MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CT-79

MAGI #0500795616

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Patuxent River Mining Sites

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Ferry Landing Road (MD 525)/ Palisades Drive

CITY, TOWN

Dunkirk/Chaney

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Calvert

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE, zip code

___ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Liber #:

Folio #:

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Calvert County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Prince Frederick

STATE

MD

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

CT-79

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	X DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Several sites all in the vicinity of Lyons Creek were mined at various times. According to H. Vokes, Geography and Geology of Maryland, the mouth of Lyons Creek was the first site on the Patuxent and first worked in 1822. The 1907, Maryland Geology Survey, mentions the Maryland Silicate Company as having worked the Lyons Creek Wharf area "for a number of years". That same source also states that the Lyons Creek locality long exceeded that of any other region in the United States and put Maryland at the head of the diatomaceous-earth producing states. According to County Records SS6-208, William Weed et al. owned land on Lyons Creek and the Patuxent in 1884 which they sold to the New York Silicate Company. The parcel is described as "beginning for the same at a stake standing on the east side of the Patuxent River at the average high water mark and opposite a revene and running up and with said river along the average high water mark.....to a stake at the mouth of Lyons Creek". This land was acquired from Griffith in 1883. (Liber SS6, folio 144).

By 1911, however, another company had been formed; the Maryland Silicate Company, and William Weed was its president (GWD-293). This same William Weed eventually moved to Calvert County from New York, married Addie Smith of Smithville, lived at Rose Hill and is buried in the Smithville Methodist Church Graveyard.

The Maryland Silicate Company Purchased "Lyons Creek Farm" described as a "Wharf Property at Lyons Creek, containing one hundred thirty and one-eighth acres" in 1911. The Wharf at Lyons Creek was for many years an important steamboat landing. It was the northernmost stop on the Patuxent from which boats of the Weems line ran to Baltimore. GWD4-428 indicates the type of contract wharf owners maintained with Weems. This property appears to have been owned by the Weeds in 1889 and then sold to others (SS6-208) and (GWD-294). This left Weeds company in control of a sizable portion of land with considerable water frontage. Ownership changes, incorrectly recorded deeds, etc. cause confusion in the title search of these properties, but it is clear that during the last twenty years of the 19th Century and the first decade of the 20th Century that the New York Silicate Company. The Maryland Silicate Company worked a large portion of the Lyons Creek Area and that in one capacity or another William Weed was always involved.

He apparently remained involved for quite a few years because according to Smith family oral history, Harry Kaylor, one of the last to mine the area obtained the operation from Weed. Kaylor's Company was the Silica Tile Company from which he bought six acres on the Patuxent (including a bungalow) in 1931. In 1939, the Patuxent Diatomite and Refractories Corporation was formed by Harry W. Kaylor et. al and the certificate of Incorporation specified many objective. Besides excavating diatomaceous earth, green sands and gravel, the company was to "manufacutre, sell, and operate steamboats, tugs, barges and all other watercraft of every description" for transportation of the products manufactured by the company (AAH 40-565).

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CT-79

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	X INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Beginning in the Mid 1880's and lasting up through the 1960's, the east banks of the Patuxent near Lyons Creek were mined for infusorial or diatomaceous earth as well as glauconite. Diatomaceous earth contains the skeletons of diatoms, a low order of aquatic plants. The uses of diatomaceous earth have been many. While its most common use has been as an agent for filtering water, according to the 1907 Maryland Geological Survey diatomaceous earth has also been employed as an absorbent in the manufacture of dynamite, as packing for steam boilers, pipes, and safes, as fire proofing and as an ingredient in manufacturing ceramics. William Weed was one of the first to mine diatomaceous earth in Calvert County and in his obituary which appeared in a Baltimore paper C. 1941, it says that as a young engineer Mr. Weed discovered the value of diatomaceous earth in the processing of sugar.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CT-79

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

Description and significance statements: Wayne Nield.

NAME / TITLE		
Form compiled by:	Mary Silverson	March 1978
ORGANIZATION	architectural consultant	DATE 757-2815
STREET & NUMBER	[illegible]	TELEPHONE
CITY OR TOWN	Annapolis, Md. 21401	STATE

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
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

PS-1108

Kaylors operations were south of Lyons Creek at the end of Ferry Landing Road. This provision indicates the importance of the Patuxent as a means of travel and is a concern which can be seen throughout the sixty or seventy year period in which many sites were productive. It is only one instance of the importance of the river to the growth of the County.

It is uncertain at this time whether the sites which these companies operated should be considered seperately or whether they actually form a continuous site which spread as deposits grew thinner in one area and the next. If one begins with the mouth of Lyons Creek (first mined c. 1884) and proceed south along the east bank of the Patuxent, one still finds evidence of mining all of the way down at Ferry Landing. AAH25-227 indicates that The Silica Tile Company even owned land below this point.

Another factor to be considered is that diatomaceous earth exists on top of green sand and at this or any given site, the mining of diatomaceous earth preceeded and paved the way, so to speak, for the taking of green sand.

For purposes of the survey, three particular sites have been chosen because of their historic, architectural and archialogical value and because they document various stages in the development of the mining industry. These are the most visible as of this date.

A. Less than 75 yards south of the mouth of Lyons Creek on the east side of the Patuxent, one can see pilings which are the remains of Lyons Creek Wharf. At this same point is a newer dock used by the residents of Patuxent Pallisades. Directly behind the wharf, the banks rise C. 20', and one can see an unnatural carved-out area. Due to erosion, foliage is thinner here, and various layers of earth are exposed.

Based on this visual evidence, deed reference SS6-208, and the information provided by the 1907 Maryland Geological Survey, this site can be identified as one of, if not the earliest diatomaceous earth mine and the one worked by the New York Silicate Company and William Weed.

B. Further down the river are two more sites. At the end of Ferry Landing Road, one can see the remains of the Ferry Landing (CLVT-). On the bluff above this wharf and slightly to the south is the bungalow which Harry Kaylor occupied and the one mentioned in deed reference AAH-25-227.

North of the Ferry Landing is an enormous metal shed which contains old mining equipment, autos, farm equipment, etc., a wooden tressel with a loading device (apparently for loading trucks with gravel etc.), and the remains of the scales which weighed out the trucks (photos attached). Behind all of this (to the east), there is another carved out bank exposing some of the white diatomaceous earth. This is mining site B.

C. North of site B. is the site which provides us with the greatest visual evidence of mining operations along the Patuxent. (See map.) Although no longer in operation, much of the equipment remains for mining and refining glauconite, also called green sand. There is little evidence of diatomaceous earth at this site indicating that it was probably exahausted some time ago.

The banks of this site show the deepest and widest penetration of the three. On the site, is a large sheet metal structure containing the equipment necessary for pulverizing and refining the raw products dug out of the nearby banks. One can see in the attached photo that the building appears to be constructed of squares or rectangles. Each of these represents a sheet of metal x and thick which is bolted to the frame. The building is approximately long, deep and high. It is painted red. This plant was first errected c. and was operating until . It is the largest and most recently operated of the three.

baltimore county
office of planning and zoning
TOWSON, MARYLAND 21204
(301) 494-3211

October 20, 1977

Mr. Mark Edwards
Maryland Historical Trust
Annapolis MD 21401

Dear Mark,

Wayne Nield was in yesterday and said you were interested in a silicate mine in Calvert County. I haven't seen it, but I picked up these facts while looking for mills:

Calvert Journal, September 13, 1902:

"Smithville Items--The Silica mines at Lyons Creek which have been closed for some time, are now in operation, preparing for the shipment which is to be made during the week. The vessel which is to carry the dirt to New York is expected daily."

Calvert Journal, November 15, 1902, p. 3

Sheriff's Sale ... "Lyons Creek Farm" ... 130-1/8 acres ... ref deed from Harvey N. Weed and wife et al to New York Silicate Co. ... 1889 ... recorded in JS 2:68 also deed to NY Silicate Co. ... 1884 ... recorded SS No. 6, f. 280 ... Beginning on Patuxent ... 100 hp steam boiler ... 25 hp steam engine ... Silicate Mill and attachments ....

Calvert Journal, April 13, 1889 (under "Dunkirk Items")

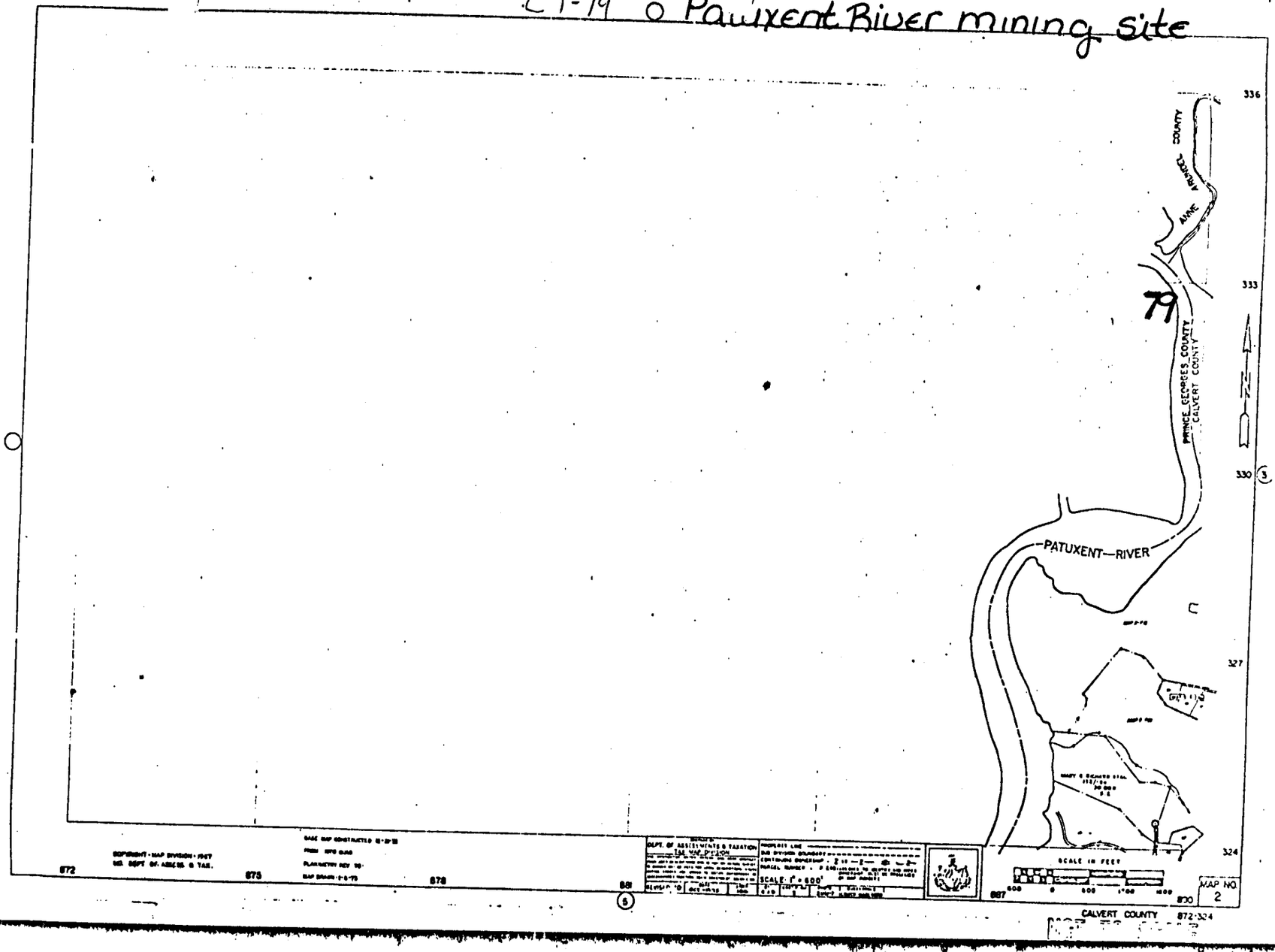
The storm of Saturday last was the most severe that has visited this section for years. Numerous buildings were destroyed among which were ... the buildings of the New York Silicate Company ... at their mines were also injured.

Very truly yours,

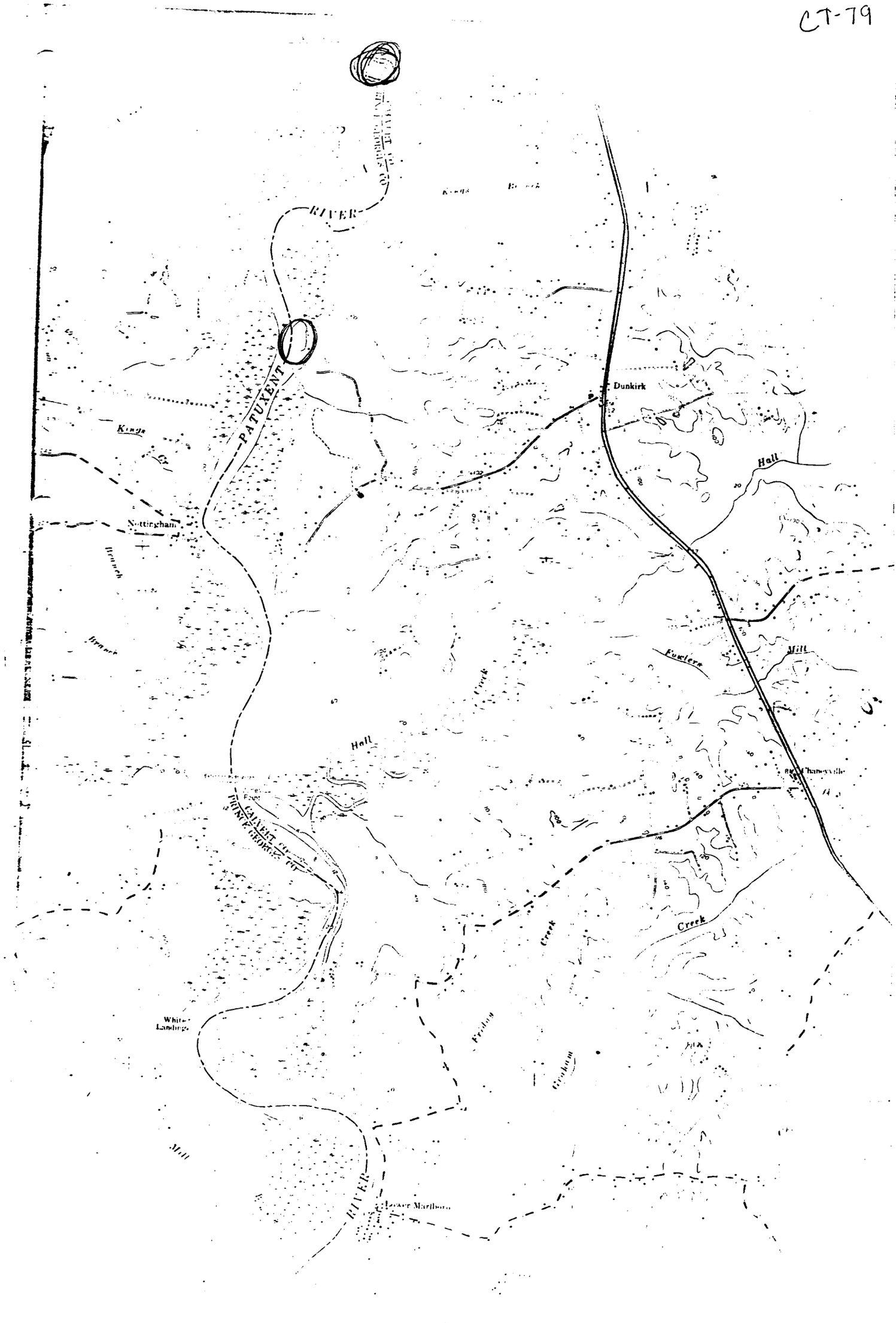
John McGrain

RECEIVED
OCT
MARYLAND
TRUST

CT-79 o Patuxent River mining site



CT-79



RIVER
PATUXENT
Kings
Nottingham
Branch
Dunkirk
Hall
Fowlers
Mill
Creek
Hall
Chaneyville
Creek
White Landing
Mill
RIVER
Lower Marlboro

CT-79

Patuxt River Mine
C.

W.N. 4/79

CT-79

Patux River Mine

C

W.N. 4/76