland while still being somewhat removed from the city congestion and security problems presented by a more urban center. Also, electromagnetic experiments (conducted in areas east of the Front Area) required magnetically neutral conditions.

The White Oak facility that developed during the final years of World War II reflected administrative and research work that was task-specific, contributing to larger weapons system development programs that included work conducted at other naval facilities. White Oak remained a group of buildings housing offices, laboratories, and shops designed for the tasks at hand. Upon completion of a set of activities, the facilities were refitted for the next set of required tasks. As a result, the facilities in the Front Area of White Oak were continuously changing with new sets of equipment installed for as long as necessary, before they were replaced or moved to a new area of White Oak or to another naval facility.

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## 8. Significance (Cont.)

Survey No. M:33-15

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The result of this role for White Oak was that, while it was an integral part of the Naval research and development program during World War II, there are no obvious manifestations of that role in the buildings or the setting of the Front Area of White Oak as they exist today, the generally high degree of integrity of location, setting and design notwithstanding.

Building 5, as well as all of the structures of the Front Area of White Oak, whether viewed individually or as a potential district, do not exhibit the integrity of association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of history (i.e., NRHP Criteria a, 36 CFR 60.4).

The Naval Ordnance Laboratory, while housed at White Oak, included Naval and civilian personnel who may have achieved considerable personal or professional renown. However, such individual importance was not connected with their tenure at White Oak and so would not satisfy NRHP Criteria b.

Since White Oak is a product of Navy activities begun during World War II and a relatively recent entity, it is unlikely that Building 5, or any component of the environment of the Front Area has the potential to yield information important to history itself. White Oak's potential historic importance lies in the scientific developments that have occurred there. Information about these developments are likely to be contained in documentary sources such as scientific notes and archives that exist separately from the physical structures that constitute the Front Area of White Oak. In addition, detailed plans and drawings exist that document the buildings of the Front Area are archived by the Public Works Department at White Oak, further reducing the potential for NRHP eligibility under Criteria d.

Building 5 exhibits the principal design shared by the original administration/laboratory buildings of the Front Area at White Oak. The exterior facades of any of these buildings (with the exception of Building 71) have not been substantially modified and appear largely the same as they would have shortly after their construction.

Although this building has maintained its architectural integrity, the combination of the campus-like setting and the "starved classicism" style that is expressed is not unique in the architecture of the period, or in federal buildings in general in the region around Washington, D.C. The stylistic elements suggests the continuation of modern architectural influences on the more formal classical designs as expressed in other buildings designed during the 1920s and the 1930s.

The buildings of the Front Area do not appear to satisfy eligibility Criteria C, for inclusion in the NRHP since they are neither distinctive examples of this architectural type nor "a significant and distinguishable entity" (U.S. Department of the Interior 1991).

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. M:33-15

Anonymous, 1959, "History of the Naval Ordnance Laboratory", manuscript on file at NSWC, White Oak, Maryland.

Craig, Lois, 1978, *The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in United States Government Buildings*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Dittman, Richard B., 1973, letter to Stanley S. Jones, U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory, White Oak, Maryland, January 29, 1973, on file at Department of Public Works, NSWC, White Oak, Maryland.

Greenhorne & O'Mara, Inc., 1992, *Historic and Archaeological Resources Protection (HARP) Plan for Naval Surface Warfare Center, White Oak, Maryland*, on file at U.S. Navy, Engineering Field Activity-Chesapeake, Washington, Navy Yard, Washington, D.C.

Smaldone, Joseph P., 1977, *History of the White Oak Laboratory 1945-1975*, Naval Surface Weapons Center, Silver Spring, Maryland.

U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory, 1949, *The U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory; General and Descriptive Information*.

## 10. Geographical Data

### Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name Beltsville, MD Quadrangle scale 7.5 Min.

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	Zone	Easting	Northing	B	Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	Maryland	code	MD	county	Montgomery	code	031
state		code		county		code	

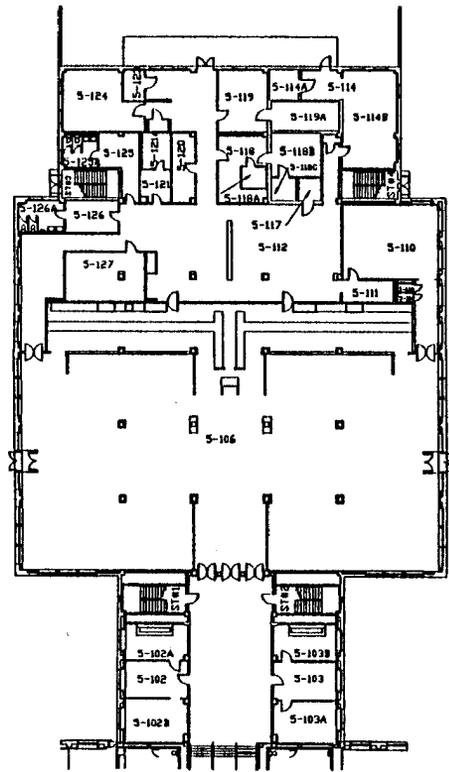
## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Mark Rosenzweig, Ph.D./Chief Archaeologist		
organization	Ecology and Environment, Inc.	date	March 25, 1994
street & number	368 Pleasantview Drive		telephone 716/684-8060
city or town	Lancaster	state	New York

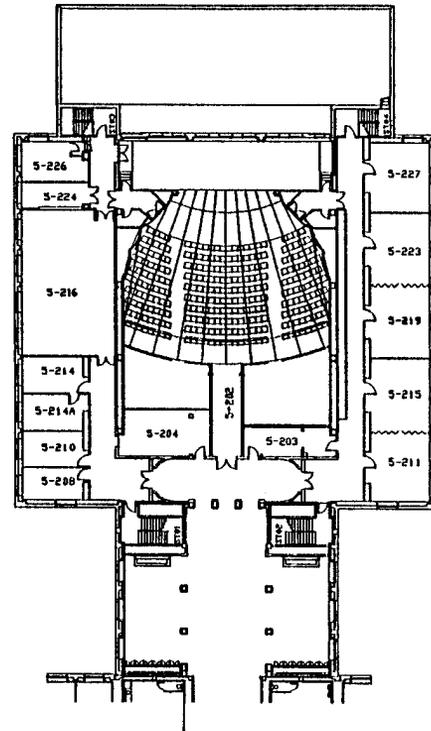
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

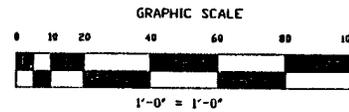
return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCP/DHCD  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
514-7600



FIRST FLOOR

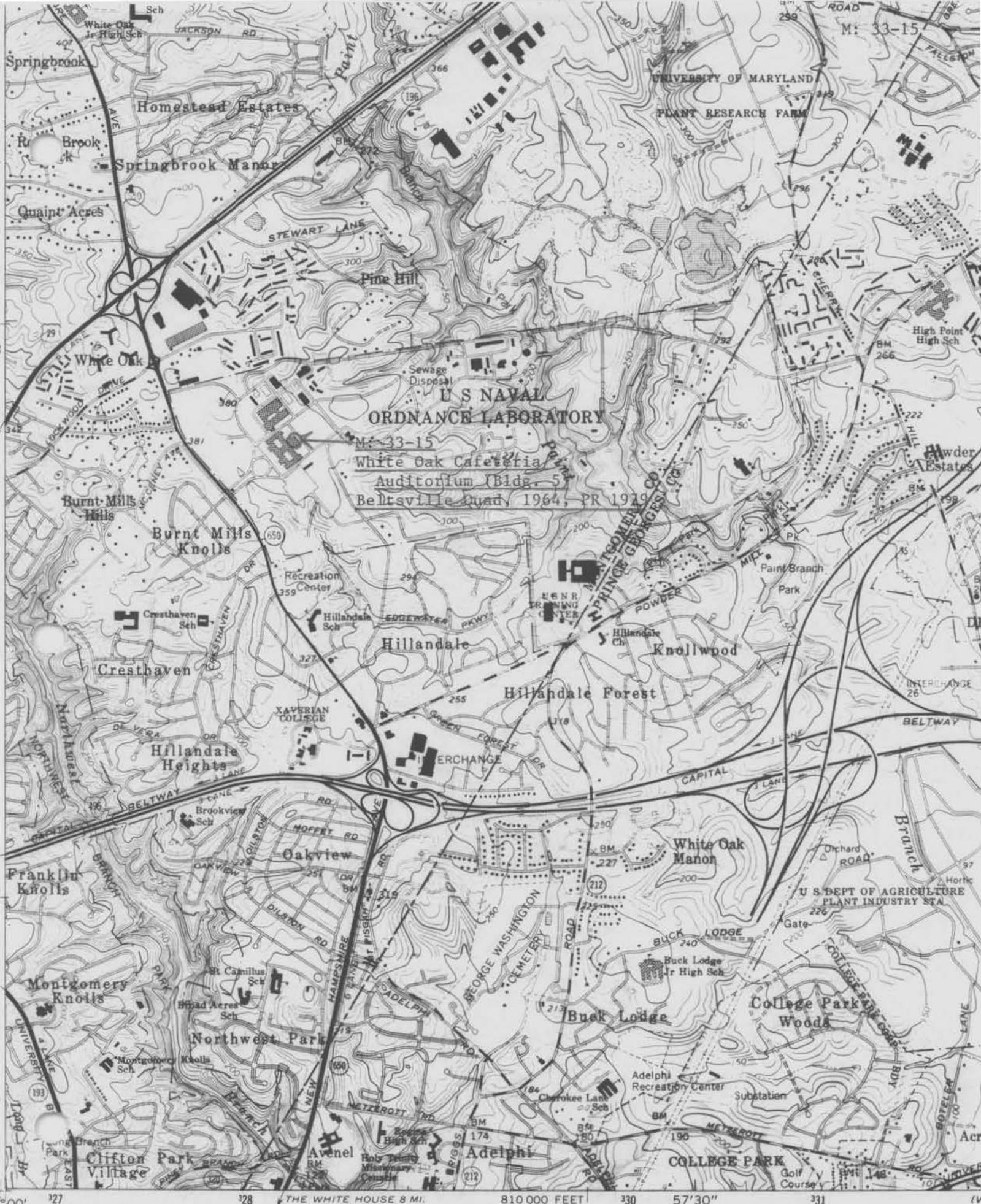


SECON FLOOR



SOURCE: U. S. Navy NSWC White Oak Department of Public Works.

**SURVEY NO. M:33-15, BUILDING 5**  
**NSWC WHITE OAK, SILVER SPRING, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**



M: 33-15  
 White Oak Cafeteria  
 Auditorium (Bldg. 5)  
 Beltsville Quad 1964, PR 1979

00' 127 128 THE WHITE HOUSE 8 MI. 810 000 FEET 330 57'30" 331 (W)

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS, USC&GS, USSCS, and WSSC





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M: 33-15  
NSWC - White Oak Laboratory  
Cafeteria / Auditorium

Building 5

Montgomery Co MD

Ecology & Environment Inc

Nov 1993

US NAVY EFA CHESAPEAKE

Looking SW

N elevation of

Building 5