

Name: Back Creek Public Wharf

Construction Date: ca. 1930 and ca. 1968

Town/Vicinity: St. Michaels

County: Talbot

Access: Public

Summary Description:

The Back Creek Public Wharf is located at the extreme western end of W. Chew Avenue. The area has been used as a landing spot for settlers and watermen for over 250 years. The existing pier is T-shaped in plan and constructed of large timbers supported by posts driven into the bed of the creek. The existing structure was built approximately 60 years ago as a straight pier, and the two wings were constructed ca. 1968. Generations of watermen have used this pier as their access to St. Michaels, as a place to unload their catch, and as a place to gather and discuss their trade.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. T-1105

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Back Creek Public Wharf

### 2. Location

street & number Western end of Chew Avenue \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town St. Michaels \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district First

state MD county Talbot

### 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 type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: public wharf

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

name State Highway Administration

street & number telephone no.:

city, town state and zip code MD

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Talbot County Courthouse liber

street & number Washington Street folio

city, town Easton state MD 21601

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered

altered

**Check one**

original site

moved

date of move \_\_\_\_\_

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

Contributing Resource Count: 1

The existing pier is T-shaped in plan and constructed of large timbers supported by posts driven into the bed of the creek. It is likely that the existing pier replaced the one that is shown on the 1929 map of St. Michaels. According to local informants, the existing structure was built approximately 60 years ago as a straight pier. The two wings at the end were constructed ca. 1968. Generations of watermen have used this pier as their access to St. Michaels, as a place to unload their catch, and as a place to gather and discuss their trade.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. T-1105

Period	Areas of Significance--Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistory	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<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 type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transporation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	Builder/Architect	unknown
check: Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> local		

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

The Back Creek Public Wharf is located at the extreme western end of W. Chew Avenue. Although there are no buildings associated with this resource, the existing wharf structure is over 50 years old, and the area has been used as a landing spot for settlers and watermen for approximately 250 years. An early mention of the Back Creek access to St. Michaels states that in the early-eighteenth century, the town churches were approachable from this point (Tilghman 1967: 376). There is also mention that this was one of the primary entrances to the town and that there were "docks or wharves" at this location following settlement of the area in the early-eighteenth century.

Due to the geography of the area, the Back Creek Public Wharf is a natural access point to the town of St. Michaels. The physical manifestations that survive at the site do not convey the history of the area but simply represent necessity for improvements. The likelihood of the area to provide subsurface information is uncertain. Portions of the shoreline may have been filled in or sculpted to create the present shoreline. Given this, it is recommended not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under any Criteria.

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## 9. Major Bibliographical Reference

Survey No. T-1105

Tilghman, Oswald. *History of Talbot County, Maryland 1661-1861*, vol II. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company. reprinted 1967.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name St. Michaels, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References **do NOT** complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification

Talbot County tax map 201, grid SM, parcels 1920 & 1921.

The boundary encompasses the parcels currently owned by the State Highway Administration.

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rob Yallop, Architectural Historian

organization New South Associates

date July 28, 1998

street & number 6150 E. Ponce de Leon Ave.

telephone 770-498-4155

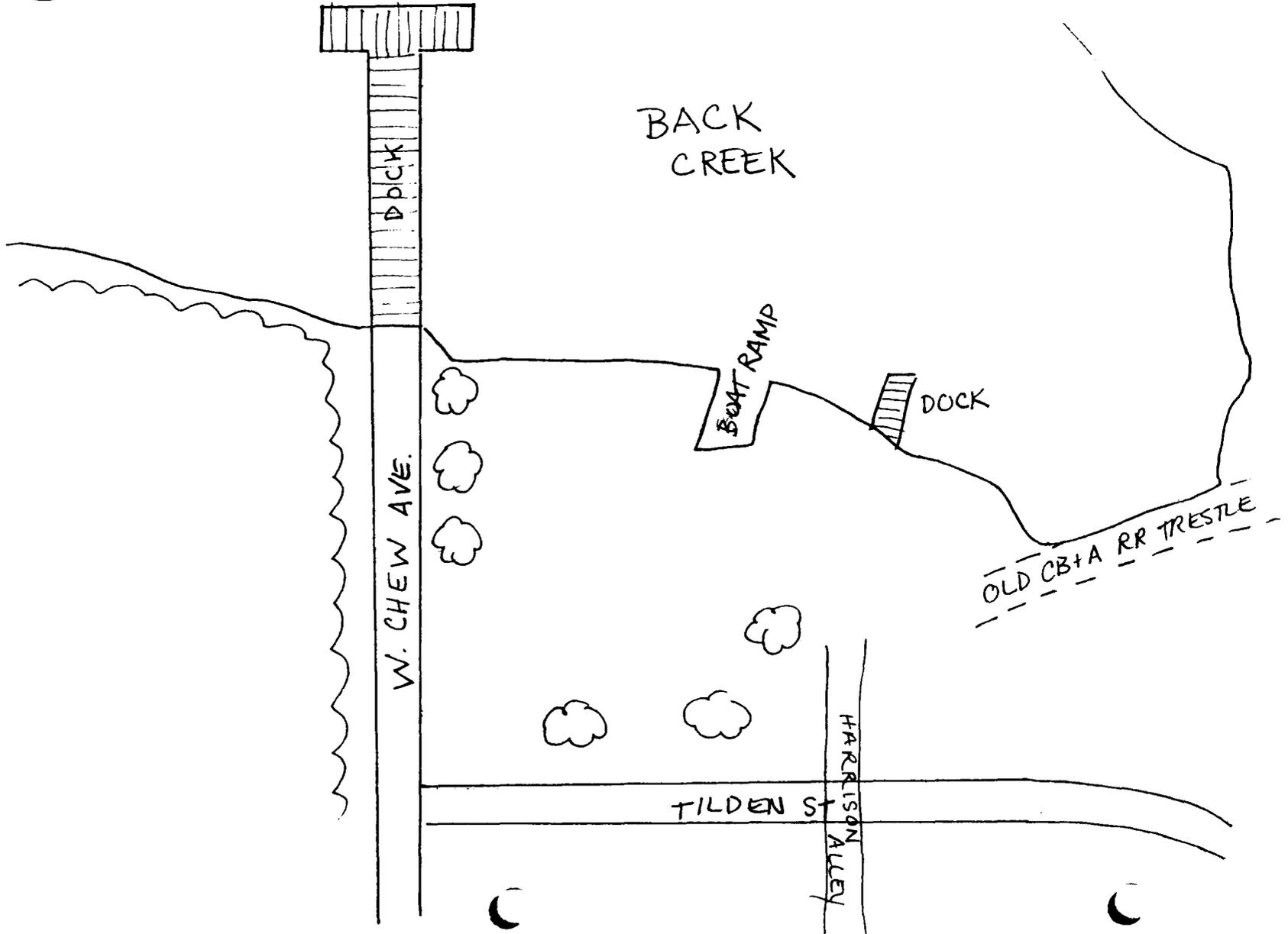
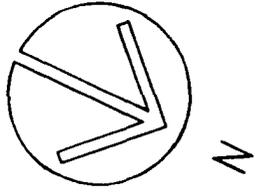
city or town Stone Mountain

state GA 30083

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.

T-1105  
Back Creek Public Wharf  
St. Michaels, MD  
SKETCH MAP - NOT TO SCALE

drawn by: Rachel Mancini  
John Milner Associates, Inc.  
August, 1998



# Continuation Sheet

Survey No.: T-1105

Name: Back Creek Public Wharf

County: Talbot

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## MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

### HISTORIC CONTEXT

**Geographic Organization:** Eastern Shore

**Chronological/Development Period(s):** Industrial/Urban Dominance Period A.D. 1870-1930

**Historic Period Theme(s):** Economic; Transportation

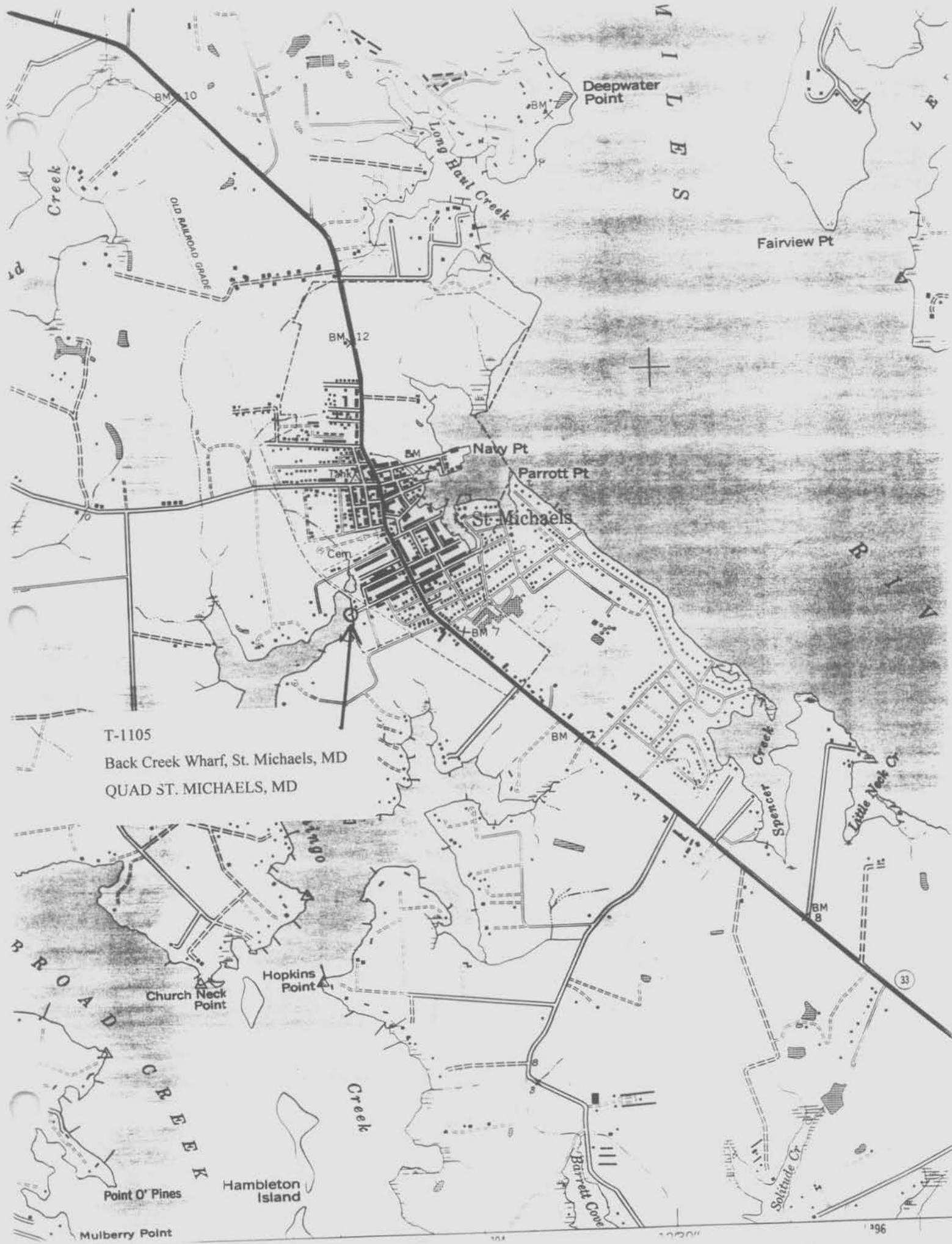
**Resource Type:**

**Category:** Structure

**Historic Environment:** Village

**Historic Function(s) and Use(s):** INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/  
waterworks/processing site  
TRANSPORTATION/water-related

**Known Design Source:** none



T-1105  
Back Creek Wharf, St. Michaels, MD  
QUAD ST. MICHAELS, MD



T-1105

Back Creek Wharf

St. Michaels, Talbot Co., MD

Rachel Mancini

August 1, 1998

neg's → MD SHPO

PROTEC8/98<No.13 >038  
785 06\*\* N N N 1-02 2<040>

Looking West down Main dock

1 of 6



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Back Creek Wharf  
St. Michaels, Talbot Co., MD

Rachel Mancini

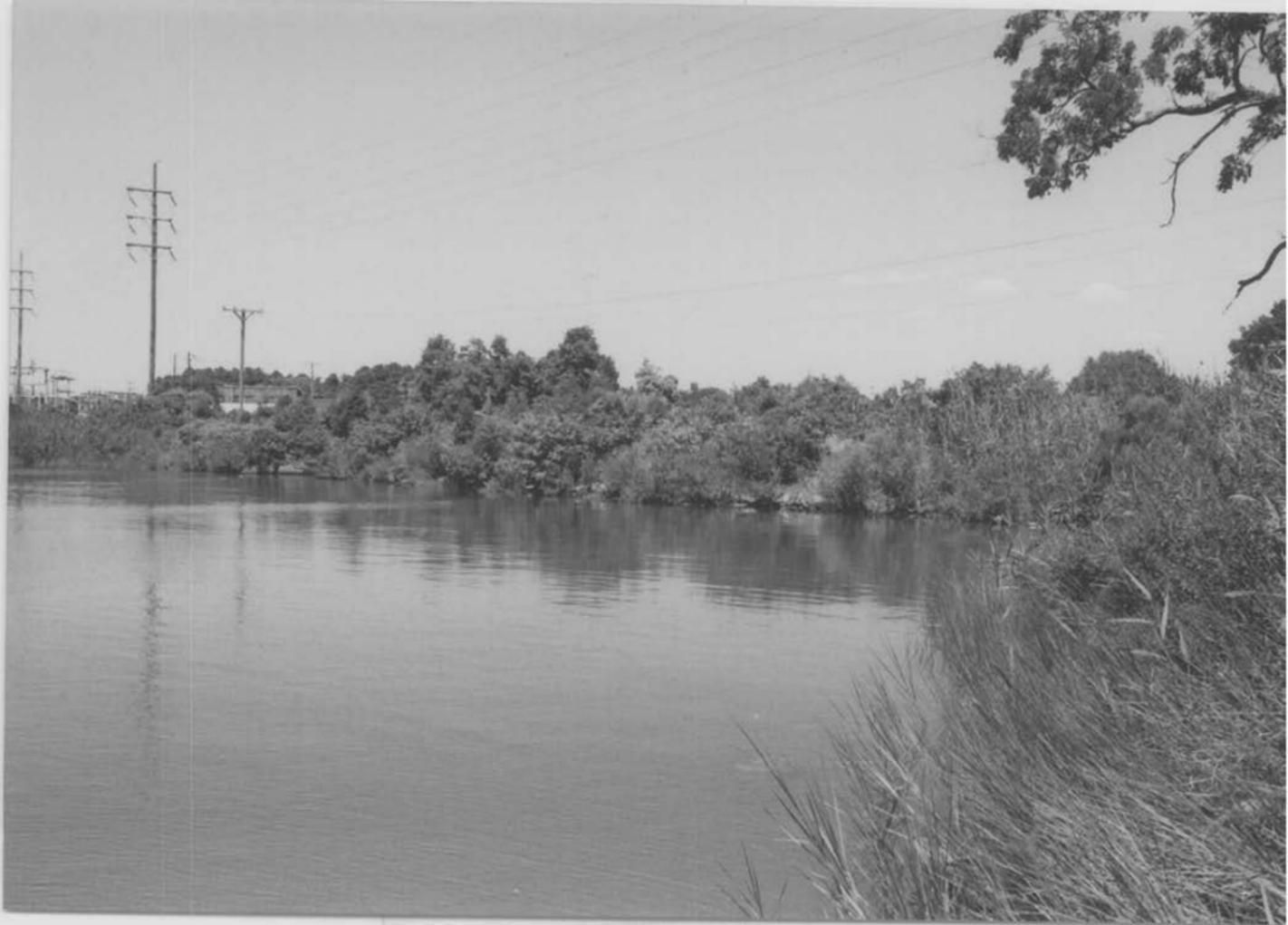
August 1, 1998

neg's → MD SHPO

PROTEG8/98<No.17>042  
785 06\*\* N N N-1 15 2<040>

Looking SW at Main Dock

2 of 6



PROTEC8/98(No.18)043  
785 06\*\* N N N-2 02 2(040)

T-1105

Back Creek Wharf

St. Michaels, Talbot Co., MD

Rachel Mancini

August 1, 1998

neg's → MD SHPO

looking NE from small dock  
@ Back Creek wharf at  
old B.C.+A. Railroad Crossing

3 of 6

6/9



PROTEGS/98(No.16)041  
785 06\*\* N N N 1-07 2(040)

T-1105

Back Creek Wharf  
St. Michaels, Talbot Co., MD

Rachel Mancini

August 1, 1998

neg's → MD SHPO

looking west down end of  
W Chew Ave at Wharf

4 of 6



RESTRICTED WHARF  
NO VEHICLES  
ALLOWED ON  
WHARF  
No Parking On Wharf

PROTEC8/98<No.15 >040  
785 06\*\* N N N 1-08 2(040)

T-1105

Back Creek Wharf

St. Michaels, Talbot Co., MD

Rachel Mancini

August 1, 1998

neg's → MD SHPO

Looking NW at grassy area  
at Wharf, old B.E.+A. RR  
line along Power lines

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6/12



PROTEC8/98<No.14 >039  
785 06\*\* N N N 1-04 2<040>

T-1105  
Back Creek Wharf  
St. Michaels, Talbot Co., MD  
Rachel Mancini  
August 1, 1998  
neg's → MD SHPO

Looking N down Tilden St  
at eastern edge of wharf  
grounds.

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