

**INFORMATION SESSION AGENDA**

**-INTRODUCTION- DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

**-CONCEPT DESIGN- NELSON BYRD WOLTZ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS**

**-NEXT STEPS- TCF, DOMINION AND DCR**

**-PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

**-IN PERSON QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

**MIDDLE PENINSULA STATE PARK: TIMBERNECK UNIT  
GATEWAY TO WEROWOCOMOCO**

Information Session  
Gloucester County, Virginia  
June 6, 2018

# WEROWOCOMOCO | The Sacred Heart of the Powhatan Chiefdom

Werowocomoco has become iconic through the legend of Pocahontas and Captain Smith, but its significance is far greater than this single story.

For many hundreds of years before the arrival of English Colonists, the Virginia Algonquins lived and thrived in an area named Tsenacommacah, which comprised all of the Tidewater of Virginia and part of the Eastern Shore. Originally cleared and settled around 1200 CE, Werowocomoco was the sacred cultural heart of Tsenacommacah and the Tribes who lived there. It was the center of Powhatan's Chiefdom; his strategic move to and settlement on Werowocomoco enabled him to consolidate his power as *Werowance*, or Paramount Chief. His authority grew to include approximately thirty tribes, and was firmly in place when Captain John Smith was captured and brought to him in 1607. Werowocomoco was abandoned by Powhatan in 1609 as an attempt to create distance between himself and the English, and his power diminished. Overtime, the exact location of Werowocomoco was lost.

The site, located on a shallow bay and bounded by three rivers within a mile of each other -- landmark features noted in Smith's journal -- was purchased by Bob and Lynn Ripley in 1996. Scholars had long theorized that this land was the site of Werowocomoco, and Lynn Ripley's growing collection of potsherds, pipe stems, and copper pieces led to an archaeological dig in 2003 by the College of William and Mary. Of particular importance among the vast archaeological findings was evidence of a significant longhouse believed to have belonged to Chief Powhatan. Evidence of large trenches, thought to be ceremonial in nature, was found, along with 20 small copper pieces whose chemical signature matched those known to have been traded with the English colonists at Jamestown between 1607 and 1609. These findings put Werowocomoco back on the map.

Placed under a conservation easement in 2012, and added to the National Park Services' Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail in 2014, NPS purchased the site in 2016. Descendants of the Virginia Algonquin tribes associated with Powhatan's Chiefdom have expressed desire that the site remain free of additional buildings in keeping with its sacred status. It is considered it to be the historic center of Tsenacommacah and the Powhatan Chiefdom.



Captain John Smith published this map in 1612, which located the numerous villages of Tsenacommacah

credit: www.nps.gov

Werowocomoco on Pamunkey River (York River)

Timberneck Site "Gateway to Werowocomoco"



Werowocomoco site: Archaeologists believe Powhatan's longhouse is situated beyond, along woodland edge



Water's edge at Werowocomoco has receded over the years, leaving artifacts submerged



Vehicular drive through Werowocomoco connects to private residence

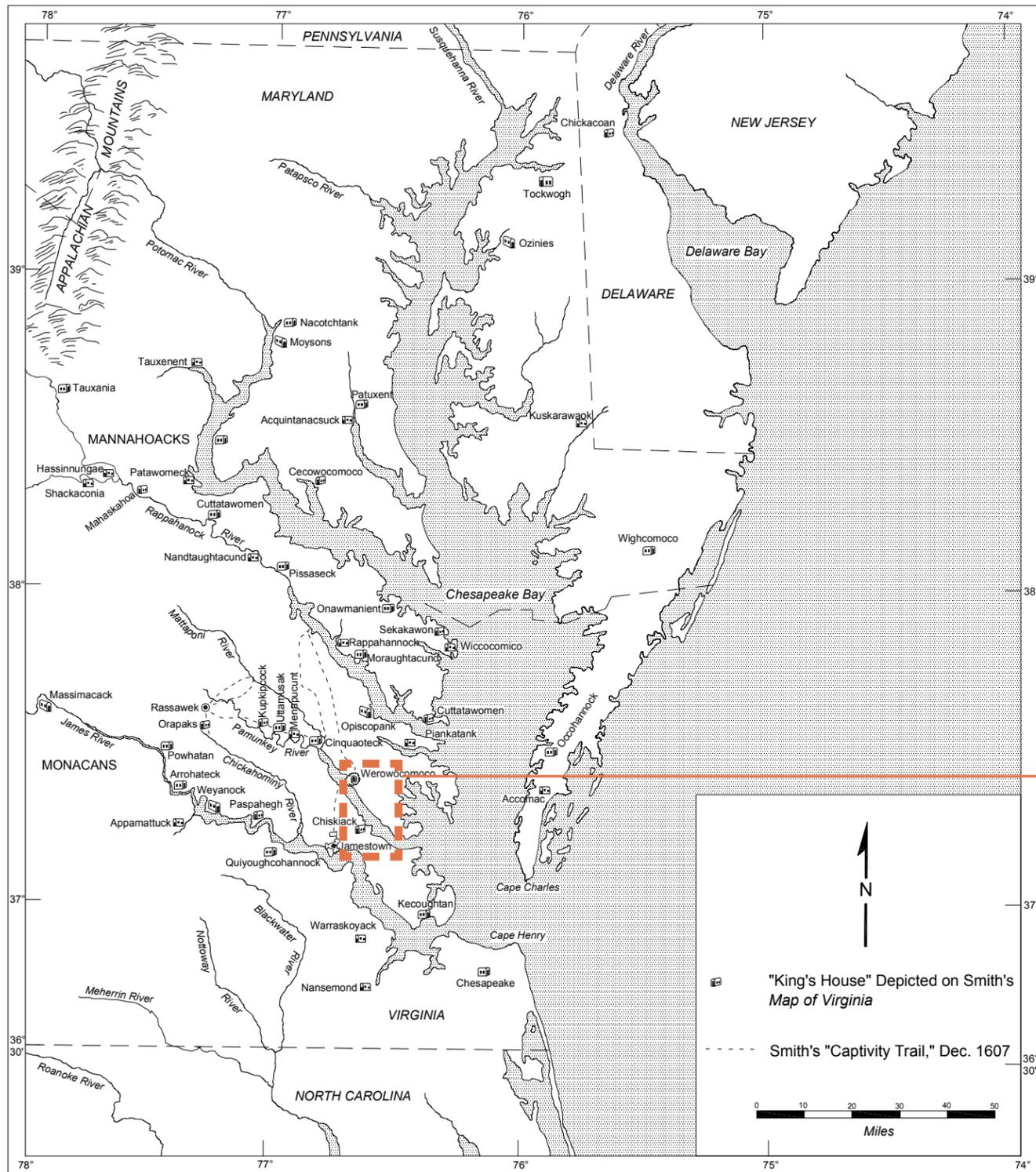


Figure 1-2. Map of Eastern Virginia, circa 1607, depicting principal native villages ("Kings' Houses on Smith's (1612) Map of Virginia) and Smith's 1607-1608 Captivity Route (taken from the Zuñiga (1608) Map).

See Appendix for Zuñiga Map. Credit: The Werowocomoco (44GL32) Research Project: Background and 2003 Archaeological Field Season Results College of William and Mary Department of Anthropology Archaeological Research Report Series Number 1 Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Historic Resources Research Report Series Number 17



## GATEWAY TO WEROWOCOMOCO | Timberneck Site as Index of Quintessential Virginia Landscapes

Archaeological evidence on Timberneck ranges from the Middle and Late Woodland Period, and includes two ancient shell middens, including one dating from 100BCE – 500CE, and various procurement sites – camps used as a base for fishing, oystering, and hunting. Located approximately 10 miles downriver from Werowocomoco, the landscape of Timberneck was most certainly associated with Tsenacommacah and Powhatan's extensive Chiefdom. The English likely settled Timberneck around 1639, when George Minifie was granted a patent on the land. In 1792, the land was sold to John Catlett and it remained in his family for the next two centuries and has been continuously commercially farmed since that time. Of particular historic interest, John Catlett held a seat in the US House of Representatives, and his son and heir, John W. C. Catlett served several terms on the Virginia House of Representatives. Included in the archaeological record is the history of the Catlett Family, the enslaved people who lived and worked on Timberneck plantation, and up to and including hunting and fishing camps from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The site is bountiful with evidence of a broad timeline and range of uses. Timberneck is an embodied index of many of the quintessential Virginia landscapes: agriculture, maritime forest, marsh, uplands, wetlands, and estuarine habitat. Richly layered historically and ecologically, Timberneck offers an optimal location for a Gateway to Werowocomoco. Respecting the sacred nature of Werowocomoco, and the Tribes' desire for it to remain clear of interpretive buildings, this landscape provides a beautiful site upon which to develop interpretive elements. The site is also perfectly situated to provide recreational and educational opportunities to both the nearby citizens of Gloucester County and day-trippers and campers from nearby counties and the DC region. The Commonwealth of Virginia has an opportunity to honor the full breadth of its cultural legacy on Timberneck Farm, from the agriculturally based villages of the Virginia Algonquins to 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Century agricultural landscapes.



### Existing Conditions and Ecology

1. Fragmented Forest
2. Agriculture: crops
3. Hydrologic drains
4. Mown parcels
5. Catlett Islands: Maritime Forest
6. Catlett Islands: Salt Marshes
7. Archaeological Site: prehistoric shell middens



# GATEWAY TO WEROWOCOMOCO | Timberneck as Gateway Site

Most recently, Timberneck was slated for a high-end development, and to that end, the site already includes a number of infrastructural improvements that could easily be reused and integrated into the development of a State Park. These include roads, walking and biking paths, oyster beds, boat slips, and a gatehouse. Park staff could reside in the existing house on site, currently being used by the land manager.



### Existing Infrastructure

- 1. Gate house
- 2. Paved road and path
- 3. Circa 1800 farm house complex
- 4. Property manager house / Maintenance yard
- 5. Boat slips
- 6. Public boat ramp (adjacent)



## GATEWAY TO WEROWOCOMOCO | Timberneck Existing Ecology

Closely affiliated with the landscape of Timberneck, the Catlett Islands, owned by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), is one of four reserves of the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System in Virginia (CBNERRSVA), representative of a significant range of coastal and estuarine ecosystems along the Pamunkey/York River. Located in a tidal tributary, the islands are described in the 2005 CBNERRSVA Management Plan as “parallel ridges of wetlands surrounded by extensive saltmarshes.”

The hydrology of the Catlett Islands are strongly influenced by tidal forces along the river and are characterized by ridge-and-swale topography, and are subject to moderate to severe shoreline erosion resulting from sea level rise and wind generated waves. The islands are comprised of different vegetation communities: low salt marsh which provide habitat for a diversity of crabs and snails; the maritime upland forest, dominated by loblolly pines and a variety of oaks; and the marsh/shrub wetland ecotone, which exists between the two.

The islands include an active heronry and are ideal habitat for nesting bald eagles. The islands are extensively used by eagles for foraging, and up until 2003, a pair nested there. As the nesting substrate is still intact, it is hoped a nesting pair will return.

Working in partnership with VIMS and CBNERRSVA, the preservation of the uplands and wetlands of Timberneck would provide added protection to the overall hydrological health of the Pamunkey/York River and the Catlett Islands and the grasslands and tidal marshes on site.



### Ecology

-  Salt Marsh
-  Maritime Upland Forest
-  Drainage



## GATEWAY TO WEROWOCOMOCO | Timberneck Site Proposed Land Use

Stewardship of productive land, either ecologically or agriculturally, begins with building and maintaining healthy soils. Regenerative agricultural production can be an efficient and effective model for value-added land management, ecological stewardship, and soil building. Well managed grassland and savannah habitats will benefit native plant species and pollinators.

Cropping offers an additional off-season field crop product without disturbance or tilling. As an example, malting barley could be grown and harvested, then sold in support of local Virginia craft breweries. Small scale field crop and vegetable production also offer an opportunity for demonstrating the agricultural methods of the Virginia Algonquin in Tsenacommacah, but would require additional labor inputs.

Agroforestry methods of forestry management could offer solutions to the labor and fossil fuel-intensive mechanical control of invasive species. Post-clearing, reforestation with native species would help create conditions for healthy edge and woodland habitat. Timber, nuts, and fruit are other by-products of agroforestry production that, like crop production, create conditions for sustainable land management and revenue generation.

### Proposed Land Use

- Interpretive Landscape
- Reforestation
- Agriculture: Crop Production
- Pollinator Meadow
- Agriculture: Marine
- Marina: Boat Landing and Entry
- Cartop Boat Launch: Kayaks and Canoes
- Facilities and Staff Housing
- Possible Event Parking

### Ecology

- Salt Marsh
- Maritime Upland Forest
- Drainage





## GATEWAY TO WEROWOCOMOCO | Timberneck Site Recreation and Circulation

With minimal development, one can envision a State Park that allows for a variety of program, suitable for those visiting for the day or camping for a few days. Hiking and biking trails – taking advantage of the paths already on site – would lead the visitor through a broad range of Virginia landscape typologies and offer exploration and guided interpretation. Birders will enjoy the site’s location along the Atlantic Flyway, Catlett Island’s resident herons, and could watch hopefully for the return of a nesting pair of bald eagles.

From its prime location on the Pamunkey/York River, we may expand upon our partnership with the NPS Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. It would provide both a landing site for those kayaking and canoeing along the trail and a starting point, complete with interpretive elements, for those launching from Timberneck. With the addition of a kayak and canoe launch, along with the already constructed boat slips, visitors would be able to travel upriver to Werowocomoco, downriver to the Chesapeake, and explore the Catlett Islands. While direct access to the Catlett Islands would be restricted, the ongoing research conducted by CBNERRVA provides another opportunity for guided interpretive elements.

A successful precedent that could be employed here is that of the Mississippi River Paddle Share in Minneapolis. This program allows people who have experience on a kayak, but don’t own their own boat, the opportunity to explore the islands and shoreline of Timberneck. This kayak share is also associated with a bike share, so visitors would be able to tour the site on bicycle, and then at one of three Bike and Boat Share Stations, explore the rest of the State Park via water.

### Proposed Recreation and Circulation

- ▬▬▬▬▬ Hiking Trail or Boardwalk
- ▬▬▬▬▬ Bicycle Path
- ▬▬▬▬▬ Vehicular Road
- Kayak and Canoe Route
- ▬▬▬▬▬ Motorized Boat Access and Route
- Public Boat Ramp
- ⬢ Pedestrian Rest and Overlook
- ⬢ Campground Facility
- ⬢ Archaeological Site
- Bike and Boat Share Station





## GATEWAY TO WEROWOCOMOCO | Timberneck Site

Hiking and biking trails, along with the opportunity to explore the creeks and marshes, will take the visitor through a diversity of cultural landscapes and land management strategies. Existing at a small scale and with more focus, these landscape types will also be concentrated on the southeast peninsula. It is envisioned that from this overlook, the majority of the site's interpretive elements and amenities will be located. This focused intensity of program condenses the cultural and agricultural land use types into one area.

Beautiful and abundant in history both culturally and ecologically, Timberneck should be embraced as a place that holds the full arc of Virginia history. Focused as the Gateway to Werocomomoco, it would be able to tell the full story of the Virginia Algonquins as the original stewards of Tidewater Virginia. Through this lens, the story of subsequent colonization, plantation and commercial farming by the Catletts, the lives of the enslaved workers, and the natural history along the shores of the Pamunkey/ York River becomes that much richer.

### Proposed Recreation and Circulation

- ⋯ Hiking Trail or Boardwalk
- Bicycle Path
- Vehicular Road
- ⋯ Kayak and Canoe Route
- ⋯ Motorized Boat Access and Route
- Public Boat Ramp
- ⬠ Pedestrian Rest and Overlook
- ⬠ Campground Facility
- ⬠ Archaeological Site
- Bike and Boat Share Station

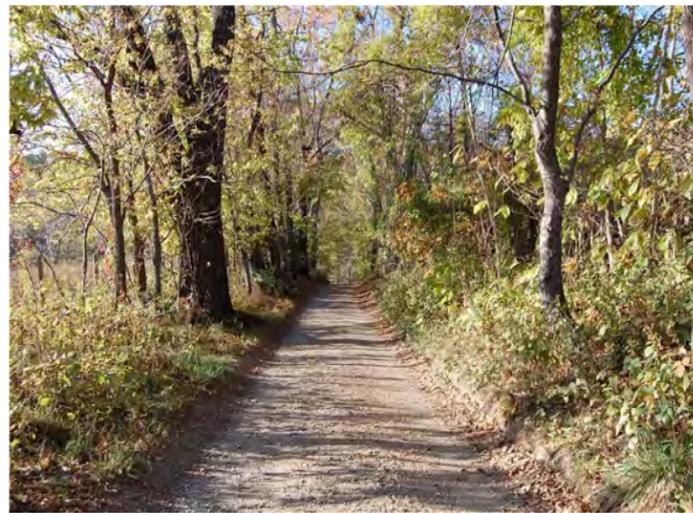
### Proposed Land Use

- Interpretive Landscape
- Reforestation
- Agriculture: Crop Production
- Pollinator Meadow
- Agriculture: Marine
- Marina: Boat Landing and Entry
- Cartop Boat Launch: Kayaks and Canoes
- Facilities and Staff Housing
- Possible Event Parking

### Ecology

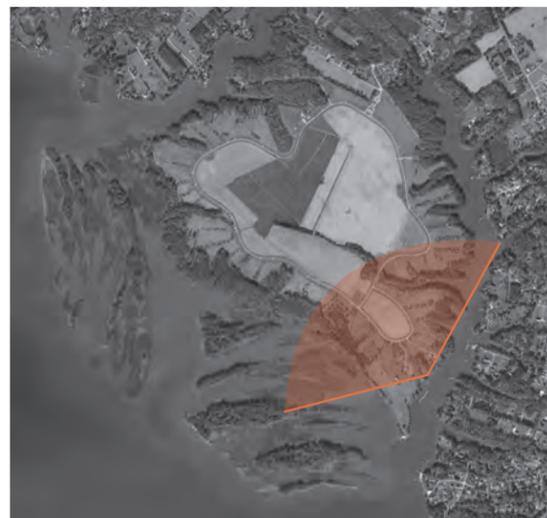
- Salt Marsh
- Maritime Upland Forest
- Drainage





GATEWAY TO WEROWOCOMOCO | Timberneck Interpretive Landscape





**Southeast Peninsula Key**

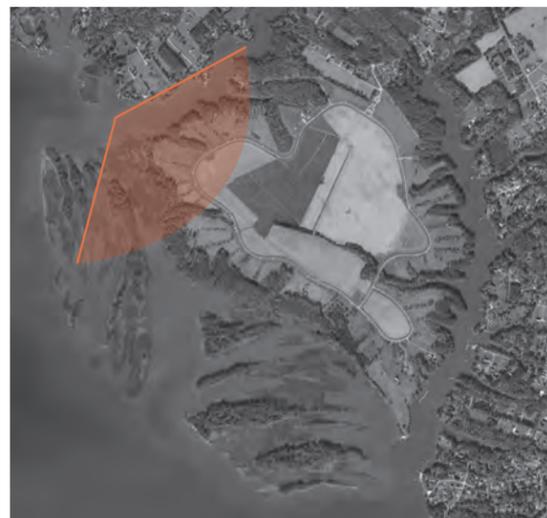
- 1. Interpretive Landscape  
Spatial framework for understanding index and timeline of inherited cultural landscape
- 2. Recreational node  
Exchange: bike and paddle share, access to water
- 3. Reforested land
- 4. Productive Agriculture: crops
- 5. Pollinator Meadow
- 6. Aquaculture and recreation: York River and Catlett Islands
- 7. Boat slips
- 8. Path to Oyster Point

Vantage of perspective rendering

Aerial of existing landscape

GATEWAY TO WEROWOCOMOCO | Timberneck Interpretive Landscape



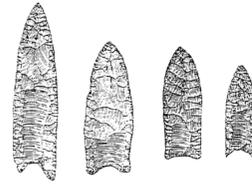


**Cedarbush Creek Key**

- 1. Walkway to kayak launch and Archaeological Site
- 2. Recreational node  
Exchange: bike and paddle share, access to water
- 3. Parking for car-top launch
- 4. Forested Edge
- 5. Pedestrian Walk
- 6. Pollinator Meadow
- 7. Productive Agriculture: crops
- 8. Campground
- 9. Salt Marsh

Vantage of perspective rendering

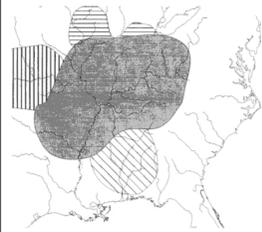
Aerial of existing landscape



Human occupation characterized by nomadic hunting and gathering wild foods. Paleo-Indians begin to visit the same places repeatedly to hunt and gather wild foods.

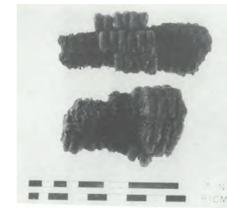
Virginian peoples shift to sedentary foraging and planting crops to depend on human-generated harvest. Sedentary foragers establish camps along floodplain terraces. Inadvertent cultivation of plants with large fruits and seeds begins.

Tsenacomacoh is established during the Late Woodland Period. Pottery shapes changed during this time to make them more suitable for boiling starchy plant material.



**Eastern Agricultural Complex emerges around 2000 BCE**  
Deliberate cultivation of plants begins centered around the shaded area in the map above. Goosefoot (*Chenopodium berlandieri*), sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), marshelder (*Iva annua*), and squash (*Cucurbita pepo*), otherwise known as the Eastern Agricultural Complex, made up the majority of Native American diets at the time.

Around 1000 CE, maize, beans, and additional squash varieties make their way to Virginia.



Carbonized maize from Western Virginia

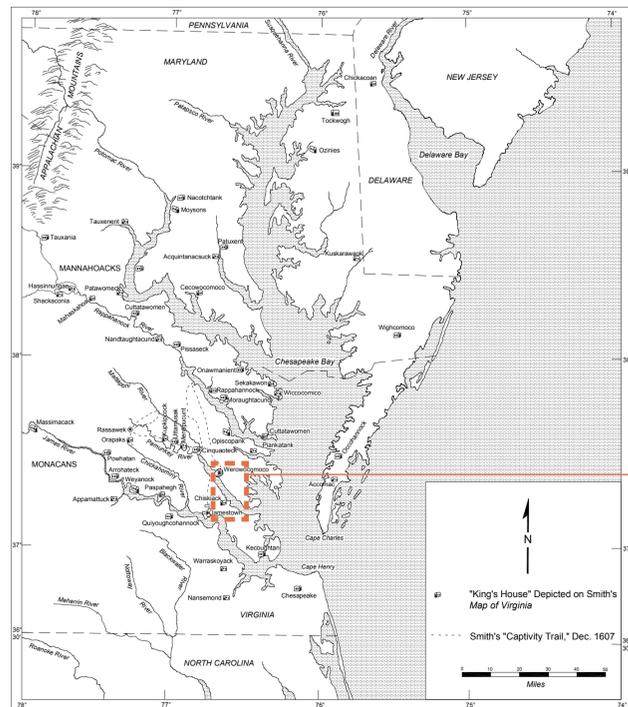
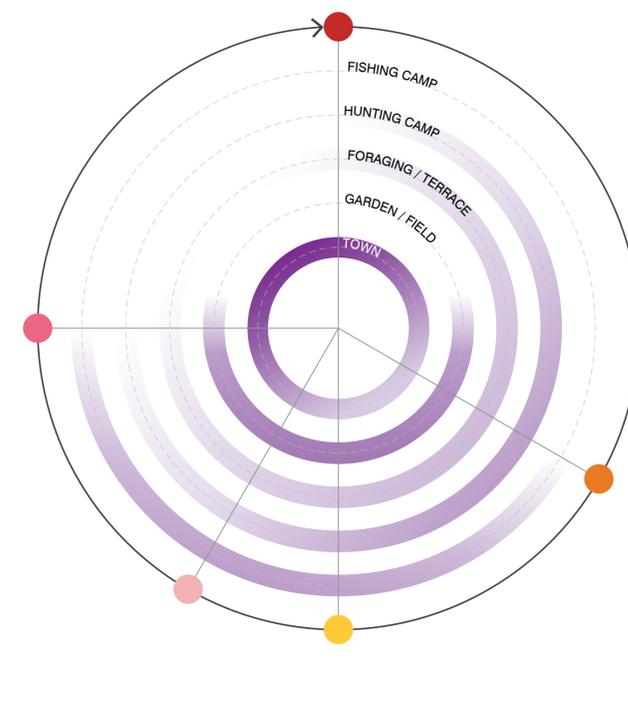
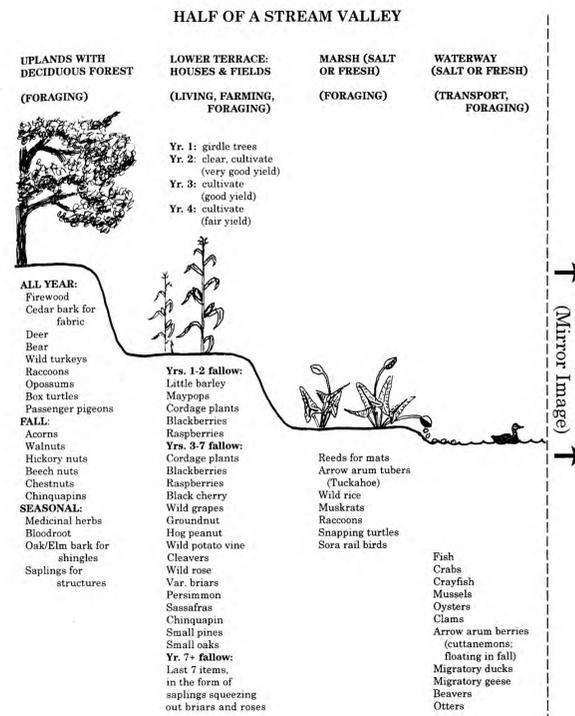
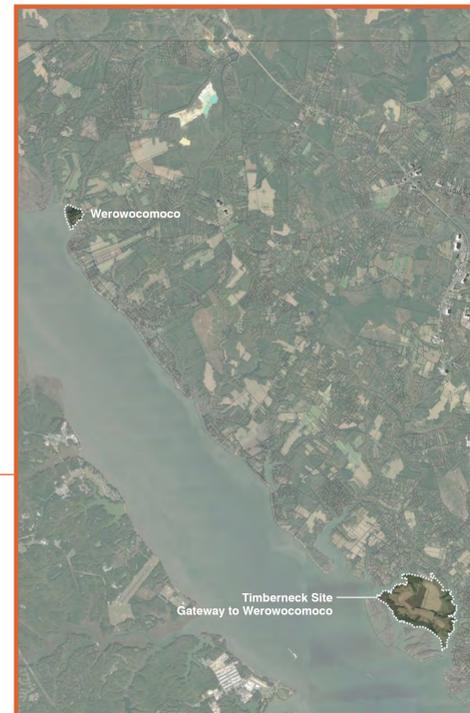


Figure 1-2. Map of Eastern Virginia, circa 1607, depicting principal native villages ("Kings' Houses on Smith's (1612) Map of Virginia) and Smith's 1607-1608 Captivity Route (taken from the Zuhiga (1608) Map).



Men return for end of year feasting in late fall. Autumn feasts were a rare occasion for everyone to come together. The last harvest ends in October as fishing season ends.





An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A wide, light-colored paved road curves through the scene from the bottom left towards the top right. To the left of the road is a large field of tall, dry, golden-brown stalks, possibly corn. To the right of the road is a grassy area with several small, young trees and a dark wooden fence. In the background, there are more fields, a dense line of trees, and a large body of water under a clear sky. The word "QUESTIONS?" is overlaid in the center of the image in a large, bold, black font.

**QUESTIONS?**