



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 053-6564

1. General Information

District name(s): Southwest Loudoun Rural Road Network Historic District

Main Streets and/or Routes: Ridgeside, Trappe, Green Garden, Willisville, and Quaker Lane
City or Town: Middleburg, including villages of Unison, Pot House, Trappe, and Aldie

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Loudoun

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage:

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban Suburban Town Village Hamlet Rural x

Briefly describe the district's overall setting, including any notable landscape features:

Loudoun County Virginia occupies the most northern part of the state, bounded to the north by the Potomac River and the Maryland state line. Southwest Loudoun sits in the southern portion of the Loudoun Valley, a valley in the western part of the County and which is bounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains to the west and the Catoctin and Bull Run Mountains to the east. Southwest Loudoun is a distinctly rich agricultural area with plentiful streams, good quality soils, hardwood trees, open vistas, and rolling topography. Southwest Loudoun is crossed by two historic turnpikes, the Snickersville Turnpike (VA State Route 734) and the Ashby Gap Turnpike (US Route 50), which transverse east to west. Between the turnpikes is open agricultural landscape, interspersed with historic villages, knit together by a rural road network of paved and gravel roads. This rural road network is still in use today along its original alignment and has become a distinctive hallmark of Loudoun County, recently named to the prestigious list of 'Signatures of Loudoun.'

Extant resources include Ridgeside, Trappe, Green Garden, Willisville, and Quaker. All of these roads were established in the late 1700s and remain unpaved and in use. All retain a high degree of physical integrity.

1 https://www.loudountimes.com/0local-or-not/1local/county-announces-signatures-of-loudoun-design-winners/article_80bc94a0-2f45-11ef-b228-cfe8586407a8.html

3. Architectural/Physical Description

Architectural Style(s): Vernacular

If any individual properties within the district were designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here:

N/A

If any builders or developers are known, please list here: N/A

Date(s) of construction (can be approximate): 18th, 19th and 20th century

Are there any known threats to this district? development

Narrative Description:

In the space below, briefly describe the general characteristics of the entire historic district, such as building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district, as well as typical updates, additions, remodelings, or other alterations that characterize the district..

The Southwest Loudoun Rural Roads Historic District is characterized by large farms and open agricultural fields. The rural local roads, both paved and gravel, ribbon throughout the district, retaining their rural feel, without modern intrusions of over-sized highway signs, streetlights, or guard rails.

At the southwestern edge of the County, the rural roads are laid out in a near grid-like pattern. Ridgeside, Trappe, Green Garden, Willisville, and Quaker Lane run almost parallel to one another along a north-south axis, along the same orientation as the Blue Ridge Mountains ridge line. Perpendicular to this, Sunken Lane, Welbourne, and Trappe Road run in an east-west direction, forming intersections of 90-degree angles. Roadways are remarkably straight, yielding only to accommodate abrupt changes in topography.

Prominent materials of the gravel roads are the gray-colored, crushed limestone, a living finish covering the roads' packed earth surface. The gravel is occasionally graded and supplemented with new. Some roads are sunken lanes, with high earthen walls, carved by centuries of travel along the original alignment. Roads are narrow, some only wide enough to allow one car to pass at a time. Some paved roads are tar and chip, also with a grey surface color and other paved roads are a black asphalt, some with double yellow lines. All paved local roads have been widened enough for dual lanes.

Southwest Loudoun's network of rural roads retain their historic integrity for the following reasons:

Design elements include roadway **width, steep banks, and alignment**. Southwest Loudoun's rural roads, as originally designed, were narrow in **width**. The road width remains relatively unchanged, evidenced by **steep banks**, testimony to centuries of travel carved along the same route. It was common for mid to late 18th century roads to follow the most direct route, sometimes a boundary line, resulting in remarkably straight **alignment**, even crossing difficult terrain such as a steep hill or soft bottomland. Many roads, as evidenced by parallel stonewalls and sunken

lanes, retain their original alignment. [See Photo 1 - Millsville Road and Photo 3 Welbourne Road]

Secondary resources such as **bridges** bear the mark of simple but ingenious **design**, testimony to their rural context. **Bridges** attributed to Luten were the most prevalent and many remain in use. The poured-in-place concrete was the perfect solution for remote, rural settings. Many Luten bridges were installed as early as 1916 and 1918, marking the arrival of the motor vehicle. (Photo 6, Quaker Lane.) The low **water bridges**, another secondary resource, demonstrate vernacular **design** of gentlemen engineers. Low water bridges were made of steel culverts coupled together and faced in fieldstone; some later garaged with concrete. (Photo 02, Newlin Mill Road)

Location

The **location** of Southwest Loudoun's rural road network was largely dictated by the pattern of connecting farms and mills to the 'main roads' or turnpikes. The location of the roads largely remains original as evidenced by the period villages, such as Unison, Willisville and Trappe, that mark the original location. [Photo 8 Middleburg Training Center and (Photo 13 Willisville Road and historic Willisville Schoolhouse)

Setting

Loudoun's road network can be defined by its unique **cultural and environmental setting**. The **cultural setting** remains the much same as during the Period of Significance. Period architecture – such as the Green Garden Mill – align with the road network's right of way and contribute to the network's historic cultural setting. (See Photo 4, Green Garden Road) The **environmental setting**, of open agricultural vistas, also remains the largely same as during the Period of Significance. Many farms are in conservation easement, protected for perpetuity. (See Photo 9, Foggy Bottom Road) Witness trees, some of which have grown into the right of way, have become part of the roadway. (See Photo 1, Millsville Road) In other places, century old tree roots form the wall of the sunken lane, becoming an integral part of the roadbed. (See Photo 3, Welbourne Road)

Materials

Loudoun's gravel roads have a 'living finish;' **materials** no different than lime mortar, which undergoes continued repointing; roofing, which changes from shakes, to tin, to pre-painted metal; or weatherboard, which receives layers of lime washes or paint. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, road construction consisted of clearing undergrowth and trees, in some cases to the specified width. By the early 1900s, road construction included motorized grading, slightly crowning the surface and digging parallel drainage ditches. The roadway 'material' was an earthen surface, which changed with weather patterns and use – mud in the spring and evolving into rammed earth over time. Later in the 20th century, some rural roads were graveled; similar methods and materials still used today.² Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) uses A-21 gravel, which is primarily crushed limestone sourced locally.³ A-21 gravel is designed as a construction base, not as a road surface.⁴ This type of gravel disintegrates with wear, turning into dust in the summer and mud in the winter, altering the state of the road 'material' between seasons. Typically, rather than gravel fully covering the road surface, sprinklings of gravel remain

² The rural road network, or the secondary roads system, was largely 'unimproved, graded, or gravel' through the mid 1960s. (Source: Loudoun County, Primary and Secondary Highways, Department of Highways, Richmond Virginia, 1967

³ In Loudoun, gravel is sourced from neighboring Clarke County, Stewart Perry quarries, Berryville Virginia

⁴ VDOT specifications for gravel are the same for paved roads as for gravel roads although the performance needs of the gravel is drastically different between paved and gravel roads.

at the crown of the road, with the bulk of gravel washing out at ditches. Today's roadbed is more often packed earth than gravel, and ironically, a strikingly authentic surface. (See Photo 3 – Welbourne Road) Southwest Loudoun's paved rural roads have a grey surface color mixed with gravel aggregate.

Workmanship

Many of Loudoun's rural roads follow sunken lanes, evidence of workmanship of laborers repeatedly digging out the road surface in an attempt to reach a stable base. Often the road labor was that of the enslaved and these sunken lanes appear more frequently in southwest Loudoun where slave labor was more common. By comparison, John Wolford Road, north of Waterford located in an area settled by Quakers who did not own slaves, remains flat. (Photo 3 - Welbourne Road)

The National Task Force for Historic Roads (NTFHR), part of the Rural Heritage Program of the National Trust, has established three classifications of historic roads: cultural routes, engineered routes, and aesthetics routes. Cultural and Engineered Routes are represented in southwest Loudoun.

Cultural Routes are legacies handed through necessity or tradition, developed without engineering, such as a path or migration route. Loudoun's cultural routes developed from paths dictated by geography or paths following a property survey line.

Mountain Crossing / Ferry (Ford) Crossings: Loudoun's original cultural routes were dictated by the distinct geography of mountain passes and ferry (or ford) crossings. Southwest Loudoun's first roads were Native American trails connecting mountain passes in the Blue Ridge through gaps in the Bull Run. While there are no ferry crossings in southwest Loudoun, one ford crossing along Philomont Road remains. (See Photo 7 Philmont Road)

Boundary Roads followed historic boundaries of Fairfax grants, following in straight, surveyed lines with little regard to topography. Boundary roads were initially established as bridle paths between farms and as agriculture grew commercially, roads were publicly adopted to transport agricultural products from farms to main routes. A representative example is Welbourne Road,⁵ which followed the 1740 Joseph Garret patent line. Later, the road served as the local road, connecting Upperville to Middleburg avoiding tolls along turnpikes. (See Photo 1, Millsville and Photo 3, Welbourne Road)

Engineered Routes are roads designed for a specific transportation goal, such as the movement of goods or armies. Loudoun's highly developed road network is a physical testimony to complex social patterns and its 18th and early 19th century mill-centered economy and is example of **engineered routes**. In 18th and 19th centuries, roads were established when citizens would petition the local court to build a road. Following a petition, the court would appoint citizen surveyors to establish the 'most convenient ways' and identify 'road hands' (a citizen task force) to construct the road. In southwest Loudoun, engineered routes can be classified early turnpikes, 'mill to market network' and 'meeting house network.'

⁵ Welbourne Road was originally known as the Road from Millsville to Upperville Road, and was the local road connecting Upperville to Middleburg

Early turnpikes were ‘main roads’ roads were created and maintained by a central authority for a specific military or commercial purpose. These are described as ‘early’ because they pre-date Virginia’s ‘turnpike era’ Because they were early, they have been modified and only segments remain. Two representative examples are Colchester Road and the east segment of Jeb Stuart Road.⁶ Archival deeds refer to these as ‘Braddock Road,’ indicating the road was one of the early routes cleared for Braddock’s march⁷ across western Loudoun. [Photo 14 Colchester Road]

Mill to Market Network: Many of southwest Loudoun’s rural roads were established to connect the farm to mill and mill to market. Mills were located near a reliable falling water source, not necessarily in close proximity to a market. This created the need to connect the mill to the markets. Representative examples are roads such as Millsville Road or Newlin’s Mill Road (See Photo 1, Millsville Road and Photo 9, Newlin Mill Road.)

Meeting House Network: Centrally placed meetinghouses served the communities settled by colonial settlers and European immigrants who came to Virginia in the mid to late 18th and 19th centuries. Centrally located churches and meetinghouses served as social centers for the agricultural community. Roads radiate from these community centers to the countryside. A representative example are the roads radiating out from the village of Unison, such as Unison Road and Furr Road.

Discuss the district’s general setting and/or streetscapes, including current property uses (and historic uses if different), such as industrial, residential, commercial, religious, etc. For rural historic districts, please include a description of land uses.

The general setting of the historic district is rural agricultural. Open fields are used for hay or livestock. Cattle and equestrian farms are dispersed throughout the landscape. The rural roads – both paved and gravel – serve the agricultural community that surround it. Loudoun’s rural roads are multi-modal – hay equipment, equestrians, walkers, and even the suburban commuter all share the road. The paved roads are now more frequently used by cars alone.

⁶ recently renamed Philomont Road

⁷ Several different routes were cleared for Braddock, although not all were used.

4. District's History and Significance

In the space below, briefly describe the history of the district, such as when it was established, how it developed over time, and significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property. Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.) Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

If the district is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

Southwest Loudoun's Rural Road Network was built over a period spanning two centuries and can be divided into five thematic periods:

Settlement and Growth (1757 – 1810)

Native American migratory routes, known as paths, crossed southwest Loudoun in east-west direction during the ore colonial era in Virginia. Paths were governed by natural topography, taking advantage of passes in mountain ranges and ridgelines in valleys. Eugene Scheel's 2018 map documents the 'Sherando Hunting Path,' which connected William's Gap in the Blue Ridge to what would become the village of Aldie, nestled in the gap at the north end of the Bull Run Mountains. Scheel also documents the 'Upper Path,' which connected Ashby's Gap in the Blue Ridge to Aldie. The two early paths formed a 'Y,' encompassing a triangular shaped area of the southern Loudoun Valley. A middle path, known as Shinnett's Path, crossed though the village of Trappe and intersected the 'Upper Path' at a ford in Goose Creek. In 1722 the Treaty of Albany was signed, and Native Americans ceased to migrate through Loudoun. 1722 also marks the time period when white settlement of southwest Loudoun began in earnest.

These paths were packed earth, pounded by centuries of foot travel. They were not wide, cleared only by those who used them. Early explorers adopted these paths, which provided access into the landlocked area of what was then Virginia frontier. Once adopted by white settlers and explorers, the 'Sherando Hunting Path,' would be referenced as the 'Great Road,' 'Main Road,' or 'Mountain Road' and by 1830, the Snickers Gap Turnpike. The 'Upper Path' would evolve in a similar manner to become known as the Ashby Gap Turnpike, or today's Route 50. Shinnett's Path would evolve to become the local throughfares of Trappe Road and others.

Through diaries, one can follow early explorers' routes across southwest Loudoun. Most notably, returning from his surveys west of the Blue Ridge, a young George Washington recorded in 1748 "... *Got over Wms Gap and as low as Wm West's ...*"⁸ indicating Washington would have been following the route of the 'Sherando Hunting Path.' Washington's diary also describes a frontier landscape, devoid of settlement or commerce, except Fredrickstown [sic], today's Winchester. The next closest settlement, Middleburg, would not come until four decades later in 1787.

Washington describes bushwhacking along trails; overland travel in southwest Loudoun was difficult and limited to foot travel or horseback. With little commerce or settlement in the area,

⁸ WH Snowden, The Story of the Expedition of the Young Surveyors, George Washington and George William Fairfax to Survey the Virginia Lands of Thomas, Sixth Lord Fairfax, 1746-1748, Scholar Select, reprint; Wms Gap would be today's Williams Gap in the Blue Ridge on the Loudoun and Clarke County line; West's would have been West's Ordinary near today's village of Aldie. Washington travelled in April in 1748

there was not yet the need for ‘wagon roads,’ and improved path wide enough to accommodate a wagon.

Colonial America, under English control, was governed by the Church and divided into Parishes for local control. Southwest Loudoun was part of the Truro Parish, which covered a narrow east-west strip spanning from Occoquan to the Blue Ridge⁹ with the Potomac River as the northern boundary and what would become the Loudoun-Fauquier County line was the southern boundary. Water travel and the larger rivers, such as the Potomac, were the main travel routes into the interior.¹⁰ Local overland ‘roads’ were still limited to the Tidewater areas except for the few and still rudimentary east-west routes. Improvements in overland transportation would be needed for governance and commerce.

The land of southwest Loudoun was part of the Fairfax Proprietary and was largely ‘granted’ during the three years from 1740 to 1742 to ‘Cavaliers’ of English descent, who resided in the Tidewater area of the colony. Land grants were reserved for friends and family of the Fairfax and Washington families or those in positions of power. The Cavaliers investors were granted large tracts of land, typically in 400-to-500-acre parcels, which they farmed as absentee landlords with managers and enslaved labor. Others were land speculators who resold their grants in smaller acreage parcels.¹¹ Quakers lived north of the area of southwest Loudoun. According to Harrison Fairfax, the Cavaliers was “markedly different from that the Quaker...”¹² and therefore roads connected within southwest Loudoun and back to the seat of power in Tidewater Virginia, but not outside of southwest Loudoun, north to the Quaker held areas.

Allegiances and governance remained with the seat of power in the eastern parts of the Colony. The need for overland transportation was paramount for maintaining the connection between the Loudoun Valley and those who governed and those who would benefit from commercial development. One of the earliest known maps of northern Virginia dates to circa 1745, when Loudoun was still part of Fairfax County. The existing road network was at that time limited to

⁹ This would have been perceived to be the western part of the Northern Neck. As seen: <https://www.newrivernotes.com/the-history-of-truro-parish-in-virginia/>

¹⁰ Boundaries of Parishes would span river front on both sides of the river, as rivers served as roads in the interior.

¹¹ One example is **Reverend Charles Green**, (Reverend Charles Green (1710-1765), born in Ireland 1710 moved to VA by 1733, where he befriended Augusting Washington, George Washington’s father.)who in 1740 was granted 1,100 acres along Little River, and again in 1741, 1,925 acres bounded by Pot house, Millville and Goose Creek; and again in 1742 1,150 acres along Route 50. At that time, Reverend Green was living in the eastern part of the colony, near today’s Woodbridge but would later move to Loudoun. Another example is **Benjamin Grayson**,([Captain] Benjamin Grayson I (1684-1757), born in Scotland and dies at Belle Aire, Prince William County) who in 1730, patented 1,925 acres, and another parcel in 1741 of 1009 acres along goose creek [lime kiln]and another parcel in 1742 of 1,950 acres. Grayson, a merchant who owned a bakery along the Occoquan at Colchester, which produced ‘biscuits’ sold throughout frontier. **Bryan Fairfax** (Bryan Fairfax 1736– 1802), nephew of Lord Fairfax, was granted 3,400 acres north of Mideleburg in 1740. Rawleigh Chinn, (Rawleigh Chinn, (1684-1741), born in Lancaster VA and married to George Washington’s aunt)patented acreage that would become Middleburg in 1731. This land was leased for profit but could not be farmed commercially without overland reliable overland transportation. **Catesby Cocke**, clerk of the court, was granted 1,052 on the north branch of goose creek in 1731 and also parcels in central Loudoun and 1731 700 acres around water from Kitottin Creekn and 1742 almost 6,000 acres to Cocke and Mercer. Gerge Carter 12,000 Fairfax grants as seen: <https://loudoungis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapTools/index.html?appid=d3c4ba1031564f919ca28c9bb5a48350> The 1730 parcel, described as along Jeffery’s Branch, was bounded between the Manor Line on the west and what would become Trappe Road on the east. The 1742 piece, described as along Beaverdam, was bounded by roads that would become Piney Swamp, Ridge Side, and Austin Grove.

¹² Fairfax Harrison, page 329 Landmarks of Old Prince William

connecting the rich agricultural valleys to the Tidewater area. What would become the Snickersville Turnpike appears on the map crossing the Blue Ridge at ‘Williams Gap.’



Map attributed to Daniel Jennings, “A Plan of the County of Fairfax on Potomock [sic] River ...” Ca 1745 – 1748. The map shows the existing road system connecting the Shenandoah to the Tidewater area.

The 1751 Fry and Jefferson Map shows a ‘Y’ area outlined by the travel corridors of what would become the Snickersville Turnpike between ‘Wefts Ord’y’ [West’s Ordinary] and Williams Gap and the lesser traveled route of what would become the Ashby Gap Turnpike, today’s Route 50. At that time, what would become the Snickersville Turnpike would have been improved enough to accommodate an ox drawn wagon, or a ‘wagon road.’ These public roads are represented in southwest Loudoun’s earliest known road cases.¹³ Local roads, based on access to these two turnpikes, would evolve later as commerce took hold.



¹³ Pawlet. Fairfax County roads, See “25 September 1751 O.S., page 164 ‘Ordered that a Road be cleared from Little River to Ashby’s Gap on the Blue Ridge and Eligiah Chinn appointed Surveyor from little River to Goose Creek. And Richard Nelson from Goose Creek to the Gap, which they are Ordered to keep in Repair according to Act of Assembly in such Cases made and Provided.’ That same year “27 March 1751 O.S., page 130 Ordered that George William Fairfax Gen.^l John Anderson HAcob Lasswell and Isaac Pennington View and mark out the most convenient Way for a Road from the [Fairfax] Court house of this County to William’s Gap and report to the next Court Also see Fairfax County road cases Crowl, Heather K, “A History of Roads in Fairfax County, Virginia: 1608-1840.” American University Washington D. C. 2002

Detail of 1751 Jefferson and Frye Map showing the travel corridor of what would become the Snickersville Turnpike between 'Wefts Ord' and Williams Gap and the lesser used travel corridor of what would become the Ashby Gap Turnpike, today's Route 50. These two travel corridors formed a 'Y' framing southwest Loudoun.

At the formation of the County in 1757, Loudoun's road cases were dedicated to appointing 'Surveyors' of the roads¹⁴ – those citizens who would be responsible for oversight of roads in accordance with English law – and thus extending existing road law to the new County. By English law, road work was completed as part of civic duty, the same as jury duty or joining the militia. Typically, Surveyors were landed gentry who had the local respect to harness citizen labor. As well, Surveyors would have benefitted from the improved road. For example, early surveyors for the main road from Ashby's Gap to 'Wests' were William West, who owned the tavern near Aldie, and Francis Peyton, a nearby large landowner and who was referred to as a 'Gentⁿ', and who would have had the financial means and social standing to command respect.¹⁵ In southwest Loudoun, there was not the population density of taxpaying citizens, or 'tithables,' for road construction and maintenance. A 'local' public road would have been non-existent or limited to bridle paths, privately maintained by those who used them. Residents were not required to get a court order to construct a private road and therefore these paths would not have appeared in public records.

Early road orders came from gentlemen farmers¹⁶ who were invested and lived in the area and needed overland transportation between investments in the western part of the state to the Tidewater area. One example is Leven Powell, who both lived in, farmed, and operated several mills in southwest Loudoun. Powell also owned commercial warehouses in Alexandria. Powell needed reliable overland transportation to connect his agricultural holdings in the west to valuable markets in the east. In 1761, Powel petitions for improving the main road to southwest Loudoun: "*do view the most convenient way for a Road from the Ford of Little River [Aldie] to Ashby's Gap [in the Blue Ridge] and make a Report of the Conveniency and Inconveniency that will attend the same to the Court*"¹⁷¹⁸ *Mercer's Mill*¹⁹ to Ashby's Gap by the said Leven turned & now opened and make a Report to the Court. Because of investments by those like Powell, Route 50 transformed from a bridle path to a 'waggon' [sic] road. One can conclude with the scarcity of road petitions for 'local' roads is that possibly there were few, if any.

The first known road case dedicated to 'local' needs was in 1758 for the purpose of connecting the two turnpikes, Ashby's and Snickers Gap Turnpikes: "*Ordered that William West Gentⁿ and Henry Taylor (being first sworn before a Justice of the Peace for this County) view the most convenient way for a Road leading from Ashby's Gap to the Road of Williams's Gap and make Report thereof to the Court.*"²⁰ A year later, the case was approved.²¹ It is possible that this

¹⁴ See Ann Miller 1757 – 1783 ...

¹⁵ 9 May 1759, Loudoun Order Book A, p. 243 Francis Peyton (1733-1815) was a prominent Loudoun political figure ; "*to work on the several roads from Little River [Aldie] to 'Shanando'* [Shenandoah River]

¹⁶ such as the Peytons and the Powells, rather than from absentee landlords, such as the Fairfaxes and Graysons

¹⁷ 14 March 1764, Loudoun Order Book B, p. 286

¹⁸ 11 June 1761, Loudoun Order Book A, p. 465; 14 June 1763, Loudoun Order Book B, p. 161

¹⁹ This would have been James Mercer's (1736-1793, Stafford County, father of Charles Fenton Mercer (1778-1858)) mill, built in 1764

²⁰ 1758 12 December 1758, Loudoun Order Book A, p. 188

²¹ 14 February 1759, Loudoun Order Book A, p. 192; 13 March 1759, Loudoun Order Book A, p. 209; Colson's Mill, in the village of Trappe, would have been located along this early local road between Ashby's Gap and Williams Gap. Stacey

early road was in the western reaches of the county and today is known as Trappe, Ridgeside, and the northern end of Foggy Bottom Roads, following the boundary lines of Fairfax patents.²²

In 1763, a second road petition was filed was to connect the two southwest Loudoun turnpikes, also connecting the two turnpikes, but further east "... view the most convenient way for a road leading from the Road that leads from Ashby's Gap to Alexandria from Leven Powell's Plantation [Route 50 at Middleburg] to Goose Creek Chappel."²³ This road would be today's Sam Fred Road, both which connect Route 50 to Snickersville Turnpike.²⁴

As the agriculture in southwest Loudoun became more commercial, road orders followed. In 1768, "Leith to have a Road to Mill and Market through the Lot of Land of Henry Taylor."²⁵ In 1770 Powell petitions for a road to his new mill, which is possibly Sally's Mill today.²⁶ Even for the landed gentry, not every road petition was answered immediately; this petition is address six times afterwards. Different types of roads petitions appear. A 'Waggon' [sic] road crossing Goose creek at his ford²⁷ indicates the need for more commercial overland transportation. In 1839, Wm Benton requests a road from 'Pot House,'²⁸ indicating the different types of commerce that was developing in southwest Loudoun.²⁹ In 1848, a road is requested from Moores' Mill and Clifton Mill³⁰ to the Bloomfield and Upperville Road, giving insight into the increased number of mills in the area.

Turnpike Era (1785-1860)

Southwest Loudoun would not be settled in any meaningful way until 1770s, with the change in focus of cash crops from tobacco to wheat. In land-locked southwest Loudoun, overland transportation was a must. With the soils in the eastern portions of the state weary from tobacco production, landowners viewed the rich, fertile valleys in the western reaches as keys to economic success. Conversely, the port cities of Alexandria and Colchester needed agricultural trade to remain economically vibrant. Improved transportation between the valley and port cities was imperative. According to Ann Miller, historian with Virginia Transportation Research Council (VTRC), "by the last half of the 18th century, Loudoun County was already one of the most populous and economically important counties in northern Virginia and contained major east-west

Janney (1745-1817), a Quaker from Buck County Pennsylvania, operated the mill for the absentee landlord, the Fairfax family.²¹ *In Obedience to the within Order We have viewed the Road and find there may be a Road cleared as good as the other that now stands but it will be further West*

²² The south end of Trappe followed the eastern boundary of the 1730 Benjamin Grayson land grant. Ridgeside follows the 1736 Manor Line, the eastern boundary line dividing Lord Fairfax's private Manor Fairfax patents, as seen:

<https://loudoungis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapTools/index.html?appid=d3c4ba1031564f919ca28c9bb5a48350> Benjamin

²³ 13 April 1763, Loudoun Order Book B, p. 106 'The goose creek chappell would have likely been the one off Snickers gap Turnpike between Philomont and Hibbs bridge Early road cases were dedicated to construction of churches. 1769 Butcher gives two acres of land for Baptist Meeting House and school. (originally butcher's meeting house and later ebenezer baptist) 1769 Butcher gives two acres of land for Baptist Meeting House and school. (originally butcher's meeting house and later ebenezer baptist)

²⁴ Another early road that connects Ashby Gap and Snickersville Turnpikes near from Middleburg is Pole Cat road, which continues to Francis Mill Road, then to Hibbs Bridge Road and ends at Snickersville Turnpike at Hibb's Bridge near Philomont

²⁵ 15 June 1768, Loudoun Order Book D, p. 84

²⁶ RP 1770-002 Leven Powell was married to Sarah (Sally) Harrison Powell

²⁷ Loudoun Order Book E, p. 72 12 November 1770

²⁸ The location of Pot House is the intersection of Pot House Road and Foxcroft Road, in southwest Loudoun

²⁹ RP 1839-001 Wm Benton Pot House

³⁰ RP 1848-003, Clifton Mill is located off Willisville Road and is still standing.

and north-south transportation routes.”³¹ Overland transportation along the main roads to Ashby’s Gap and Williams Gap remained under public oversight, maintained by unskilled labor or ‘tithables,’ but this system needed to change as demands of the main roads increased.³²

The 1796 Fairfax and Loudoun Turnpike Road Company built an improved road as far as the ford in the Little River (Aldie). The company faltered and re-emerged in 1802 as the Little River Turnpike Company, a public-private partnership that was Virginia’s first turnpike.³³ Charles Fenton Mercer, one of Loudoun’s representatives to Virginia’s General Assembly, had a vested interest in making sure the Little River Turnpike became reality and financial success. Mercer had recently rebuilt the Aldie Mill, and critical to its success, was a cost-efficient means of reaching commercial markets. Typical of many turnpike companies, founding subscribers were the millers and landowners, like Mercer, who benefitted financially from improved travel. With a successful turnpike reaching as far as Aldie, the stage was set for continued efforts to push into the fertile Loudoun Valley. The Ashby’s Gap Turnpike was chartered in 1809 and the Snickers Gap Turnpike in 1810. With the additional influx of additional capital, these two ‘main roads’ could be improved to accommodate additional agricultural commerce. From these two turnpikes, local roads would be built to prove access into southwest Loudoun’s agriculturally rich interior.

Turnpike companies, with the additional influx of subscribers’ capital, could hire labor, rather than rely on ‘tithables.’ Both enslaved labor and that of lower-class whites were used for turnpike construction. As was law before Emancipation, African Americans were considered chattel, and were therefore listed on the balance sheet of each annual report. For example, the Snickers’s Gap Turnpike Company in its reporting to Richmond listed assets including “*Negros and other property (Except Toll Houses & more) ...*”³⁴ Another example of the use of enslaved labor is the Little River Turnpike, which ran ads such as this one published in December of 1803. Since the enslaved were largely forbidden from literacy, it’s assumed this advertisement was targeted to white enslavers ... “*WANTED TO HIRE For one year, twenty able bodied NEGRO MEN, to be employed on the Little Rive Turnpike Road ... punctual payment for their services, may be relied on.*”³⁵

Local road building followed construction of the improvements to the turnpikes in southwest Loudoun and period maps lend insight. The 1829 Herman Broye map shows road development outside of the ‘Y’ formed by the Ashby Gap and Snickers Gap Turnpikes. ‘Common’ or local roads connect southwest Loudoun to the seat of local control, Leesburg. Some of these roads still exist as unpaved roads including the road from Bloomfield to Leesburg (Unison and Philmont and

³¹ Patricia B Duncan and Ann Brush Miller, *Historic Roads of Virginia: Loudoun County Road Orders ... 1783 – 1800*, Virginia Transportation Research Council, Page 2. As seen <https://vtrc.virginia.gov/media/vtrc/vtrc-pdf/vtrc-pdf/15-R18.pdf>, Fall 2024

³² William James Head *History and Comprehensive Description of Loudoun County*, Leesburg, reprint 2011, p/ 115

³³ Newlon p 3-11 According to Newlon, in 1785 the General Assembly enacted legislation enabling creation of the Little River Turnpike Company as a private venture on the assumption that the receipts from tolls would provide an attractive opportunity for private investment. This apparently was the first private toll road authorized in the United States, and apparently its attractiveness to private investors was not as great as had been thought because funding was not forthcoming. The Little River Company was rechartered in 1795 but again was not successful in attracting funds. Finally, in 1802, chartered for the third time, the company was successful in attracting investment and successfully completed 33 3 /4 mi of road from the port of Alexandria westward toward the Blue Ridge (currently US-50). This road operated as a toll road into the early years of the 20th century and is still in use today as a state road.

³⁴ Snickers Gap Turnpike Company, Annual Reports This was a repeated expense in the years before the War

³⁵ Virginia Chronicle, Alexandria Daily Advertiser, volume 4, Number 947, 29, December 1803 As seen: <https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=ADA18031229.1.2&srpos=4&e=-12-1803--12-1803--en-20--1--txt-txIN-%27little+river%27-----> March 2024

North Fork Roads), the Millsville Road (Millsville and Kirk Branch roads) , the Middleburg to Leesburg Road (Pole Cat, Francis Mill) Roads were represented on the map in more idealistic form, much straighter alignment than in reality. The 1843 Yardley Taylor Map shows a much more developed network within and beyond the ‘Y’ shaped Turnpikes, connecting meeting houses to one another and to turnpikes.



Detail of the 1829 Herman Broyle Map of Virginia shows the development of the ‘common’ or local roads between the ‘Y’ shaped turnpikes and the connection between the villages of Bloomsfield, Millsville and Middleburg to Leesburg

Civil War, Reconstruction and Growth (1861-1905) As a boarder state, much of the Civil War played out in northern Virginia. Of that number, many were fought in southwest Loudoun because of the citizens’ allegiance to the institution of slavery and because of the highly developed overland transportation network. 19th century armies were cumbersome, pulling cannons, artillery, and food and turnpikes and common roads made overland transportation possible. Civil War diaries highlight the roads’ impact on battle decisions. High stonewalls lining roadsides dictated routes and points of engagement Soldiers’ diaries detail how the Battle of Upperville was dictated by the stone walls along Millsville and Trappe. Stonewalls, lining the Snickers gap Turnpike were dismantled to allow escape or were used to shield as in the infamous Battle at Furr Farm.³⁶

In 1863, Southwest Loudoun was victim of the ‘Burning Raid,’ a two-day raid by Union soldiers in an effort to break the will of citizens of southwest Loudoun and northern Fauquier. A local paper accurately describes the condition of Loudoun’s roads after the War ... *“there is no public want under which the people of Loudoun ... are suffering which so grievously [that] effect their comfort and prosperity as good roads and better interior communication”*³⁷ Not only had the road repairs been ceased during the War, but the few bridges that existed were purposely destroyed to prevent movement of opposing armies.

During Reconstruction, only limited funds were available for roads. With the destroyed local economy, both public and private coffers were drained. What limited public budget was available, was reserved for building the new public school system and any funding remaining was re-directed to rebuilding bridges. In the years following the War, bridge re-building consumed Board of Supervisor minutes; the County was financially strapped, public services were minimal and local road rebuilding slowed to a crawl.³⁸

³⁶ Confederate Armies shielded themselves behind the stonewalls lining Snickers Gap Turnpike and preyed upon advancing Union armies. Gruesome accounts of battle describe piles of bodies and horses trapped along roads within the stone walls

³⁷ Alexandria gazette Oct 9 1869 As seen:

<https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=AG18691009.1.2&srpos=3&e=-----186-en-20--1--txt-txIN-loudoun+roads----->

³⁸ “Overseer for the Poor’ was established in 1871 and the public school system was established in 1872

As Loudoun’s rural economy struggled to return and the perennial pursuit of ‘mill-to-market’ resumed. Citizens continued to petition the court for convenient and cost-efficient ways to deliver farm produce to markets. For two years, in 1867 and 1868, petitioners begged the courts to create a road from Union (today’s Unison) and nearby Newlin Mill to efficient transportation to markets via the railway depot.

“We the undersigned citizens in the neighborhood of Unison beg leave to set for the to your Honors our distressed situation as it regards any outlet to the Manassas Gap Rail road at Rector’s Town Depot which is our nearest way to market ...”³⁹

A plat describes the preferred route, crossing Mr. Dulany’s property along a private road. However, access was never granted. Eventually, an alternative route road was created, but proved to be too steep and was later abandoned.



1868 survey charting the best path from Quaker Lane to the Ashby Gap Turnpike (today’s Route50) responding to request from road petitioners

Even after the Civil War, the system of local road repair remained decentralized, depending on amateur road viewers to enforce standards and unskilled citizens to execute the repair. County funds were allotted to road maintenance by Township or District; Mercer District governed southwest Loudoun. Each summer (the end of Loudoun’s fiscal year), individuals received reimbursement from the county for their contributions to road repair. Courts authorized Surveyors to “impress” labor (i.e. recruit citizen laborer) to work on the roads. As might be expected, finding citizens willing to work on the roads was not an easy task. Southwest Loudoun was particularly hard hit without the system of slavery that was the basis of its economy before the War. Surveyors came up shorthanded as was the case with Thomas Ayres⁴⁰ in 1867, who reported to the Courts in his 1867 “... Remarks Owing to the scarcity of hands in my Precinct, I was compelled to work the four I could get.”⁴¹

A typical day laborer was paid \$1 per day and African Americans, identified as (Col’d) in a road bill, were paid the same as their white counterparts. Surveyors ‘list of hands’ – meaning the names of the individual citizen laborers who had agreed to fulfil their roadwork obligation – was due to the court on a regular basis.

The Civil War was the effective end of most Turnpike companies.⁴² Warring armies destroyed

³⁹ Loudoun County Road Cases, RR 1868-003, “Road from Union to Goose Greek Bridge to Rector’s Crossroads”

⁴⁰ Thomas Ayres of today’s Ayreshire Farm, in southwest Loudoun off of Trappe Road

⁴¹ Get citation

⁴² Some turnpike companies were able to survive after the War, but not without controversy. For example, the individual at the

roads, turnpikes, and bridges. With the emancipation of the enslaved and collapse of the agricultural economy, fortunes disappeared and private investment into turnpikes evaporated overnight. Without the ability to collect tolls, Turnpike companies were no longer financially viable, and therefore unable to maintain travel routes. In 1866, the General Assembly passed legislation allowing these public-private entities to cede authority⁴³ of toll collection turn maintenance over the county courts;

“Whereupon it was ordered that under the Act passed Feb 1866 in regard to transferring turnpikes to the Counties in which they lie, this Court proceed to take possession of all the turnpikes appoint Surveyors, assign hands and treat the same in all respects as any other County road – the Court being of opinion that the said Turnpikes are abandoned. Court is ordered to give notice.”⁴⁴

Abandoned turnpikes were then treated as any other County Road and maintained with local levies rather than tolls. It was up to the County courts as to the fate of which road was to be repaired with limited funds and bridge repair took priority. Abandoned tollhouses were rented or sold to salvage as much value as possible. The Snickers Gap Turnpike was an example of a Turnpike that came under local control when it came under county control in 1877.⁴⁵

With limited funds, some roads were not maintained. Abandoned road traces, marked by sunken lanes and parallel stone walls, cross Loudoun’s countryside and are visible even today. In other cases, little used roads were better served as fenced pasture for livestock. Citizens were allowed to ‘erect gates’ if permission was granted by the Court. One example is the request to “Erect gates on the road from Bellefield⁴⁶ to the crossroads near the Trappe.” Erecting the gates enabled the property owner to “Enclose a large body of Woodland now open” for livestock. The petition was signed by neighbors, agreeing this would not be an imposition. The petition was posted visibly on the Courthouse door and in the neighborhood at the Trappe post office and at Powell’s Shop, once located at the northeast corner of Trappe and Millville Roads.⁴⁷

Automobile 1906-1932 With the arrival of the automobile, came the demand for a hard surfaced roads instead of packed earth and the demand for bridges instead of fords. Motorized vehicles might have been faster but did not have the capacity to navigate deep mud or high water. In 1905, Loudoun citizen petitions for bridges increased. In response, the Board of Supervisors established a bridge levy⁴⁸ taxing property, railroads, and telephones for the construction of new bridges. Luten bridges, with their adaptable poured concrete design, were perfectly suited for

toll gate at Hamilton refused to vacate the toll house, collecting tolls for his own personal profit rather than returning collections to the turnpike company. Loudoun County Road Cases, RM 1871 “Ordering the collection of tolls on the Leesburg & Snickers Gap Turnpike”

⁴³ Loudoun County Road Cases, RM- 020-1904 Commonwealth of VA vs Snickersville Turnpike Unlawfully Collecting Tolls Feb 28th 1866,” page 86

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Loudoun County Road Case **RM 16-1877**

⁴⁶ [today’s Corotoman Farm] on Millsville Road in Southwest Loudoun

⁴⁷ RM 1892 Erect Gates on the road from Bellefield [today’s Corotoman Farm] to the crossroads near the Trappe at Piney swamp. The public was still allowed to travel along Piney Swamp Road until the mid-20th century, just had to remember to close the gate behind them. Powel’s Shop was formerly located at the northeast corner of Trappe and Millville Roads. There are multiple cases of private citizens ‘erecting gates,’ such as **RM 1882** Erect gates on the road from Edwards Ferry Road to Cattail Run; “Petitioner Charles Paxton desire permission to erect a date at each end of an old and infrequented piece of road running from the Edwards Ferry Road to Cat Tail Run along the line dividing the lands of our petitioner.” Also see RP 1886-001, Dodd’s petition to close road [SGT]

⁴⁸ Bridge levy: Property, land, telephone, license, 5% on ?, 1905

construction in remote rural location. Several bridges attributed to Luten were installed during this time, including the 1916 and 1919, to the two bridges [DHR 053-6087-0091 and 053-6087-0093;] crossing Panther Skin along Green Garden Road.⁴⁹ Other changes for the automobile include transforming some of the right angle cross roads to a S-curve to accommodate higher speeds of the automobile. (See Photo 8, Training Center along Millsville Road)

1932 marks the Byrd Act, when funding was moved from the County to state level and marks the end of the Period of Significance. Road planning and construction migrated from amateur status to professional work of civil engineers. Private individuals no longer applied for reimbursement for repair to roads and professionals were hired to oversee road construction and maintenance.

Virginia's pay-as-you-go mantra for road building slowed the effort to pave Loudoun's rural roads. The 1932 report from Mr. Yellott, resident engineer, sounds eerily familiar to today's conditions, describing surface treating conditioning and surfacing gravel roads.⁵⁰ The economy of southwest Loudoun remained primarily agricultural and the use of the roads remained with little need for improvement.

Primary resources within the Rural Road Network

The Southwest Loudoun Rural Road Network Historic District is composed of extant unpaved and paved 18th and 19th century rural roads, which remain in use today. Associated with the Ashby Gap Turnpike and Snickersville Turnpike in a largely rural area with many acres of farmland under conservation easement, this historic network of agricultural roads retains a high degree of physical integrity. Many of the unpaved roads remain in near original condition, resurfaced with traditional gravel, retaining character defining features such as parallel stone walls, sunken lanes, and original alignment. Many of these roads appear on the 1853 Yardley Taylor Map.

Associated Property Types. Settled by Tidewater investors who were 'granted' property from the Fairfax family, Southwest Loudoun is composed of a high number of **boundary roads**. Many of the 18th and 19th century roads were laid out along patent boundary lines, originally serving as private lanes between farms. Representative examples include Welbourne, Trappe, and Ridgeside Roads. Quakers, although fewer in number, also settled southwest Loudoun and with them brought their meeting houses. Representative examples are the village of Unison and the associated **meeting house network** including Unison Road and Quaker Lane.⁵¹ **Mountain crossing** roads, including Llangollen, Foggy Bottom, Trappe Road, and Snake Den roads all once originally crossed the Blue Ridge. Today, Llangollen, Trappe, and Snake Den are no longer state maintained to the top of the mountain. Kirks Branch and Philmont Road are two representative examples of **ford / ferry crossings** in the district. Kirks Branch crossed Goose Creek at the village of Millsville. The ford was abandoned when the Goose Creek bridge was installed along Foxcroft Road. Today, Kirks Branch dead ends at private property, although the road trace remains. Philmont Road crosses Beaverdam Creek and the ford remains in use. **Mill to Market** roads are also present in this district including Sally Mill and Newlin Mill Roads. This district also boast representative examples of unpaved **early turnpikes**, including a remaining unpaved segment of the Colchester Road, originally part of the larger east west connection between the Tidewater and Blue Ridge and Bell Road, which served the early community of Woodgrove.

⁴⁹ The Luten design was patented and these two bridges along green garden are attributed to the York Bridge Company in Pennsylvania

⁵⁰ BOS, 1932

⁵¹ Formerly, there were two meeting houses in Unison. The earliest, no longer standing, was served by Unison Road and stood adjacent to where the cemetery is today. The second meeting house [DHR No.], which today serves as a residence, is associated with Quaker Lane. Today, the 18XX Methodist Church serves the village of Unison

Associated secondary resources within the Rural Road Network

There are several types of secondary resources associated with the rural road network:

Luten Bridge

Historically, there were numerous Luten bridges along Loudoun's roads. Today, those that remain can be found along Loudoun's rural roads or along an abandoned turnpike. Daniel Luten, one of the nation's most influential bridge builders, patented several designs for his poured concrete bridge design, which made this design particularly applicable to rural uses

Representative examples are the bridges [VDOT NO 6020 and 6299] along Green Garden Road which date to 1916 and 1919 and are significant in their own right. The bridge [VDOT 6072] on Quaker Lane is also attributed to the Luten design and was installed in 1915. (See Photo 6, Quaker Lane)

Timber deck bridge

A timber deck bridge is constructed of wood or steel under girders with pressure treated timber planking laid secured on top as a driving surface. Often, these surfaces are covered in washed gravel or pavement, obscuring the surface. Many were installed in the 1940s and 1950s, to serve the automobile. Representative examples are Millsville [VDOT no 6202] installed in 1940 and Unison Road over Dog Branch, [VDOT No 6073] installed in 1955.

Low-water bridge

A low water bridge sits below the level of the roadway The low profile allows water to flow over the 'bridge' during periods of high water. Low-water bridges are a vernacular design - typically large steel culverts assembled with fieldstone that can be completed with unskilled farm labor. A representative example is the low water bridge along Newlin Mill Road.

Culverts vary from a single pipe to multiples laid side by side. Culverts typically are corrugated steel although there are a few remaining in cast concrete. Originally, culverts were secured in place with fieldstone and many have been later modified with concrete parging.

Road markers are rare and those that have been documented are made of poured concrete. Representative examples are three known poured concrete markers and all are along Trappe Road.

Fords

Because of limited funding for local roads, before the automobile, fords were common along local roads. A representative example is ford at JEB Stuart Road, now named Philomont Road, remains in use and is recorded in Civil War diaries.

Dry stack fieldstone retaining walls

Although the iconic dry stack walls, which line many of the rural roads, are outside of the public right of way and outside of this survey, some dry stack retaining walls are part of the roadway. Dry stack walls are native to Loudoun County, dating from the Fairfax proprietary when patent land was required to be 'walled in.' Craftsmanship of dry stack stone walls varies from locality to locality; each style distinctive from another. A representative example is Snake Hill Road. (See photo 5, Snake Hill)

Significance

Western Loudoun's Rural Road network is significant at the local level under Criteria A and C:

Criteria A Southwest Loudoun's Rural Road Network is significant under Criteria A as a representative example of 'Cavalier' **settlement** in this area of the Virginia Piedmont. Nathaniel Pawlett, in his 'Guide to Preparation of Road Histories,'⁵² argues that the evolution of the county road systems of Virginia is in many ways inseparable from the social, political and technological developments that form the history of the Commonwealth. In southwest Loudoun, the rural county roads reflect the social patterns and need for order in Virginia's frontier through the road network's layout in almost a grid system. The local road network reflects the political system of southwest Loudoun through the efforts to connect to the main east-west turnpikes. The County road network reflects the technological developments of all of Loudoun through the mill to market network. Given its pristine condition, southwest Loudoun's unpaved road network provides insight into the settlement patterns into those who built it. The network, composed of unique and interconnecting parts, retains its physical and historical integrity and fully representing the range of complexities, which contributed to the broad patterns of development in Northern Virginia. The roads, which date to the 18th century, are some of the oldest original structures representing Colonial settlement in Loudoun.

Loudoun's Rural Road Network is also locally significant under Criteria A for its association with **commerce**. In the 1770s, Tidewater planters abandoned their traditional crop of tobacco, adopting the Quakers' expertise farming wheat and milling technology. Western Loudoun's rolling hills and abundant waterways provided the opportunity for milling and thus, Loudoun's unique 19th century mill-centered rural economy developed. Mills, located on inland waterways or streams, were not necessarily in close proximity to major transportation routes or markets. Loudoun's two primary overland thoroughfares, Snickersville Turnpike and Ashby's Gap Turnpike connected to port cities in the east, but were not connected to the mills. As a result, southwest Loudoun farmers developed a complex road network connecting farms to mills and mills to markets. Two and a half centuries later, this historic road network remains in use and retains its historic integrity as one of many vestiges of Loudoun's rich history.

Criteria C Southwest Loudoun's Rural Road Network is locally significant under Criteria C for its architectural integrity, largely unaltered since the mid-20th century. The road network's physical attributes are notable for their grid-like and orderly layout, presumably to impose order in Virginia's frontier. Roads such as Trappe, Ridgeside, Green Garden, Willisville and Quaker Lane, are all parallel to one another in a north-south direction with orientation similar to the ridgeline of the Blue Ridge. Route 50, Langollen (continuing as Sunken Lane), Millsville (continuing as Welbourne and Millsville), Trappe/ (continuing as Bloomfield) run perpendicular.

The Period of Significance begins in 1758 with the first known road case dedicated to 'local' roads. Although its documented there were roads in southwest Loudoun before that time, early roads in Southwest Loudoun were likely limited to the two turnpikes that crossed the area. The Period of Significance ends in 1932 with the Byrd Act, which transferred control over local roads from the County to the State.

⁵² (Page 2 Pawlett, guide to preparation of road histories)

Geographical Data

Loudoun's Yardley Taylor Map shows an elaborate overland network of rural roads in place by 1853. In Taylor's 'Memoir of Loudoun County,' published as a compendium to his 1853 map, Taylor describes these settlement patterns defined by geography and ethnic heritage. Taylor shows the county divided into 9 District. The boundaries of the Southwest Loudoun Rural Road Network Historic District is based on these early descriptions. The southwest Loudoun Rural Road network Historic District encompasses Districts 2 and 3 represented on Taylor's Map.

The district is bounded by the Fauquier and Prince William County lines to the south; Clarke County line and Blue Ridge Mountains to the west. The north boundary line follows west to east: Butcher's run to Snickersville Turnpike, following the route of the original Colchester Road, then to Beaverdam Creek to Goose Creek, and Evergreen Mills Road. The east boundary line follows Route 15 north from the Prince William County Line, then east along Oatland Mill Road, north along Gleedsville Road, west along Gap Road.

This boundary is similar to the existing Beaverdam Historic Roadway District

Photo Log

Photo 1 Millville Road, facing west. Photographer Doug Graham

It was common for mid to late 18th century roads to follow the most direct route or a surveyed boundary line, resulting in remarkably straight **alignment**, even crossing difficult terrain such as a steep hill or soft bottomland. Millsville Road originally was the local road, linking Upperville to Middleburg, avoiding the tolls of the Turnpike [today's Route 50]. The configuration of the road played a part in the Battle of Upperville June 21, 1863. So as to avoid skirmishes along the Turnpike, Confederate Brigadier General Grumble Jones and Colonel John Chambliss flanked Union troops, travelled west along Millsville.

Photo 2 Newlin Mill Road, facing north Photographer: Doug Graham

The **low water bridges**, an example of a secondary resource, demonstrates vernacular **design** of gentlemen engineers. Many low water bridges were made by coupling steel culverts together, originally faced in fieldstone and later parged with concrete. The low water bridge is an evolved version of the culverts.

Photo 3 Welbourne Road, facing west Photographer: Jane Covington

Many of Loudoun's rural roads follow sunken lanes, evidence of **workmanship** of laborers repeatedly digging out the road surface in an attempt to reach a stable base. Tree roots, forming part of the steep banks, have become part of the sunken lane and are an integral part of the **environmental setting**. As well, the packed earth surface of the road is a strikingly authentic surface. Welbourne Road, part of the original road between Middleburg and Upperville, considered a boundary road, laid along the 1740 Amos Janney land grant.

Photo 4 Green Garden Road and Mill facing west, Photographer: Doug Graham

Period architecture marks the original alignment and location of this 200-year-old gravel road

Photo 5 Snake Hill

Photo 6 Quaker Lane and Luten Bridge, facing south, Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 7 Philomont Ford, facing west, Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 8 Training Center, facing north, Photographer: Jane Covington

Original traces of crossroads remain. Many intersections, **designed** as crossroads, evolved into S-curves with the advent of the automobile. Today, the roadway is shared with an exercise rider, who uses the public road on his way to a morning gallop at the Middleburg Training Center. Large ‘witness tree’ is testimony to the original **location** of the crossroads. Millville was part of original 1740 Charles Green land grant.

Photo 9 Foggy Bottom, facing north, Photographer: Doug Graham

The county road is flanked by open pasture in conservation easement, protecting the road’s environmental setting.

Photo 10 Trappe Road Road marker, facing north, Photographer: Jane Covington

Photo 11 Millsville and rural context, facing west, Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 12 Furr Road timber deck bridge, facing north Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 13 Willisville Schoolhouse, at the corner of Willisville Road and Welbourne Road, Photographer: Doug Graham

The 1913 school house, built on the site of the original 1869 log school, marks the original route of Welbourne and Willisville Roads Both roads are referred to in historic deeds

Photo 14. Colchester Road

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<https://www.loc.gov/item/2007627515/>

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U. S. Geological Survey, "Bluemont Virginia," 1948

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<https://www.loc.gov/item/2012589658/> March 2024

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A new and accurate map of the English empire in North America; Representing their rightful claim as confirmed by charters and the formal surrender of their Indian friends; likewise the encroachments of the French, with the several forts they have unjustly erected therein, 1755 LOC as seen: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3300.ar006200/?r=0.322,0.249,0.262,0.178,0>

Archival Material

Act of the Assembly Acts and Joint Resolutions of the General Assembly Session 34 (1809) As seen: <https://www.hathitrust.org/> March 2024

Road Orders, Loudoun County Circuit Court, Archive Room, Loudoun County Courthouse, Market Street, Leesburg, Virginia.

Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Copy Teste Books: <https://www.loudoun.gov/3437/Copy-Teste-Books> March 2024

Loudoun County Deed Books, Loudoun County Circuit Court, Archive Room, Loudoun County Courthouse, Market Street, Leesburg, Virginia.

Major Repositories

Loudoun County Virginia Clerk of Circuit Court Records

Balch Library

Library of Virginia

Library of Congress

Virginia Chronicle, as seen <https://viriniachronicle.com/> March 2024

5. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: _____ Public\Local _____ Public\State x Public\Federal _____

6. Applicant/Sponsor (Individual and/or organization sponsoring preparation of the PIF, with contact information. For more than one sponsor, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Emily Houston, Board member
organization: America's Routes
street & number: PO 163
city or town: Paeonian Springs state: VA zip code: 20129
e-mail: emilyzs@yahoo.com telephone: _____

Applicant's Signature: _____

Date: May 20, 2024

•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••

In the event of organization sponsorship, you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: Emily Houston

Daytime Telephone: _____

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than applicant/sponsor listed above)

name/title: Jane Covington
organization: _____
street & number: PO 741
city or town: Middleburg state: VA zip code: 20118
e-mail: jaen@janecovington.com telephone: 434-960-4678
Date: May 20, 2024

7. Notification

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator, City Manager, and/or Town Manager.

name/title: _____

locality: _____

street & number: _____

city or town: _____ state: _____ zip code: _____

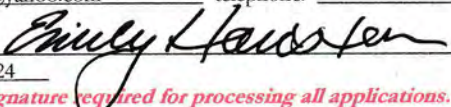
telephone: _____

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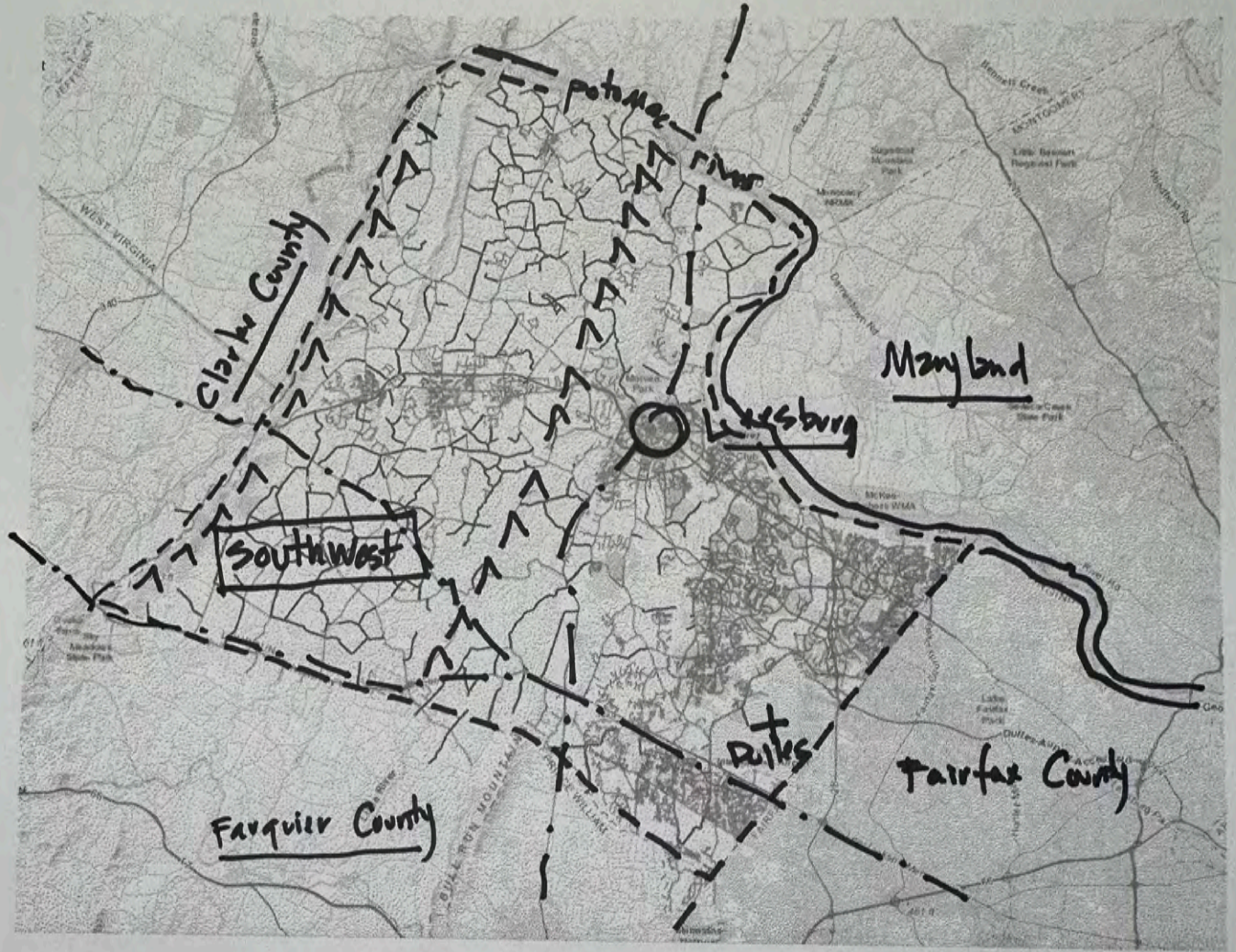
name/title: _____
locality: _____
street & number: _____
city or town: _____ state: _____ zip code: _____
telephone: _____

¹ https://www.loudountimes.com/0local-or-not/1local/county-announces-signatures-of-loudoun-design-winners/article_80bc94a0-2f45-11ef-b228-cfe8586407a8.html

² The rural road network, or the secondary roads system, was largely 'unimproved, graded, or gravel' through the mid 1960s. (Source: Loudoun County, Primary and Secondary Highways, Department of Highways, Richmond Virginia, 1967)

³ In Loudoun, gravel is sourced from neighboring Clarke County, Stewart Perry quarries, Berryville Virginia

⁴ VDOT specifications for gravel are the same for paved roads as for gravel roads although the performance needs of the gravel is drastically different between paved and gravel roads.



Location Map
 Southwest Loudoun
 Loudoun County, Virginia
 Southwest Loudoun Gravel Road Network Historic District

Key:

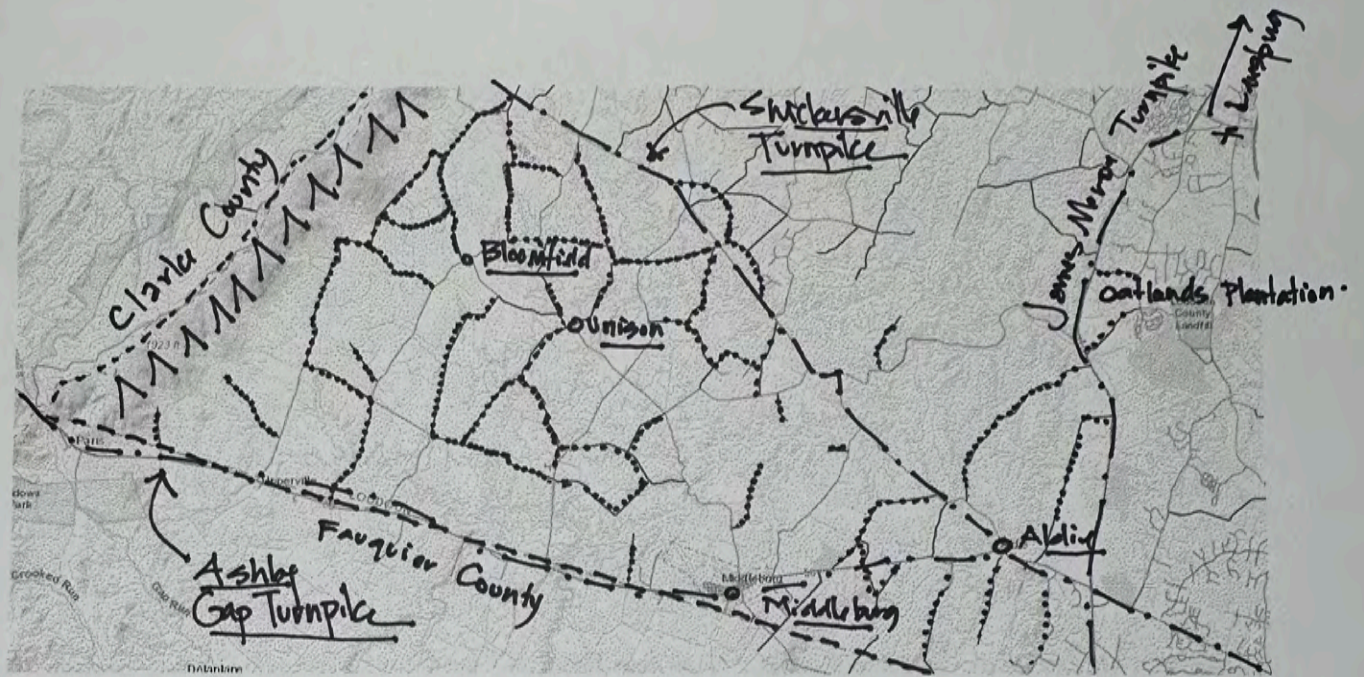
Mountains

County line

County courthouse


Airport

Paved turnpike

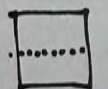


Southwest Loudoun Gravel Road Network Historic District
Site Map

Legend:

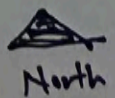
 Blue Ridge Mountains

 County Line

 Gravel Roads

 Paved Turnpike

 Village





**Southwest Loudoun Gravel Road Network Historic District
Photo Key Plan**

Photo 1 Millville Road, facing west. Photographer Doug Graham

Photo 2 Newlin Mill Road, facing north Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 3 Welbourne Road, facing west Photographer: Jane Covington

Photo 4 Green Garden Road and Mill facing west, Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 5 Snake Hill Road

Photo 6 Quaker Lane and Lutten Bridge, facing south, Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 7 Philomont Ford, facing west, Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 8 Training Center, facing north, Photographer: Jane Covington

Photo 9 Foggy Bottom, facing north, Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 10 Trappe Road Road marker, facing north, Photographer: Jane Covington

Photo 11 Millsville and rural context, facing west, Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 12 Furr Road timber deck bridge, facing north Photographer: Doug Graham

Photo 13 Willisville Schoolhouse, at the corner of Willisville Road and Welbourne Road, Photographer: Doug Graham























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