MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes___ no X

Property Name: Former Western Md Railroad Right-of Way (ROW) Inventory Number: AL-VI-B-354

Address: Along MD 36 from Lonaconing to Gilmore City: Lonaconing Zip Code: _____

County: Allegany USGS Topographic Map: Lonaconing

Owner: Western Maryland RR Is the property being evaluated a district?___ yes

Tax Parcel Number: _____ Tax Map Number: _____ Tax Account ID Number: _____

Project: AL8485180 Agency: SHA

Site visit by MHT staff: X no ____yes Name: _____ Date: _____

Is the property is located within a historic district ____ yes X no

If the property is within a district District Inventory Number: _____

NR-listed district____yes Eligible district ____yes Name of District: _____

Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource___yes ____ no Non-contributing but eligible in another contex ____ yes

If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district) Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible ____yes X no

Criteria: ___ A ___B ___C___ D Considerations: ___ A ___B___ C___ D___ E___ F ___G___ None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in Compliance files

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

On the east side of MD 36 is a section of abandoned CSX Railroad Right-of-Way (ROW) that runs from Gilmore south to Lonaconing along Georges Creek. The ROW was formerly used by the Western Maryland (WM) Railroad which took over the Georges Creek and Cumberland (GC & C) Railroad in 1913. The ROW is probably part of the original GC & C , a regional railroad which was constructed in 1880-81.

A review of various maps indicate that the GC&C ran south form Gilmore along this side of Georges Creek. The existing ROW merging into existing CSX tracks just north of Lonaconing (south of the project area). Most of the tracks and associated structures have been removed/demolished along this section of ROW and it is overgrown with vegetation. (Although about 100 feet of tracks are still evident near the merge with current CSX tracks) It is not known exactly when this section of ROW was abandoned. However, WM abandoned the tracks from Georges Creek Junction to Midland in 1939.

The GC&C was chartered in 1876 and organized by 1879 by the American and Maryland Coal Companies who had interest in the coal in the Georges Creek region. The GC&C competed with the Consolidation Coal Company owned by the Cumberland and Pennsylvania (C&P) Railroad in the transportation of coal from Georges Creek region to Cumberland.

In June 1879, a contract was awarded to Wilis and J.N. Phelps of Springfield, Mass. to construct the GC&C line. A single

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIE

Eligibility recommended ____ **Eligibility not recommended** X

Criteria: ___ A ___B ___C ___D **Considerations:** ___ A ___B___ C___ D___ E___ F___ G ___None

MHT Comments

Andrew Lewis ✓ 4/28/03

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Service **Date**

4/29/03

Reviewer, NR Program **Date**

200301448

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contract for 1.5 million feet of pine trestling lumber was let to build the trestles and bridges.

The GC & C main line reached the Jackson Mine in Lonaconing in 1880 and was completed in 1881. It ran 20 miles from Georges Creek over Vale Summit (parallel to the Eckhart Branch line to La Vale), down the Narrows to its Georges Creek Junction with the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) at the western end of the Narrows and into Cumberland.

The GC & C had 50.6 miles of railroad mainline and branch track. It extended along the southern side of the Narrows and the southern side of Braddock Run, following the Eckhart branch's route at a higher elevations through the Georges Creek valley. The GC & C featured two tunnels and several bridges over Georges Creek. It crossed the town of Midland on a large wooden trestle that was removed in the 1930's. There was also a large trestle near Knapps Meadow that was removed in 1921.

The GC & C provided passenger service, although coal was the primary cargo. The January 18, 1887 published schedule of the GC & C shows two trains per day from Cumberland to Lonaconing (except Sundays). If you took the 10:45 AM from Lonaconing, you could lunch in Cumberland before catching the 1:15 PM to New York over the Pennsylvania Railroad. This express service would arrive in New York at 7:10 AM the next day. There was checked baggage service on this line. Passenger stations were located at Cumberland, Vale Summit, Midland and Lonaconing. The station at Lonaconing was located up the hill from the town, and the line is still evident in this area, but no rails remain. The GC&C used the Hay Street Station in Cumberland, and had a passenger stop at Mechanic Street. The roundhouse and turntable at City Junction. None of these structures are extant.

The WM purchased the controlling stock interests of the GC&C on January 17, 1907. The GC&C was a small but key part of the George Gould master plan for a transcontinental railroad link. Gould's dream ended in bankruptcy after the financial panic of 1907. Operation of the GC&C was taken over by the newly reorganized Western Maryland Railway in July of 1913. . full merger and consolidation took place on January 23, 1917 by order of the United States Railroad Administration. The GC&C line was operated by WM until 1939, when the track from Georges Creek Junction to Midland was abandoned. Mines west of Midland were served through the connection with the C&P at Jackson Junction, near Lonaconing. In 1968, the B & O and C & O were given permission to take over the operations of the WM. By 1983, WM was completely merged into B & O (and then CSX) and ceased to exisit as an operating railway

Although the GC & C was an important regional railroad which played a role in the development of the coal industry as well as transportation in the Georges Creek Valley, the abandoned ROW lacks the necessary integrity of location, design, materials, setting, and workmanship to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The ties and rails in this section of ROW from Gilmore to Lonaconing have been removed (except in a spot area near the merge with CSX trackage) and there are no associated structures remaining.

References:

Stakem, Pat, Cumberland and Pennsylvania Railroad Revisited. P. 21,79

Feldstein, Albert L., Feldstein's Historic Coal Mining and Railroads of Allegany County, Commercial Printing Company, 1999.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIE

Eligibility recommended ____ **Eligibility not recommended** ____

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

MHT Comments

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Service **Date**

Reviewer, NR Program **Date**

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Harvey, Katherine, The Best Dressed Miners, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969).

Prepared by: Liz Buxton Date Prepared: 03/31/2003

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIE

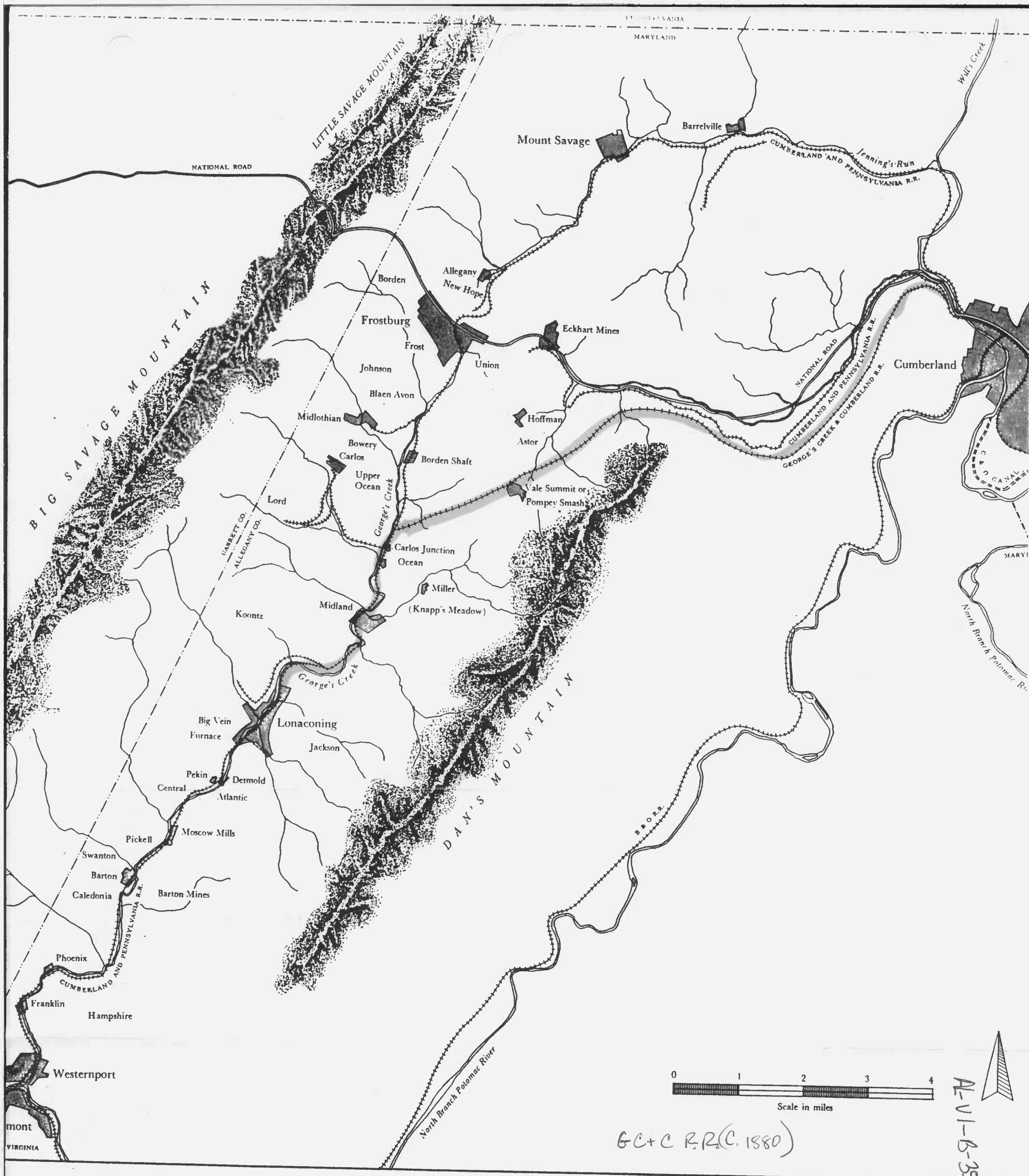
Eligibility recommended ____ **Eligibility not recommended** ____

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

MHT Comments

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Service **Date**

Reviewer, NR Program **Date**



GC+C R.R. (C. 1880)

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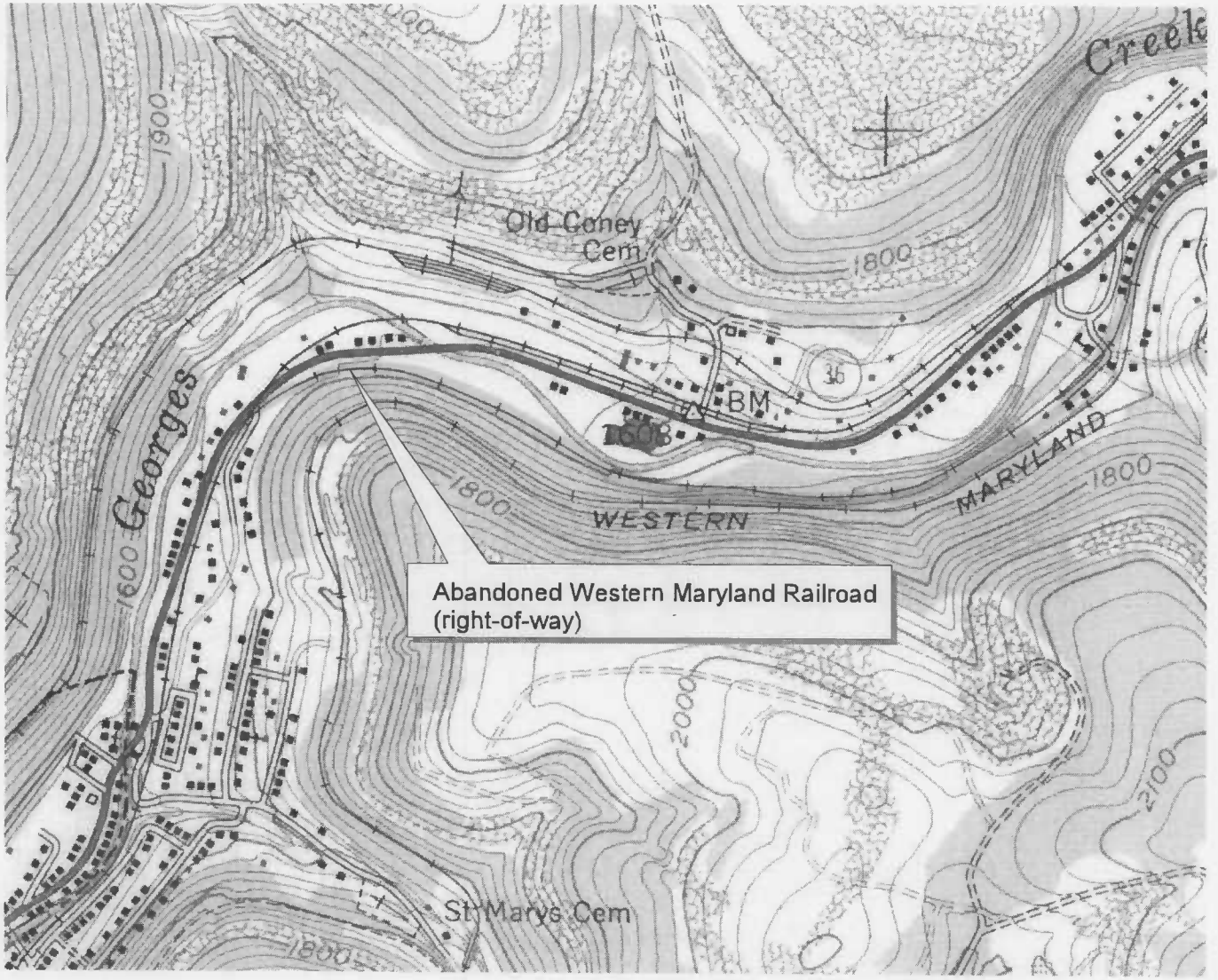
Map of George's Creek Valley, Allegany County, Maryland, showing the approximate locations of coal mines mentioned in the text

From: Best Dressed Miners
By Katherine A. Harvey

MD 36 over Geroges Creek
Allegany Co.
Lonaconing Quad



0.4 0 0.4 0.8 Miles

USGS Topo Quad Index
County

N
W E
S

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Former Western M- | GC + C RR
Rov. (abandoned)
along [illegible] G. [illegible] of Conaconing,
Allegany Co.
MSHPO
L. Buxton
3/03

AL-VI-B-354

Former Western MD / GC+C RR
ROW (abandoned)
along MD 36 - N of Lonaconing
Allegany Co
MSHPO
L. Buxton

3/03