

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-Peskeompskut Historic Archeological District

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: _____

City or town: Gill & Greenfield State: MA County: Franklin

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

X national X statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B ___ C X D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date** _____

Title : _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
-

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Site

Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	<u>TBD</u>	buildings
<u>12</u>	_____	sites
_____	<u>TBD</u>	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>12</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DEFENSE: Battle Site,

Military

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LANDSCAPE

DOMESTIC

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-Peskeompskut Historic Archeological District is a discontinuous district associated with King Philip's War, located in the towns of Gill and Greenfield, Franklin County, Massachusetts. the Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-Peskeompskut occurred on May 19, 1676 (Figures 1-3). The battle consisted of an attack by 150 English settlers and soldiers on the Native village at Wissatinnewag/Peskeomskut on the west bank of the Connecticut located in the Riverside area of Gill Massachusetts. Following the attack Native forces from surrounding villages counterattacked the English as they retreated 6.5 miles south to

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the Deerfield River. The discontinuous district is approximately 6.5 miles (10.5 kilometers) in length and varies between 200-300 yards (180-275 meters) wide (Figures 1, 4-6).

The southern boundary of the district is defined by the Deerfield River Ford. The district boundaries then run north along the terraces of the west bank the Green River for 2.5-miles to the Green River Ford. The boundary then turns east and parallels the Cherry Rum Brook and White Swamp alternating between the south and north banks 3.5 miles (5.6 kilometers) to the Fall River. The boundary then runs east up a steep slope and then southerly to the Riverside area of Gill within 400 yards (365 meters) of the Connecticut River. The district contains twelve contributing sites or battlefield loci (Loci A-L) varying between seven and 170 acres for total of 800 acres (Figures 2-17). Locus boundaries were determined based on the distribution of battle-related objects and terrain. The Battlefield Boundary and National Register Boundary are completely congruent with one another. The battlefield district is discontinuous as sections of the battlefield have not been surveyed and/or modern roads and development have impacted many areas of the battlefield and these areas lack integrity. Although historic and modern development occurs in several sections of the battlefield and have impacted the battlefield to varying degrees, previous battlefield surveys in residential areas have proven that battlefields in suburban areas still retain a degree of integrity and can yield additional information.

Much of the Battle of Peskeomskut that has been surveyed still retains physical elements that convey a sense of the historic scene. Since the 1676 battle, houses and roads have impacted portions of the battlefield and the nature of the vegetation has certainly changed. However, the original terrain and geomorphology are largely unchanged based on an analysis of historic maps dating back to the nineteenth century and still provide a sense of the visual setting and key terrain features.

Contributing Resources

The resources below have been identified based on the historical and archeological records and battle-related artifacts, and they incorporate elements of battlefield and historic landscapes as well as key terrain features extant during the Battle of Great Falls. The National Park Service American

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Battlefield Protection Program defines a battle as "armed conflict, fighting, or warfare that occurred between two opposing military organizations or forces recognized as such by their respective cultures (not civil unrest)."¹ A battlefield is defined as a bounded area on and across the landscape where an engagement between two opposing forces took place. Battle actions, and therefore their respective battlefields, yield a range of battle-related material culture (i.e. musket balls, gun parts, personal items) that represents various actions and movements on the battlefield by the combatants and helps to define battlefield boundaries.

The Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-Peskeomskut Historic Archeological District consists of 12 battlefield loci comprised of battle-related objects and terrain associated with the Battle of Great Falls that took place on May 19, 1676. The battlefield loci or sites collectively encompass 800 acres located within the towns of Greenfield and Gill, Franklin County, Massachusetts.

After 340 years of post-King Philip's War land use and settlement, the Great Falls battlefield loci were found to retain a moderate degree of physical and archeological integrity that can still provide information on the sites and actions associated with the battle. Collectively these loci have yielded over 350 battle-related objects including musket balls, gun parts (ramrod sleeves, trigger guards), equipment (horse tack and buckles) and personal and domestic objects (knives, amulets, buttons, scrap brass).

Contributing Resources

Locus A: Wissatinnewag/Peskeomskut Village (Figure 7)

Ten musket balls were recovered from Locus A – Wissatinnewag/Peskeomskut Village. Eleven lead, brass, and iron objects were also recovered considered to be domestic or personal and potentially associated with the battle and village. The locus is approximately 100 yards north of the Mohawk Trail / State Route 2 and east of Main Road in Gill. It is not clear if the domestic/personal objects represent the northern boundary of Peskeompskut village or outlying structures such as the "wigwam or two higher up than the rest" mentioned in English battle

¹ National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program, Section 106 Compliance, <http://www.nps.gov/hps/abpp/preservation/compliance.htm>. Accessed February 2014.

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narratives. Similarly, the distribution of musket balls could either be associated with the English attack on the village, or the Coalition counterattack on Wells' group, or perhaps both. There is not enough of a sample to infer much from the musket ball diameters, although the majority (60 percent, n=6) were in the .15"- .34" diameter range. The higher percentage of small shot is usually identified as a Native signature, but evidence from other seventeenth century battlefields indicate the English used small shot when attacking a village.

The domestic/personal objects include two fragments of brass scrap, several fragments of lead bar or molten lead, two pewter buttons, an iron blade, a possible cast iron kettle fragment, a lead amulet, and a possible iron kettle fragment and axe fragment (Figures 94 -96). This area may be either the northern boundary of the Peskeomskut village and/or the location where the English killed seventeen people "being in a wigwam or two higher up than the rest."² Brass scrap is usually considered a signature of seventeenth-century Native domestic sites. The lead bar, molten lead, and brass scrap fragments may be associated with musket ball production or reprocessing brass kettles. The pewter buttons could be associated with either an English or Native combatant or they may not be related to the battle at all. The lead amulet is considered a Native personal object.

Locus B: Initial English Retreat (Figure 8).

Twenty-seven musket balls were recovered from Locus B extending 250 yards west of Main Road in an area of approximately two acres. There were a few of outliers 200-275 yards to the north and west of the main concentration of artifacts consisting of two musket balls and a possible gun screw. The terrain is relatively flat in the eastern area and begins to rise steeply 200 yards west of Main Road to the Mountain Gap 100 yards to the northwest.

Four impacted musket balls were recovered on the southeastern face of the slope indicating fire from the southeast. The direction of fire indicates Native fire toward the English who were in front of them – likely Wells' group. Fourteen ball in the .15"- .34" diameter range (74 percent) exhibited facets and two in the .35"- .49" diameter range (.37" and .38"). Eleven percent of the ball (n=3) were in the .35"- .49" diameter range but as two had facets they were not from English pistol

² CSL. *Colonial Wars*, Series I. Doc. 74.

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fire. Five of the remaining ball (19 percent) were in the .55+” diameter range and possibly some were the result of English fire.

Several domestic/personal objects were recovered from the eastern section of Locus B including a possible lead flint wrap, several fragments of lead sheet and molten lead, a pewter button, a lead bead, an unidentified wrought iron object, a rose head nail, and an eyelet from a reprocessed iron hoe (Figures 99 & 100). The lead and eyelet suggest the possibility of a Native domestic area at this location but the absence of scrap brass might suggest otherwise. The pewter button and lead bead could have been dropped by an English and Native combatant. In any event this distribution of domestic objects is not believed to be contemporaneous with the battle as none of the English narratives mention a Native village or domestic site so far from the main village at Peskeompskut.

Locus C: Mountain Gap (Figure 9).

Fifty-seven musket balls were recovered from Locus C, the Mountain Gap. No personal or domestic artifacts were recovered. The “mountain” is a southwest-northeast trending bedrock ridge that parallels the Fall River 160 yards east of the river and runs for 0.6 miles in a northeasterly direction from the Connecticut River. The ridge is characterized by an extremely steep, almost vertical cliff face along the western edge that drops to a series of terraces leading to the Fall River. The only way to pass through the ridge and descend to the Fall River is through the narrow gap in the bedrock which allows passage for someone on foot. The Mountain Gap is only about 15 yards wide and 30 yards long, significantly restricting movement through it to the terraces immediately to the west. Fifty-five (97 percent) of the recovered musket balls were small shot in the .15”-.34” diameter range of which 32 (58 percent) had facets and believed to Native fire (Figures 102, 103, & 105). Two musket balls were in the .60”-.69” diameter range (.62” & .63”). It is unclear if the two larger ball represent Native or English fire in this context.

During the English retreat from Peskeompskut two groups of English soldiers had to pass through the gap descend the terraces to the west of the gap to reach their horses tied on the west side of the Fall River. The first group was comprised of the main body of approximately 100 soldiers under the command of Captain Turner and Lieutenant Holyoke. It does not appear that

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Turner's company was attacked until they reached the English Assembly Area on the west side of the Fall River. The second group consisted of approximately twenty soldiers in Jonathan Wells' group who had "lagged" behind along the Connecticut River shoreline where they exchanged fire with Native soldiers crossing the river by canoe.³ At some point Wells' group disengaged from fighting and retreated as well, the entire time being pursued by Native soldiers. According to Wells' account his company of twenty men was forced to fight their way to their horses. All of the battle actions in Locus B, C, and D is believed to be the result of fighting between Wells' group and Coalition forces.

There are two groups of musket balls within Locus C. The largest grouping consists of one .63" diameter ball and forty-seven small shot in the .15" - .34" diameter range concentrated in the immediate area of the gap. Of the twenty-five 25 small shot for which a direction of fire could be determined, all were fired from the southwest to northeast into the gap. The .63" diameter ball was fired from south to north. A smaller group of musket balls is located approximately 75 yards southwest of the gap and consists of one .62" diameter ball and six small shot.

The pattern of musket balls indicates that the group of Native soldiers that was pursuing Wells' group through Locus B separated as they neared the gap, with one group continuing to pursue the English from the rear to force them into the gap, and the second group moving to the west and then north in a flanking movement to ambush the English as they moved through the gap. Native soldiers positioned themselves on high ground along the southwest rim of the gap and poured volleys of small shot into the English soldiers as they moved through the gap. Although Wells does not mention any casualties, it seems likely the English took several based on the proximity and amount of concentrated fire.

Locus D: Terraces (Figure 10).

³ Jonathan Wells relayed his account of the Battle of Great Falls to the Reverend Stephen Wilson in his later years, circa 1730. Wells was a private soldier from Hadley, MA who was part of the 20 man company which stayed in the village when the majority of the company retreated. Wells' company was nearly cut off in their retreat. He was wounded during his retreat but survived the encounter. See: Daniel White Wells and Reuben Field Wells, *History of Hatfield, Massachusetts, in three parts* (Springfield, MA: F.C.H. Gibbons, 1910); Thomas. "Rev. Stephen Williams's Notebook."

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Thirty-four musket balls were recovered from Locus D and appear to represent a mix of Native and English fire. Fifty-nine percent (n=20) were small shot of which percent exhibited facets, previously demonstrated to be a Native signature. Twenty percent (n=7) were in the pistol/carbine diameter perhaps from English fire, and 20 percent (n=7) were in the .50" diameter range likely representing a mix of English and Coalition fire.

Based on the distribution of musket balls it appears that the 20 English soldiers in Wells' group dispersed after exiting the gap and took two or three different routes across the terraces to descend to the Fall River. Whether this was the result of close pursuit by Coalition forces that split the group or the soldiers retreated the same way(s) they traveled up the ridge is unclear, but they were definitely being pursued. There are only a few locations along the terrace edge descending to the Fall River that someone could more easily descend, but if one was being fired upon one could make the descent anywhere. One group took a westerly path and a second group a more northerly one before swinging to the west. Both paths ended up in sections of the terrace edge with a less severe slope. It is difficult to determine the direction of fire for most of the recovered musket balls and who fired them. One and perhaps two .56" diameter musket balls appear to have been fired from the southwest to northeast along the northern route of retreat likely fire fired by Native forces.

There were two other musket balls recovered along the northern route; an impacted .54" and .56" diameter whose direction of fire could not be determined but they are suspected to be Coalition fire from the southwest to northeast at the English retreating along the northern route. All four musket balls were fired from calibers favored by Coalition forces. Impacted .60", .31", and .37" diameter impacted musket balls were recovered along the bottom of the slope adjacent to the Fall River and could only have been fired from west to east across the Fall River. While the musket balls could have been fired by the English who had crossed the river at Natives pursuing them down the terrace, they may also have been fired by Native forces from Rawson Island who had already come up the Fall River.

Locus E: English Assembly / Horse Tie Down Area (Figure 11).

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The battlefield terrain associated with Locus E is characterized by a broad, gently sloping terrace that varies between 100 and 250 yards west of the Fall River to the base of a slope that rises steeply from the 200' to the 260' contour interval to the edge of a terrace that demarcates Locus F. The Lower Factory Hollow terrace stretches 600 yards north from the Fall Brook paralleling the Fall River, and encompasses an area of approximately 13 acres, more than sufficient space to tie 140 or so English horses.

Two actions took place in Locus E; where the English dismounted and tied their horses to some small trees one quarter of a mile away, and the counterattacks from two groups of Coalition forces; one pursuing Wells' group across the Fall River from the east, and a second group from Rawson Island coming north up the Fall River to attack the English guarding the horses (as well as Wells' group). The only source that mentions the horse hitching area is Hubbard who does not indicate precisely where the horses were tied other than "When they came near the Indians rendezvous, they alighted off their horses, and tyed them to some young trees at a quarter of a mile distance," which could refer to a location anywhere in the Lower Factory Hollow area. As discussed earlier it is unlikely the English crossed the Fall River on or leading horses as it would be very difficult if not impossible to negotiate the slopes with horses.

If the English descended the Fall Brook into Lower Factory Hollow and hitched their horses one quarter of a mile from where they dismounted, this area would be located in the more northerly portion of Lower Factory Hollow (Figure 108). Alternatively, the English could have approached Lower Factory Hollow from White Ash swamp using the terrace and swales leading from Upper to Lower Factory Hollow but based on Hubbard's reference the Horse Tie Down Area would still be in the northern portion of Lower Factory Hollow.

The steep incline that connects Lower and Upper Factory Hollow rises 60 feet over a distance of 225 feet (one foot per yard with 25 percent slope) which would make it extremely difficult for mounted, or even dismounted soldiers leading their horses, to ascend or descend. The slope does contain several east-west trending swales (areas of a depression or a hollow) of significantly less incline that mounted soldiers could easily ascend even at a gallop. The swales are spaced at varying intervals along a 325 yard stretch of the slope, and all contained concentrations of musket balls. This may indicate that the horses were dispersed throughout Lower

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Factory Hollow and when the English retrieved their horses they retreated up the nearest swale to escape Coalition fire.

There are a few descriptions of the action(s) that took place in Lower Factory Hollow when the English reached the spot where they hitched their horses:

...for some of the enemy fell upon the guards that kept the horses.⁴

In the meanwhile, a party of Indians from an Island (whose coming on shore might easily have been prevented, and the Souldiers before they set out from Hadley were earnestly admonished to take care about that matter) assaulted our men.⁵

...ab^t 20 men, y^t tarried behind to fire at some indians yt were comeing over y^e River and were left by y^e company, and were forced to dispute ye point wth y^e Enemy a considerable time before y^y cd recover y^t horses.⁶

Turner's group of 100 or so soldiers (not including the 30-40 men in Wells' group and the horse guard) probably came under attack by the group of Natives from Rawson Island as they were retrieving their horses. Alternatively, Turner's force may have already retrieved their horses and were on their way west to the White Ash Swamp when the Native group from Rawson's Island attacked Wells group and the horse guard. Either way, it appears that by the time Wells' group reached the horses the horse guards were also under attack, and Wells' group had to fight their way to the horses. At this point Wells' group faced attacks from the front and rear.

Eighty-nine musket balls were recovered from Locus E, 87 (98 percent) were recovered directly from the swales leading to Upper Factory Hollow or at the toe of the slope leading to the swales. These distributions reflect the final phase of fighting in Lower Factory Hollow as Coalition forces attacked the now mounted English as they were trying to escape from Lower Factory Hollow and had to use the swales as their only path of retreat. Unfortunately, there is little evidence of the Coalition attacks on Wells' group or the horse guard because any battle related objects are obscured by industrial activity and related artifacts distributed throughout Lower Factory Hollow. The soil is so saturated with non-battle related iron, brass, and lead objects it proved nearly impossible to detect and recover any battle related objects.

⁴ Hubbard. *Narrative of the Indian Wars*. P. 206.

⁵ Mather. *Brief History*. P. 49

⁶ Thomas. "Rev. Stephen Williams's Notebook." P. 15.

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Seventy-Five percent (n=67) of the musket balls from Locus E were small shot (.15”-.34” diameter) and of those 57j percent (n=51) had facets, considered to be characteristic of Coalition fire. Of the small shot in the swales for which a direction of fire could be determined, all indicated a direction of fire upslope, consistent with the hypothesis that Coalition forces were chasing the mounted English up the swales as they attempted to escape from Lower Factory Hollow (Figure 110). The association of the musket balls with the swales, distributed over a 325-yard stretch, indicates that after the English retrieved their horses they used the nearest swale to escape their Native pursuers. Nineteen percent (n=17) of the ball were in the pistol/carbine caliber range (.35”-.49” diameter) and could be from English fire. A little over 5 percent of the ball (n=5) were in the .50+” diameter range and could be associated with either English or Coalition forces.

There should be a recognizable signature of musket balls in Lower Factory Hollow east of the slope to mark the location(s) where Well’s group and the horse guard fought Coalition forces, but only two musket balls were recovered due to the extensive post-battle disturbance; a dropped .37” diameter and an impacted .56” diameter ball. These musket balls could be associated with either Coalition or English forces, but more likely Coalition forces. Three musket balls (.31”, .37”, .60” diameter) were recovered at the toe of the slope on the east side of the Fall River and are also related to the fighting in Lower Factory Hollow. All three musket balls were impacted and fired from west to east across the Fall River. While they could be the result of fire from Wells’ group or the horse guard directed at Natives attacking from the east across the Fall River, or overshoot from the general fighting in Lower Factory Hollow, the most probable scenario is that the fire was from Coalition forces who had come up the Fall River and directed their fire at Well’s group as they fled down the slope to escape the Native attackers in their rear.

Two horseshoes were recovered in Lower Factory Hollow. One was modern (cast), but the second was hand wrought suggesting it could be seventeenth-century (Figure 115). Seventeenth-century horseshoes can be highly variable with respect to shape and width, and are often (but not always) wider than later eighteenth and nineteenth century horseshoes.

Locus F: Upper Factory Hollow (Figure 11):

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Upper Factory Hollow is a large plain 50 acres in extent that measures 750 yards east to west and 350 yards north to south. Upper Factory Hollow is considered a key terrain feature as it provided the primary avenue of retreat for the English after they retrieved their horses and exited Lower Factory Hollow. The plain is bounded on the east and north by a very steep incline that forms the boundary with Locus E. Locus F is defined by a distribution of 19 musket balls and five pieces of possible horse tack that were recovered in three distinct concentrations within a two-acre area. The distribution of musket balls and horse tack only extends for approximately 160 yards east to west and ends abruptly 500 yards from the western end of Upper Factory Hollow. Although an additional five acres in Upper Factory Hollow were surveyed west of the concentrations, no musket balls or other battle related objects were recovered. This pattern suggests that most of the mounted English may have temporarily outdistanced their Native pursuers when they reached Upper Factory Hollow until they were ambushed at White Ash Swamp. It may also be the case that the Native fire evident in the musket distributions in Locus E and F were directed at the last of the English attempting to escape from Lower Factory Hollow. There is a fourth concentration of musket balls that is technically in Locus E and is located at the top of the slope leading from Lower Factory Hollow where a swale empties onto Upper Factory Hollow. Eighty-eight percent (n=7) of the ball were small shot indicating the target was very close. These concentrations, particularly numbers 1-3, are a unique signature not seen elsewhere on the battlefield. In Locus F, 74 percent (n=14) of the ball are larger diameter shot fired as a single round. The only .45" diameter ball from Locus F included in this category has a firing hemisphere indicating that it too was fired as a single round either from a pistol or carbine.

A portion of Jonathan Wells' narrative describes the intense fighting that took place in Upper Factory Hollow. One passage in his narrative refers to an area "about a quarter of a mile [from] where they took their horses" before Wells reached the White Ash Swamp which places the location in Upper Factory Hollow assuming the horse hitching area was somewhere in Lower Factory Hollow. The passage also indicates that both English soldiers and horses were being targeted:

Jonathn Wells Esq. then abt 16 years and 2 or 3 months old, was wondd abt a quarter of a mile where they took yr horses being in ye rear shot by 3 indians. One bullet struck his thigh bone & one bullet brushd his hair, and ye other struck his horse

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behind, & broke part of ye bone which before had been broken by a cart wheel & never set but lapd & shatter part of ye bone & ye other part stuck where it lapd . J fond he had likd to have fallen but catchd hold of ye horse's main & kept ye indians back by presenting his gun once or twice & wn yy stopd to charge he got from ye & came up to ye capt: & psuadd him to turn & take care of ye men in ye rear but he sd he had better lose some than lose all & then he fell into the rear again & took with a Small company yt Separatd from others yt ran upon a parsell of indians near a Swamp & were most of ye killd.⁷

There are several scenarios which could account for the pattern of musket balls and associated horse tack in three discrete locations. During this phase of the battle, mounted English soldiers ascended the steep slope from Lower Factory Hollow using the swales to escape the Native soldiers in close pursuit. Upon reaching the flat plateau at the top of the slope the English soldiers rode as rapidly as possible to put distance between them and their attackers, who reached the top of the slope soon after and opened fire on some of the English while they were still within musket range (i.e. 100 yards). Several English soldiers and/or their horses were hit and fell as they exited the swales which drew Native gunfire to their positions. The close association of large musket balls and horse tack indicates a battlefield event in which Native soldiers positioned 100 yards to the east along the ridgeline concentrated their fire on at least three English soldiers who may have been taking cover behind, or pinned by, their downed horses.

All four concentrations of musket balls are most likely the result of repeated and concentrated fire at a single target(s) otherwise the musket balls would be distributed in a wider pattern across the area. Concentrations 1-3 are located 100 yards west of the ridge line and indicate longer-range musket fire from Native soldiers who were positioned just below and along the edge of the slope leading down to Lower Factory Hollow. The location of the musket ball concentrations 100 yards west of the terrace edge, and the lack of any musket balls recovered in the 100-yard interval between the three concentrations and the terrace edge indicates that there were no targets between the terrace edge and the three musket ball concentrations. The fact that the thirteen large musket balls in the three concentrations in Locus F are of nearly identical diameter suggests they could have been fired from the same caliber weapon and perhaps fired by the same individual. While it's possible that one Native soldier fired and reloaded thirteen times at the targets, it is

⁷ Thomas. Notebook of Stephen Williams. P. 24.

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equally plausible that several Native soldiers with identical caliber weapons were firing and reloading.

Only 16 percent of the musket balls in concentrations 1-3 are small-shot, also a unique signature compared to the rest of the battlefield loci. Small shot fired as buckshot is generally ineffective beyond 40 or 50 yards as the shot patterns spreads so far at those distances it would be hard to hit a target, and would likely not do any damage as the load would lose considerable velocity over that distance. If loads of small shot was fired at a distance of 100 yards it would also be spread over a large area. The presence of small shot only within the small concentrated areas in Locus E and F suggests they were fired at close range. The English may have been initially been fired upon with larger diameter ball and when they were disabled and out of action Native soldiers approached them and fired on them at closer range. It is doubtful that the downed English soldiers escaped from Upper Factory Hollow.

Locus G: White Ash Swamp (Figure 12).

White Ash Swamp is an east-west trending wetland that begins a few hundred yards west of Upper Factory Hollow and extends .75 miles west to within .2 miles of Cherry Rum Brook. The more level and dryer terrain along the northern boundary of the swamp could support horses and was used by the English as an avenue of retreat. A linear and fairly evenly spaced pattern of battle related objects were distributed along the northern edge of the swamp for .65 miles. Recovered battle related objects include 45 musket balls and a few possible seventeenth century brass and pewter buttons, and two ramrod sleeves. One of the ramrod sleeves had an intentional 'V' shaped cut. The purpose of the cut is not known but it may have functioned as some kind of whistle. It is pure speculation but perhaps the devise was used by Coalition commanders to communicate with their troops.

The distribution of musket ball diameters is similar to most of the other battlefield loci; a high percentage of .15"- .34" diameter small shot (71 percent; n=32) and lesser amounts of .35"- .49" (11 percent; n= 5), .50-.54" (2.2 percent; n=1), .55"- .59" (9 percent; n=4), and .60"- .69" (6.5 percent; n=3) diameter musket balls (Figure 124). Fifteen (47 percent) of the small shot exhibited facets indicating they were fired by Coalition forces as buckshot. The few musket balls

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in the .35”-.49” diameter range and a portion in the .55”-“69” diameter range may have been fired by the English.

Several sources refer to the ambush at White Ash Swamp as the battle event that caused the most significant number of English Casualties and spread disorder through the column:

and the Souldiers so cut off were surpriz'd by a Party of the Enemy belonging to the *Indians at Deer-field-falls*, who having gotten before our forces had laid and Ambush, the chiefest execution of which was through too much fear of our Men whereby the disordered themselves.⁸

On their route the Indians had laid ambush in a swamp, but as the English were not all together, only part of them went that way. The ambushing Indians slew many of that group, in fact, about thirty-eight.⁹

Wells fell into the rear again and took wth a small company yt separated from others y^t run upon a parcel of Indians near a swamp & was most of y^m killed. They then separated again & had about ten men left with him, and his horse failing considerably by reason of his wound, & himself spent wth bleeding, he was left with one John Jones, a wounded man likewise. He had now got about 2 miles from ye place where yy did y^e exploit in, & now y^y had left y^e track of y^e company & were left both by y^e Indians y^t persued y^m and by their own men that should have terried with y^m.¹⁰

At least two groups of English appear to have been ambushed in the swamp, a large group under Turner and perhaps Holyoke and a smaller group with Wells. Both Harris (Leach) and Wells indicate the English suffered very high casualties as a result of the ambushes. Harris claims all 38 of the English casualties were in the group “that went that way [i.e. swamp]. The ‘group’ he refers to may include all of the English that followed that avenue of retreat; the main body and Wells’ group. Wells claims he was with a small company and not with the main body and that most of the soldiers in his group was killed in the ambush. Harris also refers to a group of English who had split from the main body before the ambush in the White Ash Swamp “but as the English were not all together, only part of them went that way”.¹¹ Perhaps this was a group under Holyoke. L’Estrange does not mention the number of casualties but states that “the chiefest execution of

⁸ L’Estrange. *A True Account*. P. 4.

⁹ Leach. *A Rhode Islander Reports*. P. 80.

¹⁰ Thomas. *Notebook of Stephen Williams*. P. 24.

¹¹ Leach. *A Rhode Islander Reports*. P. 80.

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which [ambush] was through too much fear of our Men whereby they disordered themselves”.

Regardless of how these passages are interpreted it appears the English suffered significant (if not most) of their casualties in the swamp ambush.

None of the sources indicate precisely where the ambush took place along White Ash Swamp. Wells’ reference that “He had now got about 2 miles from ye place where yy did y^e exploit” doesn’t give a specific location either, only that he had traveled two miles from Peskeompskut where “now y^y had left y^e track of y^e company.”¹² This passage does suggest that the ambush took place before Wells “left ye track.”

The distribution of musket balls in Locus G is evenly and continuously distributed along the entire .65 miles of the northern boundary of the swamp that was surveyed, with no evidence of a higher concentration of musket balls in a particular locale (Figure 122). However, approximately 170 yards at the eastern end of the swamp was not surveyed as the landowner didn’t grant permission and it is possible the area contains a higher concentration of musket balls. L’Estrange claims that the “Indians from Deerfield Falls having gotten before our forces had laid an Ambush”. This indicates a separate group of Coalition forces than those who came up the Fall River or were pursuing Well’s group from Peskeompskut. It is not known precisely where Deerfield Falls is located but the location may have been close enough to the battlefield to give Coalition forces sufficient time to set an ambush along the entire length of the swamp.

The direction of fire could be determined for several of the musket balls. Some were fired east to west from the swamp by Coalition forces and several larger diameter musket balls were fired from west to east in the direction of the swamp and are considered to be from English fire. Based on the direction of fire associated with a few small diameter musket balls it appears that in some locations Coalition forces had the English ‘sandwiched’ between the swamp and uplands (Figure 122). In spite of the narratives which give the impression the fight in the White Ash Swamp was one sided in favor of Coalition forces, it appears the English were beginning to mount a defense. Twenty-seven percent (n=12) of the musket balls were in the .35”-.49” and .55”-.69” diameter range which may be from English fire.

¹² Leach. *A Rhode Islander Reports*. P. 80.

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Lieutenant Holyoke is credited with organizing his command into a cohesive unit that was better able to defend themselves:

a fear possessed some part of the English, whereby they fell into a disorder, and thereby Captain *Turner* and several of his Souldiers were slain and others to the number of two and thirty. But Captain *Holyoke* exhorted them not to be terrified, saying God hath wrought hitherto for us wonderfully, let us trust in him still: and reducing his men into close order made a safe and a valiant retreat, and preserved the Souldiers under him; that there were but few of them slain.¹³

And if Capt. *Holioke* had not played the man at a more then ordinary rate, sometimes in the Front, sometimes in the flank and reer, at all times encouraging the Souldiers, it might have proved a fatal business to the assailants.¹⁴

L'Estrange also states that "the chiefest execution of which [swamp ambush] was through too much fear of our Men whereby the disordered themselves.¹⁵ It is tempting to speculate that was the moment Holyoke stepped up and brought order to the column but we don't know which group Holyoke was with or even if he and his men took that avenue of retreat. However, it does appear that the English were better organized after the White Ash Swamp as the battlefield loci from the White Ash Swamp to the Deer River Ford indicate increasing amounts of English fire.

Locus H: Cherry Rum Brook Engagement (Figure 13).

After the English reached the western end of the White Ash Swamp they traversed three hundred yards from the end of the swamp to pick up the Cherry Rum Brook which served as their avenue of retreat to the Green River two miles away. Locus H is located .55 miles downstream from where the English picked up the brook. The three hundred yards between the end of the White Ash Swamp and the Cherry Rum Brook was not surveyed but based on the nearly continuous distribution of musket balls along the brook to the confluence with the Green River it's safe to assume that the English were under fire most of the way.

The spatial distribution of musket balls in Locus H is largely associated with a six-acre portion of a 15-acre wetland bisected by the Cherry Rum Brook. There is a 70-yard gap in the

¹³ L'Estrange. *A True Account*. P. 4

¹⁴ Hubbard. *A Narrative of the Troubles*. P. 86.

¹⁵ L'Estrange. *A True Account*. P. 4.

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distribution of musket balls toward the eastern end of Locus H, but that area was heavily impacted by the construction of Cherry Street and an elementary school. The survey at the western end of Locus H was never completed but nonetheless there does appear to be a lower density of musket balls at both the western and eastern ends of Locus H as if the intensity of fire increased and then abated from east to west. The number of musket balls per acre in the eastern end of Locus H was 5/acre and in the 6-acre portion of the wetland in the central portion of the locus associated with the 6-acre portion of the wetland the density was 25/acre. There is almost a perfect correlation between the distribution of the 148 musket balls recovered and the boundaries of the six-acre portion of the wetland. There is a continuous distribution of musket balls that extends between a few yards to 80 yards on north and south sides of the brook. The stream bed is 30 feet wide and composed of a firm, packed gravel base which could easily support horses. The brook was wide enough in this area that the English could have ridden two abreast. Assuming the main body of English numbered 60 soldiers at this point in the battle, and they were riding two abreast, the column would have stretched between 320- and 350- yards along the brook.

Locus H is very unique compared to the other battlefield Loci in terms of the density of musket balls over a relatively large area (6-acres), the frequency of musket balls in the .35”-.49” diameter range, and the low number of musket balls in the .15”-.34” diameter range. Ninety-five percent of the musket balls are in the .35”-.49” diameter range. As previously discussed this category of musket ball diameters is considered to be English fire from pistols or carbines. Two musket balls are in the .60”-.69” diameter range (.62” and .64”) and may also be from English fire. Only five musket balls were in the .15”-.34” diameter range and four (80 percent) had facets indicating they were fired as buckshot, a pattern generally associated with Coalition fire elsewhere on the battlefield. However, the five ball in this category were among the general distribution of musket balls in the .35”-.49” diameter range and may have been from English fire as well. Unlike other battlefield loci there is no compelling evidence to indicate a Coalition presence in Locus H.

None of the 151 musket balls in the .35-.49” diameter range exhibited facets suggesting they may have fired as a single projectile, although there are a number of factors which would preclude the presence of facets such as the amount of gunpowder, how closely packed the musket balls were and the use of wadding, and the hardness or composition of the musket ball.

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Additionally, five ball in the .35-.49" diameter range showed evidence of ramrod marks and one .48" diameter ball exhibited a firing hemisphere further suggesting ball in that range were fired as a single shot from a pistol or possibly carbine.

The frequency of specific musket ball diameters in the .34"-.49" range are interesting and exhibit two peaks. Eighty-six percent of the musket balls were either .37"-.38" or .44"-.45" diameter. Fifty percent (n=75) of the ball were .37"-.38" diameter and 36 percent (n=54) were .44"-.45" diameter. There is no obvious explanation for this pattern but it is statistically significant. It could be that most of the ball in those categories were cast from only two or a few molds and/or either reflects the caliber of the weapons carried by the English generally, or by only a few individuals. Alternatively, the English used these diameters because they were more plentiful and readily available even though they didn't necessarily match the caliber of their weapon. None of these explanations adequately address why 86 percent of the musket balls fall into two narrow diameter categories. A more detailed analysis of the musket balls in these two categories will be conducted to determine if there are any casting flaws such as Jupiter rings or misaligned seams that indicate an association with a particular mold.

The musket balls in the .15"-.34" and .60"-.69" diameter range were misshapen and clearly impacted. None of the musket balls in the .35"-.49" diameter range exhibited any obvious evidence of an impact and only upon close examination under a microscope could impacts in the form of slight striations and/or gouges be identified. Obvious signs of impact usually occur if the musket ball is deformed by impacting against something solid such as a tree or rock, or if the musket ball skips along the ground for some distance if fired at an angle more horizontal to the ground surface. Generally, slight impacts such as were observed in the .35"-.49" diameter range musket balls occur if the musket ball was fired at more of a down angle and hit the ground quickly and if the soils were largely devoid of gravel or stones. The soils in Locus H were fine silts and the only stone were very small particles of grit.

The spatial distribution, limited range of musket ball diameters and the general lack of obvious impacts raises a number of questions for which there are no ready explanations. The distribution of musket balls is correlated with wetlands. The English had been ambushed from a wetland (White Ash Swamp) just a short time and distance (.75 miles) prior. The English,

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particularly if they were on horseback, avoiding passing by or entering a wetland because the thick vegetation provided ideal cover for Natives to set an ambush, a strategy used by Native forces throughout King Philip's War. Assuming the wetland may have concealed Coalition forces with the intention of ambushing the English, they may have preemptively fired into the swamp. As there is no evidence of Native fire, the wetland apparently was not occupied by Coalition forces intending to ambush the English.

The similar distribution of musket balls on either side of the brook indicates that the English were riding in the brook and directed fire to their flanks. The fact that none of the musket balls exhibited any obvious signs of impact suggests they entered the ground quickly because they were fired at a down angle from soldiers on horseback. Another factor could be the musket balls did not have a lot of velocity because the English didn't load their weapons with a full charge of gunpowder. Hubbard states that the English were low on gunpowder which contributed to the high casualty rate among the English as well as their general disorder:

The loss that befell our men in the retreat, was occasioned principally by the bodily weakness of Capt. *Turner*, unable to manage his charge any longer, yet some say they wanted powder, which forced them to retire as fast as they could by Capt. *Tuners* order.¹⁶

Locus I: Cherry Rum Brook (Figure 14).

Locus I is defined by a discontinuous distribution of musket balls recovered along a 1-mile stretch of the Cherry Rum Brook. Only .5-miles was surveyed due to land disturbance or lack of landowner permissions. Battle related objects were recovered from three separate areas within the loci. The areas were defined based on different distributions of musket balls and terrain. In all, fifty-one musket balls and several possible seventeenth century domestic / personal objects were recovered including a ramrod sleeve, lead bead, hand wrought hatchet/axe fragment, two brass rings and an iron buckle.

The Cherry Rum Brook meanders through the one-mile length of Locus I significantly increasing the danger and the amount of time if the English were traveling along the brook, as it appears they were. The English could have shortened their route and avoided wetlands and

¹⁶ Hubbard. *A Narrative of the Troubles*. P. 86.

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potential ambushes in some areas if they cut across the meanders, yet they followed closely along the course of the brook. This suggests that they were moving through territory unfamiliar to them and the Cherry Rum Brook was the only landmark to guide them. In some areas the English appear to have traveled in the stream bed and in other areas they traveled along flat ground adjacent to the brook, or both. When direction of fire could be determined the fire was from east to west across the brook and sometimes from the English rear. Based on the musket ball distributions and direction of fire they were being pursued both from the rear and ambushed from the swamp simultaneously. The lead bead was found in Area 3 on flat ground on the south side of the brook probably dropped from one of the Native soldiers pursuing the English from the rear of the column. In Area 3 the musket balls were recovered along the south bank of the brook on a flat terrace thirty feet above the brook and could have only been fired by Coalition forces to the rear of the English.

The frequency and distribution of musket ball diameters suggests a mix of Coalition and English fire (Figure 129). Thirty-nine ball (76.5 percent) were in the .15”-.34” diameter range, five (9.8 percent) in the .35”-.49”, three (5.9 percent) in the .50”-.54”, one in the .55”-.59”, and three (5.9 percent) in the .60”-.69” diameter range. Based on the analysis presented earlier, the musket balls in the .15”-.34” and .50”-.54” diameter ranges are considered to be from Coalition fire, while ball in the .35”-.49” diameter range are mostly from English fire. Fifty-six percent (n=22) of the musket balls in the .15”-34” diameter range and one .35” diameter musket ball had facets also considered to be a Coalition signature. Three impacted .50” diameter musket balls were recovered from the south end of Area 2 believed to be from Coalition fire. All were recovered in a 200 square foot area suggesting they were fired from the same weapon at a stationary target. Although musket balls were only recovered from only .5-miles along the brook there is no reason to believe the fighting was not continuous. The terrain is so rugged and steep it is unlikely the English could put any distance between themselves and Coalition Forces.

Locus J: Green River Ford (Figure 15).

The terrain at the western end of Cherry Rum Brook at the confluence with the Green River is so constricted and steep the English were forced to stay within the stream bed of the Cherry Rum Brook. As Coalition forces clearly knew the route of the English retreat, the Green River

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Ford was an ideal location to set an ambush. Coalition forces positioned themselves along a steep slope on the north side of the ford to fire down on the English as they passed through Cherry Rum Brook and crossed the ford. No primary sources mention the fighting at the ford, only that Captain Turner was killed there after he crossed the ford to the west bank of the Green River:

John Wecopeak, on his examination saith...that he saw Capt. Turner, and that he was shot in the thigh, and that he knew it was him, for the said Turner said that was his name.¹⁷

Within a few days after this [the battle], Capt. *Turners* dead Corps was found a small distance from the River; it appeared that he had been shot through his thigh and back, of which its judged he dyed speedily without any great torture from the enemy.

When John Wecopeak saw Captain Turner on the west side of the ford he was alive and had received one shot in his thigh. When the English returned a few days later they observed Turner he had been shot in the thigh and back. They also noted that Turner was not tortured as if they had encountered other English dead who were. None of these observations can help determine which direction the fire came from that killed Turner. The area around the west side of the ford and Green River has been heavily disturbed from construction activities precluding the recovery of any battle related objects that might indicate if Coalition forces were waiting for the English on the west side of the ford or if they were pursuing the English from the rear.

Fourteen musket balls were recovered from Locus J, all were impacted against the slope on the north side of the ford. All of the shot was clearly fired by the English and directed at Native Coalition forces positioned along the slope. Horses could not ascend or descend the slope so the fire was not directed at English along the slope. The distribution of musket ball diameters is interesting as it is the only battlefield loci where all of the recovered musket balls were fired by the English. Seventy-one percent (n=10) of the shot was in the .15”-.34” diameter range of which 60 percent (n=6) were faceted. Two of the musket balls in that range appear to have been fired from pistols; a .33” with a firing hemisphere and ramrod mark and a .36” diameter with a firing

¹⁷ Easton. *A Narrative of the causes*. P. 180.

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hemisphere. Two musket balls were in the .35”-.49” diameter range (.36” and .40”) and two in the .60”-.69” diameter range (.62” and .63”).

Even though the sample of musket balls was small, a number of conclusions can be reached. At this point in the battle, and clearly before as well, the English were organized enough to mount a determined defense. The .33” and .36” musket balls were most likely fired from pistols, argued to be an English signature. The contention that .60”-.69” diameters are associated with English fire (although not exclusively) is supported by the evidence at Locus J. No musket balls in the .50”-.59” diameters were recovered which supports the contention that ball in these ranges are largely associated with Native Coalition fire. The only anomaly is that all but one of ball in the .15-.34” diameter range were fired as small shot (buckshot) loads, demonstrating that the English would also load their weapons with multiple loads of small shot as buckshot when the situation called for it. If so, the English may have been fairly close to the Coalition forces along the hillside for the buckshot to be effective.

Locus K Holyoke’s Retreat(Figure 16).

When the English crossed the Green River Ford they took advantage of the large expanse of relatively open and level ground along the western terraces of the Green River to put some distance from the Coalition forces. The only impediment was the east-west trending gully’s extending hundreds of yards from the Green River that the English had to go around as they couldn’t be traversed them on horseback. Of the .8- miles and 28-acres surveyed south of the Green River Ford only three musket balls and a few possible seventeenth century objects were recovered.

One musket ball was an impacted .58” diameter cylindrical shot re-fashioned from a .62” diameter round ball. This was one of only two cylindrical shot recovered from the battlefield, the other was recovered from Locus L. The cylindrical shot could be associated with either English or Coalition forces. The other musket balls included an impacted .36” diameter and an impacted .65” diameter ball, generally believed to be from English fire. The most significant aspect of the assemblage is how few and dispersed the musket balls were; only three in a 25-acre area. The pattern is unlike any other loci and indicates that once the English crossed the Green River Ford they moved very rapidly, easily outdistancing their pursuers. As no surveys were conducted between and Locus K and Locus L (Deerfield River Ford) 1.85 miles to the south, it cannot be

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determined at this time if this pattern characterized the remainder of the route of retreat until Deerfield River Ford.

Locus L Deerfield River Ford (Figure 17).

After Captain Turner was killed at the Green River Ford the remnants of his company, now likely under the command of Lieutenant Holyoke, probably numbered no more than 60 or 80 soldiers considering the number of killed (38), an unknown number who took a different route before the White Ash Swamp ambush, a dozen or so who came into Hatfield in the days after the battle, and individuals such as Jonathan Wells and the Reverend Atherton who remained lost for several days. The English were not familiar with the landscape and kept the Green River in sight on their left as best they could considering the deep gullies cutting west from the Green River which forced them to keep as much as .3-miles (550 yards) west of the river.

Locus L is situated in the southeastern corner of a large terrace overlooking the Green River to the east and the Deerfield River to the south. The secondary Deerfield River Ford was used by the English as an avenue of approach and retreat and lies 40 feet below the southern edge of the terrace. The slope leading to the ford is so steep that it is impossible to descend on horseback except by a very narrow trail that could accommodate only one horse at a time. This terrain feature created a bottleneck whereby the English had to wait their turn to descend to the ford and were vulnerable to Coalition attacks.

The northern and western boundaries of Locus L were determined by the distribution of musket balls and Native domestic objects. The greatest extent of battle related objects encompassed approximately 6.5-acres, but the majority of the battle related objects, as well as the Native domestic objects, were concentrated within a .8-acre area.

Locus L yielded a total of 43 musket balls, 41 were recovered from the terrace and two were recovered half-way down the slope leading to the ford. The two musket balls recovered from the slope were an impacted .51" and .52" diameter and could only have been Coalition fire from the edge of the terrace presumably toward the English as they were crossing the ford.

The most interesting and perplexing aspect of the musket ball assemblage is the equal amounts of large ball between .50" and .69" diameter and smaller ball between .22" and .46"

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diameter, a pattern unlike any of the other battlefield loci. The large and small diameter musket balls were fairly evenly distributed throughout Locus L. Nine musket balls in the .15”-.34” range and four in the .35”-.49” diameter range (60 percent) exhibited facets, which suggest Coalition fire. Eleven of the faceted ball were recovered within a .8-acre area indicating that they were fired as buckshot at close range. Two large diameter musket balls had unusual impact marks most likely from hitting a metal object with a sharp edge such as a sword, stirrup, or horse bit.

Five musket balls (12 percent) were dropped, an unusually high percent compared to any of the other battlefield loci.¹⁸ Excluding Locus H, 25 percent of all dropped musket balls on the battlefield were recovered from Locus L. The relatively high percentage of dropped musket balls suggests both duress under fire as well as repeated loading and firing. Two musket balls were sandwich shot (.52” and .60” diameter) and one was a cylindrical .55” diameter shot re-fashioned from a .58” diameter round ball.

The fighting that took place at Locus L was very different compared to the other battlefield loci given that most of the musket balls were recovered in a very circumscribed area and half of the assemblage were large diameter musket balls. The other battlefield loci were running fights that took place over large areas, Locus L was a stationary fight that took place within a relatively small area (.8-acres). Control of the southeastern corner of the terrace was vital for both the English and Coalition forces; the former to secure their route of retreat and the latter to prevent them from doing so. Once the English crossed the Deerfield River they could use their horses to advantage to escape the Coalition pursuit.

Two scenarios present themselves. The first is that Coalition forces, perhaps from the Cheapside area, occupied the terrace first to prevent the English from using the ford. When the English arrived, they were forced to drive them away and subsequently occupied the terrace continuing to receive fire from Coalition forces as they waited to descend the slope to the ford. A more likely scenario is that the English occupied the terrace first having put some distance between themselves and Coalition forces once they crossed the Green River Ford. The distance from the Green to the Deerfield River Fords is 2.5 miles and if the English traveled at 15-20 MPH they

¹⁸ Twenty-six of the musket balls at Locus H were identified as dropped but only because they were so degraded that the striations and gouges that characterized all the other impacted ball could not be detected.

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would have reached the ford in 10-15 minutes. It would have taken Coalition forces 20-25 minutes to cover that same distance at a jog, only 10-15 minutes behind the English. Many, but not all, of the English could have descended to the Deerfield Ford in that span of time perhaps leaving 20-30 men on the terrace waiting their turn to descend. Because of the delay caused by the bottleneck, Coalition forces were able to catch up to the English and fired upon them as they waited their turn to descend to the ford.

The second scenario is more probable, as it is very unlikely that Coalition and English forces were receiving and giving fire in precisely the same location. If Coalition forces occupied the terrace first it is doubtful they would have exposed themselves to English fire in such a close formation for an extended period of time. As such, all of the impacted musket balls are considered to be from Coalition fire and the dropped musket balls are English. The mix of small and large diameter ball also suggests there were two phases of the battle. Many of the English had already descended the slope by the time Coalition forces arrived, leaving only a small group of English on the terrace. When Coalition forces arrived, they exchanged fire with the remaining English at a distance of 100-150 yards. The percentage of smaller diameter ball with facets indicates that as the number of English dwindled Coalition forces closed in on the remaining English and exchanged fire at a distance of 30-40 yards. The .51" and .52" diameter musket balls recovered on the slope leading to the ford were likely from Coalition fire in the last phase of the battle. The musket balls could only have been fired from the edge of the terrace, indicating that as the last of the English vacated the terrace Coalition forces occupied it and fired at the retreating English.

The high percentage of large diameter musket balls (n=21; 49 percent) suggests an extended exchange of fire between 100 and 150 yards. If there was an exchange of large ball, Coalition positions would be identified by a distribution of large musket balls, including diameters of the dropped 57", .68", and .69" ball fired by the English 100-150 yards from Locus L. The terrain and topography preclude Coalition fire coming from any other direction except the west and northwest, but unfortunately these areas have not yet been surveyed.

Once the English crossed the Deerfield River Ford they continued to be pursued by Coalition forces through the upper Deerfield Meadows. This area was not considered for survey given the many engagements that took place in Deerfield between the English and Natives during

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King Philip's War and Queen Anne's War and the many musket balls that could have resulted from Native attacks on Deerfield.

A seventeenth-century Native domestic site was also identified at Locus L. Although the battle related and Native domestic objects are closely associated spatially, the site is not believed to have been occupied at the time of the battle. No temporally diagnostic objects were recovered to narrow the time period beyond the seventeenth-century, and the site could have been occupied before or after the battle.

Thirty-seven seventeenth or possibly seventeenth century objects were recovered from an area of approximately 0.6 acres. The objects included 13 pieces of brass scrap from reprocessing brass trade kettles, a brass finger ring, several punched or incised brass objects, a brass spoon bowl, two brass buckles, a lead bale seal, and several fragments of lead bar and scrap, and five copper nuggets. Several of the brass scraps were scored and several exhibited cut or chisel marks indicative of reprocessing.

Archaeological Investigations

The battlefield archaeological survey consisted entirely of metal detecting. Fieldwork was conducted in four phases: Orientation Phase, Inventory Phase, Recovery Phase, and Laboratory and Evaluation Phase. These phases were often conducted concurrently and fieldwork was guided by the work plans and research design outlined below.

Orientation Phase

Landowner Permission: Landowner permissions and cooperation were the most crucial aspect of conducting fieldwork. Landowner permissions were obtained from public informational meetings, letters, phone calls and personal contacts. Eventually, more than seventy landowner permissions were obtained which constituted 256.5 acres (107 hectares).

Visual Inspection: A windshield and pedestrian survey was conducted for the entire battlefield. Landscape and cultural features were observed and correlated with historic maps and Lidar maps

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of existing topography and cultural features to assess areas of integrity and disturbance and to get an overall feel for the battlefield landscape. Once landowner permission was obtained visual inspection and walkover over of individual properties was conducted with the landowner present to gain information on the locations of below-ground disturbances (i.e., septic systems, utility lines, etc.), and to note landscape features that had physical and/or cultural attributes that were related to the battlefield.

Land Use Research: A land use and occupational history of Greenfield and Gill was conducted to identify potential battle-related landscapes and sites, and to identify post-Pequot War structures and activities. The site files of the Massachusetts Historical Commission were also consulted for information on relevant sites within or adjacent to the battlefield.

Spatial Reference and Analysis: The first step in determining the provenience and precise geographic location of artifacts, and cultural and terrain features was establishing a conceptual grid or referencing system over the entire Core Area of Saybrook Point facilitated by GIS (Geographic Information System) to aid in the collection, maintenance, storage, analysis, and output of spatial data and information.¹⁹ The GIS database consisted of a two foot contour base map which incorporated relevant terrain features such as marshes, hydrography and soils. Through the course of the field season the GIS database was expanded to include: property information (i.e., boundaries, ownership, structures), and modern features such as roads, aerial photographs, disturbed areas, and all battle-related artifacts and features.

Provenience: To establish provenience of objects, terrain features, and structural remains within the project area a combination of methods were utilized. The first step in establishing provenience was to develop a procedure so that all cultural materials and features identified within the battlefield loci could be assigned a spatial reference based on Cartesian coordinates within a grid. A conceptual one-meter grid was established over a two foot contour base map of

¹⁹ Paul Bolstad, *GIS Fundamentals: A First Text on Geographic Information Systems*. (White Bear Lake, MN: Eider Press, 2008).

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with the intent of physically establishing fixed points within the grid throughout the battlefield utilizing GPS (Global Positioning System).

Inventory Phase

The Inventory Phase consisted of three sequential steps: metal detector and archeological surveys and excavations, recovery of artifacts, and recording of artifacts. The survey phase consisted of an initial metal detector survey to identify and locate potential battle-related objects in any given area. If potential battle-related objects were recovered, a more intensive metal detector survey followed as well as possible archeological surveys and excavations. Metal detected objects were pin-flagged for subsequent recovery and initial identification.

Recovery Phase

The recovery crew (staff archeologists and metal detector operators) excavated a 25cm square hole with a small shovel or trowel which had been previously marked by a pin-flag during detection. The excavation location was detected a second time to make sure there were no other metal objects present before the hole was re-filled. If the recovered object was clearly modern (e.g., aluminum foil, pull tabs, tin cans, roofing nails) the artifact was discarded and in the case of personal objects (e.g., match box cars, jewelry coins) it was given to the landowner.

If the artifact was not modern it was placed in a plastic bag with soil and left at its location marked by a pin-flag for the recording crew. The artifact was placed in a sealed plastic bag with soil according to conservation protocols that require objects be kept in an environment similar to which it had been removed until it could be brought to the archeology and conservation labs at the MPMRC for evaluation and identification (often on a daily basis).

Standard metal detecting and archeological survey forms were used to record all relevant information about the artifact's provenience and preliminary identification as well as the date, weather and soil conditions, depth of artifact, machine type and operator and recorder.

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Laboratory and Evaluation Phase

Real-time laboratory analysis was the most important aspect of fieldwork, as the immediate (within two to three days) results of identification of metallic (primarily ferrous) artifacts determined if they were battle-related and therefore likely to determine where to focus additional fieldwork efforts. Laboratory analysis involved three sequential steps: initial examination and identification, radiography analysis if necessary, and stabilization and conservation to remove extraneous oxide. Some objects were evaluated and analyzed to further refine or clarify previous identifications.

Initial artifact examination consisted of cleaning the artifact with a soft brush to examine by eye and with a low-powered binocular microscope. In many instances, the age of the artifact could not be determined from just the initial examination. If further examination was required, the next step was to take several radiographs (X-Rays) of the object with different exposures and object orientation. The most important aspect in the of identification potential battle-related artifacts was further assessment of ferrous objects through radiography (X-Ray analysis). Most recovered ferrous objects were highly degraded and not easily unidentifiable, particularly features such as holes, breaks, and pivot points that could help to identify the function of the object. X-Ray Analysis was performed as soon as possible so battlefield staff could quickly assess whether the object was hand-wrought and if it might be battle-related. These determinations often influenced decisions where to concentrate survey efforts.

Integrity Statement

The battlefield district retains physical integrity, and integrity of setting, location, feeling, and association with the historic battlefield landscape and key terrain features within the district. The battlefield district retains a majority of the historic and battlefield landscape elements, and key terrain features which were present during their period of significance. Intrusions such as post King Philip's War land use activities, buildings, structures, and roadways are present but their impacts to the battlefield district vary to high impact to low or no impact. In many areas of the battlefield post King Philip's War land use has not impacted the visual setting and key terrain

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features associated with the battle. The physical landscape within the boundaries of the battlefield district can be demonstrated to be similar enough to its late seventeenth-century appearance to allow one to envision the scene of the actions and movements of the English and Coalition forces on the day of the battle. Although some battlefield loci have varying degrees of physical or visual impacts, they all contain battlefield objects which contribute to our understanding of the battle.

Location – The battlefield retains integrity of location if it is the place where the historic battle and engagements took place. The Battle of Great Falls survey utilized historic research and archeological investigations to identify the locations where the actual battles and engagements occurred.

Association – The battlefield retains integrity of association as the place where the battle and engagements occurred based on historical research and the distribution of battle-related objects.. The documented battlefield locations/loci were confirmed to be associated with the Battle of Great Falls.

Setting – The battlefields retain integrity of setting. Key terrain features and visual settings associated with the various battlefield loci remain largely intact. The battlefield loci associated with the Battle of Great Falls retain physical landscape components and visual settings from the actions and visual settings from actions and engagements.

Feeling – the battlefield loci have the ability to convey a sense of time and place from its period of significance in the Battle of Great Falls. intrusions such as buildings and structures, road systems, or extensive alterations in land use but in low density within the battlefield loci and have not substantially affected the terrain, visual setting, or archeological integrity of the battlefield.

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Associated Property Types

The associated property types for the Battle of the Great Falls / Peskeomskut Archeological District are categorized by the historic contexts outlined above. For the purpose of this Archeological District nomination a property type is a resource (or group of resources) with similar cultural and archeological elements that relate to the same historic context. The property types have been defined and identified based on the historical and archeological records and battle-related artifacts, and they incorporate elements of battlefield and historic landscapes as well as key terrain features extant during the Battle of Great Falls. It is anticipated that when the battlefield surveys of the remaining 5.5 miles the Great Falls battle have been completed additional properties and sites will be incorporated into the district. The battlefield is comprised of a discontinuous distribution of recovered battlefield objects that have been designated as battlefield loci and for which boundaries were determined based on the distribution of battlefield objects and terrain. These loci represent several different property types:

1) village/domestic (Locus A); 2) large engagements of relatively longer duration as defined by a larger density and distribution of battle-related objects (Loci B, E, F, H, I, L); 3) small engagements of relatively shorter duration defined by a smaller density and distribution of battle-related objects (Loci D, J, K); and 4) ambushes of short duration but with varying densities of battle objects and area(s) (Loci C, G, J).

The Battle of Great Falls/Peskeomskut Archeological District contains a variety of contributing resources distributed over 6.5 miles (including the location of the Peskeomskut Village) and within 70 acres of the battlefield. The district possesses a significant concentration of a physically proximate group of cultural resources which were historically significant to or were part of the landscape on the day of the Battle of the Great Falls/Peskeomskut (May 19, 1676). The boundaries of the Battle of Great Falls/Peskeomskut Discontinuous Archeological District and individual Loci are defined by terrain features and the distribution of battle-related and domestic objects. The district contains 12 battlefield loci of varying artifact densities and distribution including musket balls, broken and discarded weapons and weapon parts, equipment, and personal items associated with the English and Native combatants. The distribution of

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battlefield loci represents spatially and temporally discrete associations of battle-related artifacts and terrain features, some of which are referenced or described in battlefield narratives. In addition to the Peskeomskut Village (Locus A) the district also contains one Native domestic archeological site which was not demonstrated to be contemporaneous with the battle (Locus L).

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery

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- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Archaeology
Military
Ethnic Heritage

Period of Significance

1675-1676

Significant Dates

May 19, 1676

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Pocumtuk
Narragansett
Wampanoag
Nonnotuck
Abenaki

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Nipmuc
English

Architect/Builder

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Battle of Great Falls/Peskeomskut was one of the most significant battles of King Philip's War. The battle was the beginning of a process that resulted in the dissolution of the Native Coalition and ultimately the piecemeal defeat of all the tribes in the coalition and the end of the war in August. In the weeks and months following the battle, Native peoples abandoned the middle Connecticut River to seek refuge in Mahican territory or among the Abenaki to the north, or returned home to their homelands in central and eastern Massachusetts or Narragansett country. While the English were the victors at the attack on the Peskeomskut Village, killing hundreds of Native people and destroying critical food stores and supplies, the attack did not significantly reduce the military strength of coalition forces nor seriously degrade their military leadership. The ability of coalition forces to effectively and efficiently mount a series of well-planned counterattacks against the English is reflected in a casualty rate of 60 percent among the English forces. The 12 battlefield loci reflect the nature of English and Coalition weapons and the varying tactics employed by Coalition forces against the English at various points on the battlefield. At the end of the day, Native Coalition forces controlled the battlefield and exacted a steep price from the English for their attack on Peskeomskut.

The Battle of Great Falls Historic Battlefield Archeological District may be nominated under Criteria A and D for its significance in the areas of Native and Colonial history, military history, and historic archeology. The Battle of Great Falls Peskeomskut Archeological District is associated with actions and engagements of varying degrees of strategic importance as part of the campaigns by Coalition and English forces in the middle Connecticut valley during King Philip's War. The contributing properties within the district have, and will continue to provide information important for understanding and reconstructing the actions, movements, and engagements associated with the Battle of Great Falls during King Philip's War.

The Battle of Great Falls/Peskeomskut Archeological District is significant under Criteria A, for its association with a major event and period of significance in American history – King Philip's War (1675-1676) and the Battle of Great Falls/Peskeomskut (May 19, 1676). The Battle of Great Falls/Peskeomskut was one of the pivotal battles of King Philip's War, and provides

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significant information on the nature of weapons, tactics, and battlefield strategies employed by the English and Coalition forces during the battle and King Philip's War generally.

The nature and distribution of battlefield objects has added an important perspective that is lacking in the battle narratives – evidence of a series of well-planned counterattacks that led to a Native victory in the final phase of the battle. The continuous and intense fighting along the first 0.75 miles of the battle (Loci A-F) is not reflected in the battle narratives nor is the Native flanking and other movements that are only reflected in the distribution of battle-related objects recovered from the mountain gap, terraces, and swales (Loci C, E). These actions by Coalition forces proved to be far more sophisticated than previously believed, and has increased our knowledge and understanding of Native tactics during King Philip's War and military leadership.

The battlefield district is considered significant under Criteria D as it has yielded and will continue to yield important information for understanding the course and outcome of King Philip's War and the Battle of Great Falls. Battle-related objects associated with the Battle of Great Falls recovered from systematic metal detector and archeological surveys and excavations funded by the National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program provide important information on munitions, weapons, equipment, and personal items associated with the European and Native combatants. Their distribution and associations provide important insights on Native and Colonial military and political organization and tactics during the early seventeenth-century.

Categories of battle-related and domestic objects associated with the Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag Archeological District include:

1. Military artifacts such as musket balls of various diameters, firearms of various types (e.g., pistols, carbines, full muskets) and ignition systems (e.g., matchlocks, flintlocks, wheelock), swords, knives, pikes, brass tipped arrows, and iron hatchets associated with the English and Native combatants.
2. Domestic and personal artifacts carried by English and Natives into battle including buttons, aglets, buckles, folding knives, straight knives, jaw harps, clay and brass pipes, brass and lead amulets, eating utensils, gaming pieces, bracelets and miscellaneous personal items.
3. Domestic artifacts associated with Native villages/sites including brass scrap, brass and glass beads, European and Native pottery and pipes, iron tools such as hoes/mattocks, axes, sedges, and chisels, and food remains such as animal bone, maize, and shellfish, and features such as refuse pits, hearths, and post

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molds. Encampment sites associated with pre- or post-battle activity with associated battle-related objects such as broken and discarded equipment, hearths and trash pits.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage

Criterion A: Military

The Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District meets Criterion A in the category of Military History for its substantial association with King Philip's War. The Battle of Great Falls with its key terrain features, unique landscapes, and archeological sites is directly associated with the events and actions of the Coalition and English forces during the Battle of Great Falls on May 19, 1676. The district is emblematic of the nature and evolution of weapons, tactics, and strategies used by English and Coalition forces during King Philip's War. The district encompasses many large and small engagements and associated terrain features associated with English and Coalition forces during the battle.

Historic Context

King Philip's War (June 1675 – August 1676) was an armed conflict between dozens of Native American tribes and bands who inhabited (and still do) present-day southern New England who fought against the United Colonies of Connecticut, Massachusetts Bay, and Plymouth. The war is named after the Pokanoket sachem Metacom, known to the English as "King Philip," as the war began in Plymouth Colony, the homeland of the Pokanoket, and due to King Philip's leadership role during the conflict. Dozens of frontier towns in central Massachusetts and the Connecticut Valley were attacked and burned during the war, as were settlements in Providence

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Plantations, Plymouth Colony and eastern Massachusetts (Figure 31). The conflict is often referred to as the deadliest in American history based on English and Native civilian and military casualties per capita relative to the population.²⁰

King Philip's War began on June 25, 1675 when a group of Metacom's men attacked and killed several English at Swansea, Massachusetts because of rising tensions between the Pokanoket and Plymouth Colony following the execution of three Pokanoket men by the English several months earlier.²¹ This action initiated a sequence of events that engulfed all of New England in a full-scale war within a few months. Once the Pokanoket (Bristol, RI), Pocasset (Tiverton, RI), and other Wampanoag bands eluded English forces at Mount Hope (Metacom's homeland) and fled to central Massachusetts in late August, almost all the Native groups in Massachusetts joined the war against the English.²² It was reported that there were even some Mohegan's who fought for Philip. Roger Williams reported that after the Great Swamp Fight "14 Monhiggins are now marcht away with the Nahigonsiks."²³ The Narragansett of Rhode Island entered the war in December of 1675 following a surprise attack on their fortified village in South Kingston by the United Colonies on December 19, 1675.

From the summer of 1675 through the early winter of 1676 The Pokanoket and Pocasset Wampanoag, Narragansett, Nipmuc, middle Connecticut River Valley tribes (Pocumtuck, Nonotucks, Agawam, Norwottock) and the Quabaug, Nashaway, and Sokokis, launched dozens of highly successful attacks against English settlements in the Western, Central, and Eastern theaters. These attacks had a devastating impact on English settlements.

Coalition attacks on the middle Connecticut Valley settlements forced the English settlements at Northfield (Squakeag) and Deerfield (Pocumtuck) to be abandoned in September of 1675. In October Native attacks on English corn and grist mills in the middle Connecticut valley forced Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut to send soldiers to garrison and fortify the remaining

²⁰ Douglas Leach, *Flintlock and tomahawk; New England in King Philip's War* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1958).

²¹ George Madison Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War: Being a Critical Account of that War* (Boston, MA: Rockwell and Churchill Press, 1906). Pp. 25-27

²² The Nipmuc of central Massachusetts and northeastern Connecticut, as well as the Pocumtuck (Deerfield), Norwottuck (Hadley), Agawam (Springfield), Woronoco (Westfield), Nonotuck (Hadley), Squakheag (Northfield) of the middle Connecticut Valley, and various Nipmuc tribes including the Quabaug (Brookfield) and Nashaway, and the Quahmsit, and Segunesit of north central Massachusetts.

²³ LaFantasie. *Correspondence of Roger Williams*. P. II:714

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settlements of Springfield, Westfield, Hatfield, Hadley, and Northampton during the winter of 1675-1676.

By the spring of 1676, the war had raged for nearly a year with heavy casualties on both sides, but the Native coalition was far more successful on the battlefield than were the English. Even so, the tide of the war began to turn in favor of the English as they began to aggressively pursue, harass, and attack Native communities throughout the region, not allowing them time to rest, gather food, or plant their fields. By the early spring both sides were exhausted and there was a brief pause in the war as they took time to rest and resupply. English forces in Connecticut, Massachusetts Bay, and Plymouth refitted their armies, provided for the defense of their towns, and prepared for spring offensives against the Native coalition.

Native communities began gathering in the middle Connecticut River Valley in early spring to find refuge and recover from the long winter, plan future strategy, rearm and refit, plant corn, and gather food supplies, particularly fish, for immediate consumption and as food stores to continue the war for next year. There were far more Native attacks in all theaters between January and May of 1676 than in the previous five months in part because of the addition of the Narragansett to the Coalition and likely because the Coalition used the winter to plan and prepare for wide ranging offensive operations. Similarly, we see a dramatic increase in English offensive operations in the spring of 1676 as well. This surge may have been partly in response to Native attacks but was also the result of developing English experience in battlefield operations and execution, as well as logistics and planning. The English operations in the spring of 1676 (mostly attacks on Native communities) had a tremendous impact on Native people throughout the region. These operations prevented Native communities from gathering food supplies, planting, and directly and indirectly caused thousands of deaths from battlefield casualties, malnutrition, sickness, and disease.

By April the broader Peskeomskut/Great Falls area of the middle Connecticut River Valley, had become a center of a multi-tribal gathering with at least a dozen villages located between Deerfield and Squakeag (Figure 38). In a May 1 letter, the Connecticut War Council identified several Coalition leaders and communities at Squakeag including Pessicus (Narragansett), Wequaquat (Pocumtuck), Wanchequit (Norwottuck), Sunggumachoe (Nonotuck)

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“and the rest of the Indian sachems up the river at Suckquackheage [Squakheag].”²⁴ Jonathan Wells identified six Coalition communities in the immediate vicinity of Great Falls at the time of the battle at Peskeomskut, directly across the river, further upriver near the confluence of the Millers River, Cheapside (east of the confluence of the Deerfield and Green Rivers), Deerfield and Rawson Island.²⁵

The immediate area around Peskeomskut consisted of two broad floodplains along the west and east banks of the Connecticut River adjacent to the falls. The bedrock formation at Peskeomskut forms one of the largest waterfalls along the Connecticut River where anadromous fish such as shad, alewife, salmon, and eels were easily caught as they make their way upriver to spawn. The confluences of the Green and Deerfield Rivers, the Fall and Connecticut Rivers, and the Banquaug (Miller’s) and Connecticut Rivers were all ideal fishing places to capture anadromous fish which attracted Native people to these areas.

Coalition Forces conducted 21 attacks on the English in the middle Connecticut valley between September and November of 1675, six of which were major attacks on English settlements. The English settlements at Deerfield and Northfield were destroyed and abandoned in September of 1675 (For a map of English towns in the middle Connecticut River Valley see Figure 31). By the fall of 1676, the northernmost English settlements along the middle Connecticut River Valley were the towns of Northampton, Hadley, and Hatfield. The English also suffered significant military defeats in ambushes during the month of September at Northfield when Captain Beers and his company of 37 men were killed, and at Bloody Brook in Deerfield when 57 soldiers and local teamsters were killed.

The attacks were part of a broader Coalition strategy to force the English out of the middle Connecticut valley, and it was succeeding. The winter of 1675/76 was relatively quiet in the middle valley with virtually no attacks recorded as the Coalition shifted their attention to the eastern and southern theaters (Figures 33 & 34). By the spring of 1676 a false sense of security developed within the English settlements in the middle valley with the promise of peace negotiations and the cessation of Coalition attacks during the winter. That perspective changed when an estimated 500

²⁴ Trumbull, *Colony of Connecticut*. P. II:439

²⁵ Thomas, *Historiographic Analysis*, pp. 11, 13-14.

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Narragansett, Pocumtuck, Wampanoag, and Nipmuc soldiers attacked Northampton on March 14, 1676.

By the early spring of 1676 the Great Falls and surrounding area had become a gathering place for many tribes and bands in the Coalition where they could rest and resupply and escape the relentless pursuit of Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay forces. The English in the valley recognized the threat from the Native tribes gathering near the falls and well understood the broader Native strategy to force the English from the valley so they could plant corn and resettle the middle valley. With the planting season just weeks away, control over “one of the best granaries” in the colony could disrupt one side or the other’s ability to support their war effort.²⁶

On May 13, 1676 Coalition forces from the Great Falls area raided Hatfield meadows and captured seventy cattle and horses which they drove north to Deerfield Meadows.²⁷ This incident enraged the English settlers at Hadley and the other river towns, who had been urging colonial officials to attack the upriver Native settlements for weeks and were concerned that the tribes would be able to gather enough dried fish and eventually corn to continue the war for the following year. Revenge was likely a factor as well. The deaths of more than 100 English soldiers and settlers in the upper valley at the hands of Coalition forces in the previous six months certainly contributed to a growing desire on the part of the settlers to attack the Native people gathered at Wissatinnewag-Peskeomskut.

English forces began to assemble from the various towns at Hatfield and prepared to march to Great Falls. Captain Turner was appointed commander and assembled a force of between 120 and 150 men and prepared to march to Great Falls on the evening of May 18. Turner’s largely inexperienced force, drawn in equal parts from militia and garrison troops, the latter presumably with more combat experience, counted on the element of surprise and presumably a larger force. The latter consideration was based on a freed English captive’s assessment that there were only 60-70 fighting men at the Great Falls.

The information was inaccurate. By late March dozens of Native communities from throughout southern New England began to gather along the Connecticut River near the Great

²⁶ CSL. CT Archives, Colonial Wars, Series I. Doc. 66.

²⁷ For information regarding the cattle raid see: L’Estrange. *A True Account*. P. 3; Hubbard. *A Narrative*. P. 85; CSL, Connecticut Archives, Colonial War, Series I. Doc. 71.

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Falls and eight miles further upriver at Squakeag (Northfield). Mary Rowlandson was at Squakeag in early March and mentioned that King Philip and the Pocasset Squaw Sachem Weetamoo were there along with hundreds, if not thousands of men, women, and children.²⁸ Northampton was attacked on March 14 by men Rowlandson saw gathered at Squakeag. The communities at Great Falls and further north at Squakheag began to gather along the Connecticut River in March when the anadromous fish began to run. Around the time of the battle English sources provide descriptions of where the villages were located – six in the immediate vicinity of Great Falls and at least six further north near Squakheag. The village of Peskeompskut was located adjacent to the Great Falls on the west bank of the Connecticut River and a second village was located on the east bank across the river.

On May 18 Captain Turner and approximately 150 soldiers and militia/colonists drawn from Springfield/Westfield, Hatfield, Hadley, and Northampton “came from Hatfield a little before night...y^e most with horses & a few footman.”²⁹ The company left Hatfield at dusk and travelled north 15 miles along the west side of the Connecticut River to the Deerfield River and crossed the river at the Deerfield River Ford.

After Turner’s force forded the Deerfield River they proceeded north for approximately 2.5 miles along the west side of the Green River until they reached the Green River Ford at the confluence with Cherry Rum Brook. From there the English travelled east 3.25 miles closely paralleling the Cherry Rum Brook, along the north side of White Ash Swamp to the Fall Brook leading to the Fall River arriving just before dawn. William Hubbard states that “When they came near the Indians rendezvous, they alighted off their horses, and tied them to some young trees at a quarter of a mile distance [from where they dismounted]” and then marched to the village.³⁰ The area where the English tied their horses in Lower Factory Hollow is approximately one-half mile from the village at Riverside. Reverend Stephen Williams described the approach and the attack on the village based on interviews with Wells and perhaps other veterans of the battle as well as some information he obtained from William Hubbard.

The army came up to the Indians (at the falls) a little before break of day whom y^e
found very Secure without any watchman. Some y^t had been at the river fishing y^t

²⁸ Rowlandson. *Narrative of the Captivity*. Pp. 13-16.

²⁹ Hubbard. *Narrative*. P. 9.

³⁰ Hubbard. *Narrative*. P. 205.

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cd have been like to have discovered y^e, having been driven from y^r fishing by a little storm of thunder and lightning, y^t happened a little before ye sun came up, y^e English allighted from y^r horses at a quarter of a mile distance from the enemy, & tied their horses to some young trees; and when it grew so light as y^t they were able to distinguish between y^r friend & enemies they marched up to y^e wigwams...³¹

The total number of people in the village is difficult to determine as the sources vary widely and are based primarily on casualty estimates. Assuming 250 people and approximately 8 to 15 people per wigwam, there may have been 15 to 30 wigwams in the village. One ambiguous reference by an English soldier described “a wigwam or two [a] little higher than the rest” of the village, which is interpreted to mean they were located further upslope and otherwise slightly removed from the main village.³² As no battle-related objects were recovered from the highly disturbed Riverside area, and none of the sources describe the English battle formation or plan of attack, no firm conclusions can be drawn regarding English attack formations and the evolution of the battle

On a given signal the English forces opened fire upon the unsuspecting inhabitants of the village indiscriminately killing any Native people they encountered. After the initial attack English soldiers took up positions along the shoreline and opened fired on anyone trying to escape into the river including swimmers, people in canoes, and those hiding under the bank of the river:

The only Native descriptions of the battle is from the testimony of several Native men who were captured a few months after the battle and were courts martialed and executed. It is not clear if the testimony of these men described events at the Peskeomskut village fight or the retreat battle (or both). A Narragansett man named John Wecopeak testified:

that he was at the fight with Captain Turner, and run away by reason the shot came as thick as rain, but said that he was at a great distance but said alsoe, that he was at a great Distance. Butt John Godfree and William Heifferman saith, that he the said Wecopeak told them, that he saw Capt. Turner, and that he was shott in the Thigh, and that he knew it was him, for the said Turner said that was his name.³³

³¹ Williams obtained the information in italics from Hubbard, but Williams incorrectly transcribed the information. What Hubbard said was “When they came near the Indians rendezvous, they alighted off their horses, and tied them to some young trees at a quarter of a mile distance”. The Hubbard’s reference to one quarter of a mile is in reference to the distance to the young trees from where the English dismounted, not the distance to the village. See: Thomas. “Rev. Stephen Williams’s Notebook.” P. 13.

³² CSL. Colonial Wars, Series I. Doc. 74.

³³ Easton. *A Narrative of the causes.* P. 180.

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Estimates of Native casualties vary considerably between 200 and 300.

Battle of the English Retreat

Confident in their victory, and apparently unaware of the other Native villages mobilizing for a counterattack, the English delayed their retreat to count the dead, burn wigwams, destroy supplies, and loot the village for trade goods. In the meantime, Native men from the other villages began to organize to counterattack the English.

The initial counter attack came from Native men coming across the river in canoes from the village across the Connecticut River from Peskeompskut, and perhaps from the village “up above” near Millers River. Jonathan Wells was with the group of 20 men that “tarried behind” to fire at the Indians coming across the river. It is not clear if the 20 men were purposely left behind as a rear guard or were simply left behind by the main group in their rush to retreat. At this point Turner’s command was split between the main body of approximately 110 soldiers who had begun a panicked and disorganized retreat to where their horses were tied a half mile or so away on the west side of the Fall River, and the group of 20 men who tarried by the River. It is not clear from the narratives when the main body of men under Turner was initially attacked, but it appears to have been after they crossed the Fall River and reached the assembly area where their horses were tied.

In the meantime, Wells’ group was beaten back from the river’s edge by the Native counterattack coming across the river and “were forced to dispute y^e point wth y^e Enemy a considerable time before y^y could recover y^l horses.”³⁴ A ‘considerable time’ suggests that Wells’ group was under attack for the entire distance of 0.5-miles from Riverside to the English Assembly/Horse Hitching Area, as indicated by the continuous distribution of musket balls from Peskeompskut to the Fall River. Figure 84 depicts the distribution of musket balls recovered from Battlefield Loci A-F. It is believed the distributions of musket balls in Loci A-D reflect the engagements between Wells’ group of twenty men and Coalition forces.

³⁴ Thomas. “Rev. Stephen Williams’s Notebook.” P. 15.

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By the time the main body under Turner group arrived at the English Assembly/Horse Tie Down Area there was complete chaos among the English as a result of Coalition forces attacking from a number of different directions. Native forces were converging on the assembly area from Peskeomskut to the east and from Rawson Island to the south and up the Fall River as Wells states “some of the enemy fell upon the guards that kept the horses, others pursued them in the rear”.³⁵ The main body under Turner was most likely under attack as well at this time. Based on the distribution of musket balls closely associated with several ‘swales’ leading from Lower to Upper Factory Hollow, once mounted the retreating English used the swales to ascend the steep incline leading to Upper Factory Hollow to escape from Coalition forces.

The English forces were now under attack from all directions and their command and cohesion began to break down turning the retreat into an unorganized rout. These circumstances were in part the result of the lack of training and inexperience of most of the men who had never been in battle as well as the command failure of Captain Turner. The superior tactics, coordination, and planning by Coalition forces was also an important factor as they managed to get ahead of the English to set several ambushes.

Native forces continued to attack the groups of English as they emerged from the vicinity of White Ash Swamp along their retreat to the Green River Ford. Some of the English may have been following a path as Wells mentioned “abt 2 miles from y^e place where y^y did y^e Exploit & c & wn y^y had left y^e track of y^e company & were unacquainted wth y^e woods.”³⁶ Evidence also indicates that Native Coalition forces anticipated the English route of retreat at various choke points along the route of retreat such as the along the White Ash Swamp and at the Green and Deerfield River fords. The distance from the Green River to the Deerfield River Ford is approximately 2.5 miles. Although there is no mention in the battle narratives of any fighting along that portion of the retreat a small number of musket balls along the Green River terraces south of the Green River Ford (Locus K) and a concentration of musket balls at the Deerfield River Ford (Locus L) indicates the English were still under attack until they forded the Deerfield River.

³⁵ Thomas. “Rev. Stephen Williams’s Notebook.” P. 24.

³⁶ Thomas. “Rev. Stephen Williams’s Notebook.” P. 24.

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Several English sources (corroborated by Native sources) agree that 39 English soldiers died in the battle. Jonathan Wells states that “29 with their wounds came home swiftly on ye same day” and “two died of their wounds.”³⁷ A total of 41 dead and 29 wounded is a casualty rate of just over 45 percent, which is extremely high by any standard. It is likely the casualty rate would have been far higher if not for the actions of Lieutenant Holyoke who “exhorted them not to be terrified...and reduced his men into close order made a safe and valiant retreat, and preserved the soldiers under him; that there were but few slain.”³⁸

Aftermath

At this point in the war, the Native Coalition began to dissolve. The rapid dissolution of their alliance following the Battle of Great Falls was due to several factors. There were significant disagreements between the tribes regarding the future course of the war, and particularly about peace negotiations with the English. Metacom (King Philip) and a few other sachems were vehemently against any peace overtures and ransoming captives. The rift between the tribes may also have been the result of different strategic goals and interests. For a time, most of the tribes saw the middle Connecticut Valley as their best hope to reestablish their communities in a safe, protected, and defensible landscape with plenty of fish and arable land to grow corn. Shortly after the battle Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay renewed their offensives in the upper valley making it untenable for the tribes to continue there. For the Narragansett, Wampanoag, Nipmuc and Quabaug they made the decision to return to their homelands and try to reestablish their communities. For the Native communities of the middle valley their only option was to continue the war against the English in the valley and hope they could establish a defensive perimeter. Those hopes ended with renewed English offensives designed to sweep the remaining tribes from the valley.

³⁷ Thomas. “Rev. Stephen Williams’s Notebook.” P. 9.

³⁸ L’Estrange. *A Brief and True Narration*. P. 4.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 799

Locus	Acreage (Acres)
A	41.674919
B	27.625801
C	7.01166
D	13.20693
E	33.962667
F	25.61551
G	212.38953
H	105.318558
I	171.245466
J	24.425438
K	108.709617
L	28.017232

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Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

PointID	Locus	Longitude	Latitude
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2	A	-72.541485	42.608815
3	A	-72.544114	42.608087
4	A	-72.54835	42.613264
5	B	-72.543137	42.617841
6	B	-72.542633	42.616899
7	B	-72.546652	42.614142
8	B	-72.549615	42.614638
9	B	-72.549513	42.615716
10	C	-72.549158	42.616829
11	C	-72.545695	42.618105
12	C	-72.545569	42.617104
13	C	-72.548934	42.616122
14	D	-72.549159	42.619174
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16	D	-72.545695	42.618105
17	D	-72.54967	42.616645
18	E	-72.551481	42.621274
19	E	-72.549301	42.619862
20	E	-72.549887	42.616255
21	E	-72.550763	42.615538
22	E	-72.553783	42.61748
23	F	-72.551481	42.621274
24	F	-72.553783	42.61748
25	F	-72.555631	42.617208
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27	G	-72.577678	42.613495

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Name of Property

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33	H	-72.584825	42.6089
34	H	-72.592439	42.60633
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37	I	-72.595389	42.608615
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39	J	-72.613664	42.608186
40	J	-72.611141	42.605474
41	J	-72.614853	42.603998
42	J	-72.615996	42.606616
43	K	-72.620097	42.606066
44	K	-72.615985	42.604182
45	K	-72.6153	42.599899
46	K	-72.619925	42.596415
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49	L	-72.599709	42.574486
50	L	-72.601423	42.571802
51	L	-72.604221	42.571916

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The southern boundary of the district is defined by the Deerfield River Ford. The district boundaries then run north along the terraces of the west bank the Green River for 2.5-miles to the Green River Ford. The boundary then turns east and parallels the Cherry Rum Brook and White Swamp alternating between the south and north banks 3.5 miles (5.6 kilometers) to the Fall River. The boundary then runs east up a steep slope and then southerly to the Riverside area of Gill within 400 yards (365 meters) of the Connecticut River. The district contains twelve contributing sites or battlefield loci (Loci A-L) varying between seven and 212 acres for a total of 800 acres. Locus boundaries were determined based on the distribution of battle-related objects and terrain. The Battlefield Boundary and National Register Boundary are completely congruent with one another.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The twelve battlefield loci that comprise the district are located in a land area where continuous activity and conflict between the English and Pequot occurred from September 1636 to April 1637. However, the boundary is discontinuous because the sites are separated by intervening development and unsurveyed areas. Historic and contemporary residential development between the loci do not share any association with the Battle of Great Falls. Loci boundaries were determined through systematic metal detecting surveys and based on the distribution of battle related objects and terrain features.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kevin McBride/ Associate Professor of Anthropology
organization: University of Connecticut (UConn)
street & number: 354 Mansfield Road Unit 1176
city or town: Storrs state: CT zip code: 06268
e-mail kevin.mcbride@uconn.edu

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Name of Property

telephone: (860) 303-1114

date: October, 2020

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

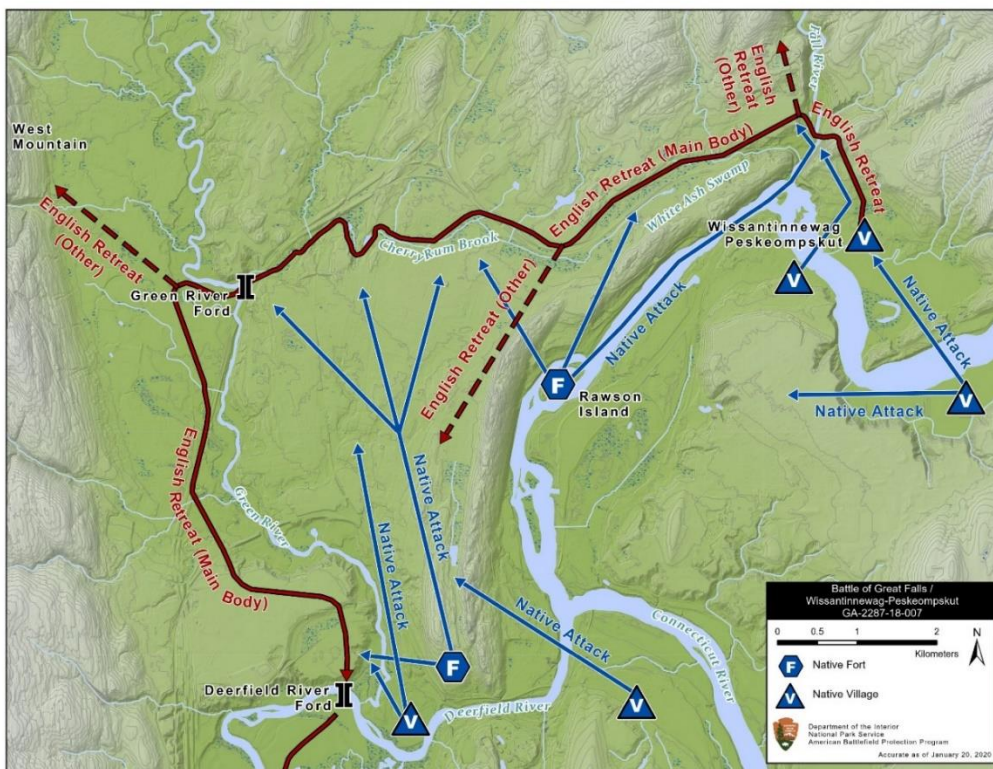


Figure 1. Battle of Great Falls/Wassatinnewag/Peskeomskut

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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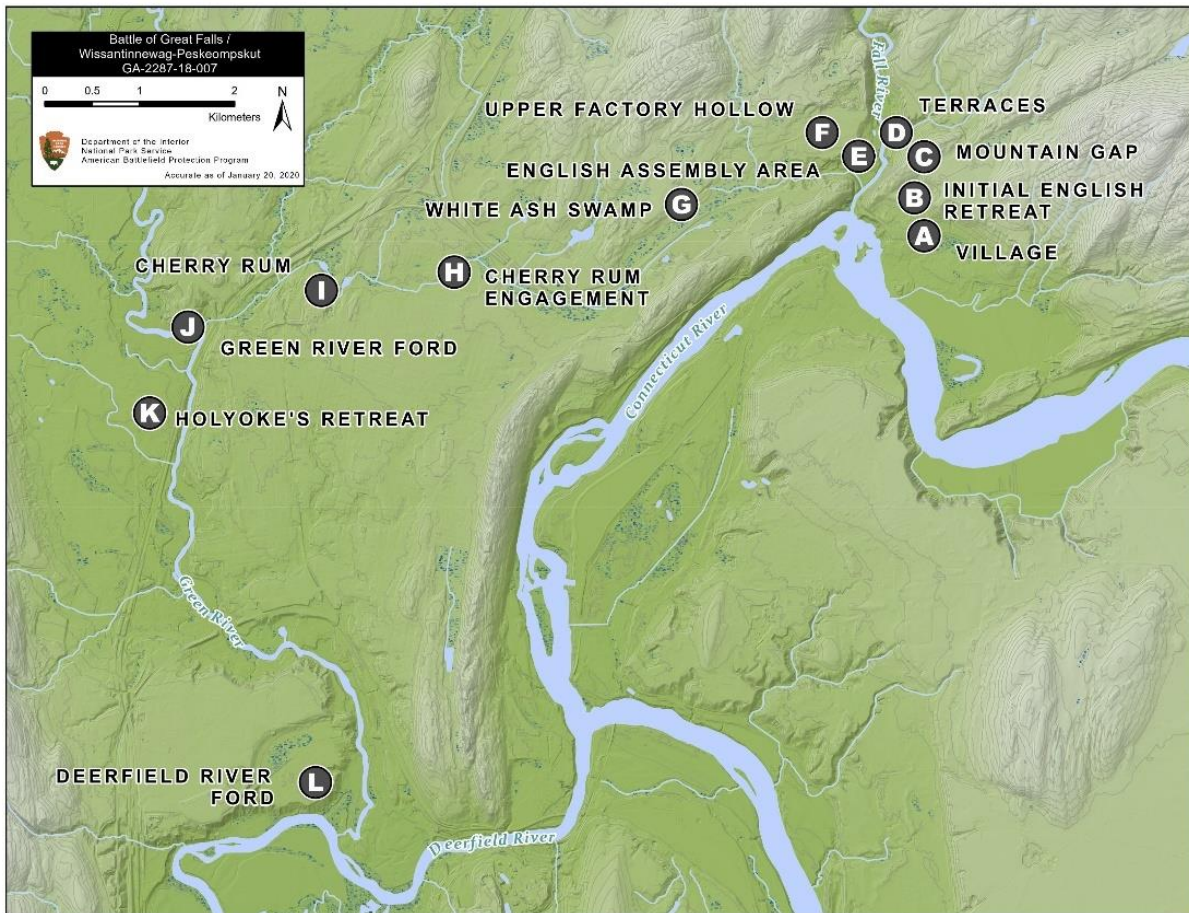


Figure 2. Battlefield Loci

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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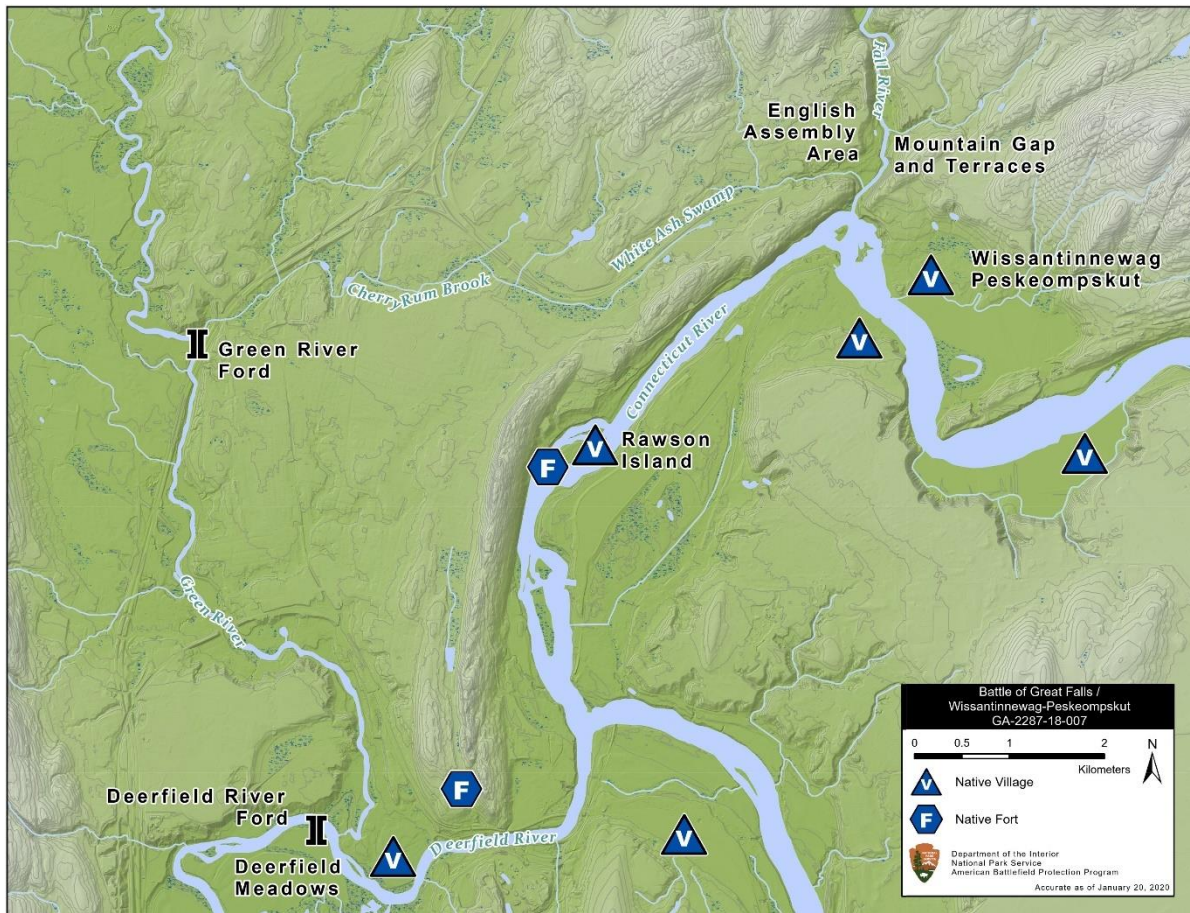


Figure 3. Battlefield Terrain and Cultural Features.

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

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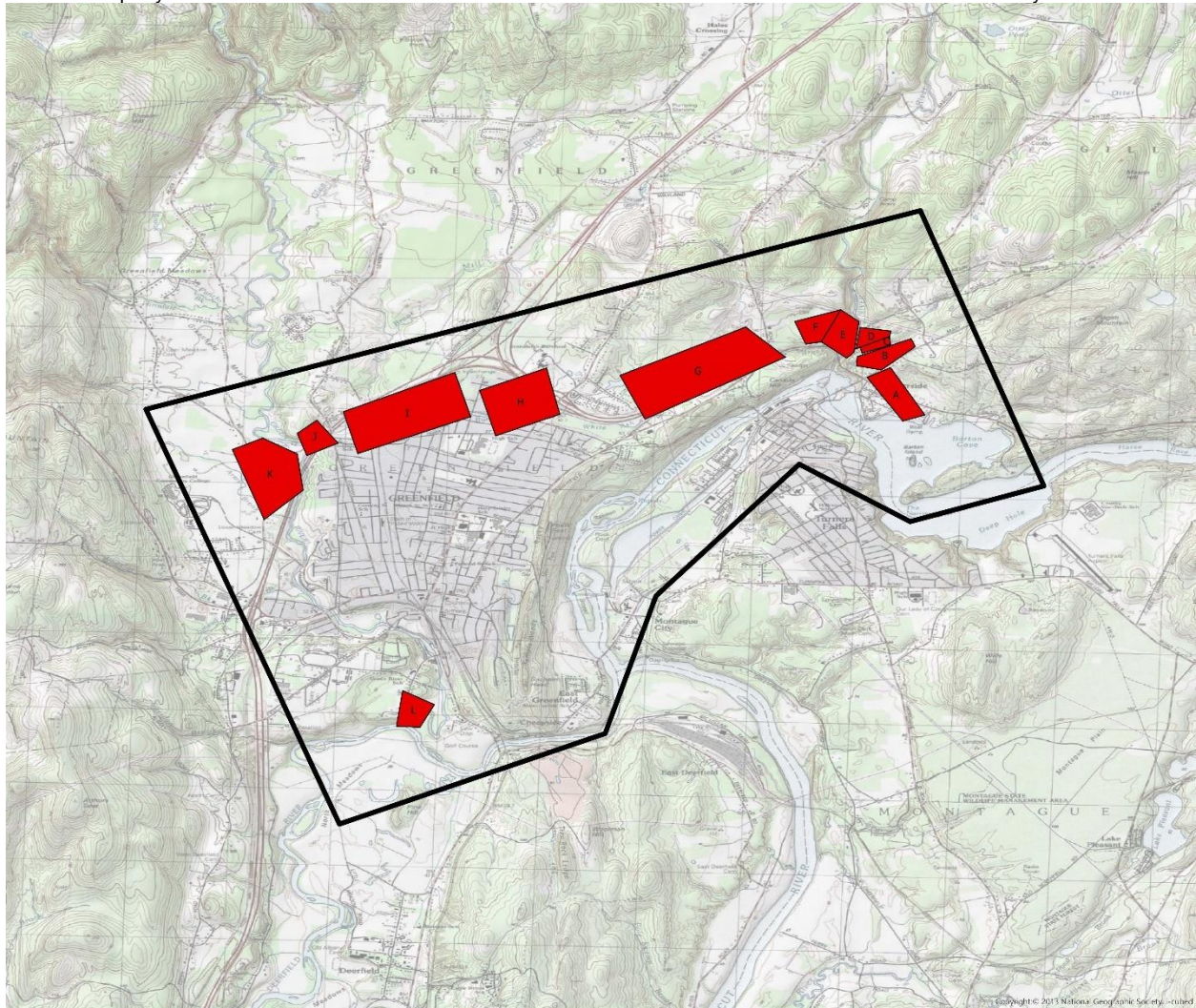


Figure 4. Battlefield Boundary and Battlefield Loci

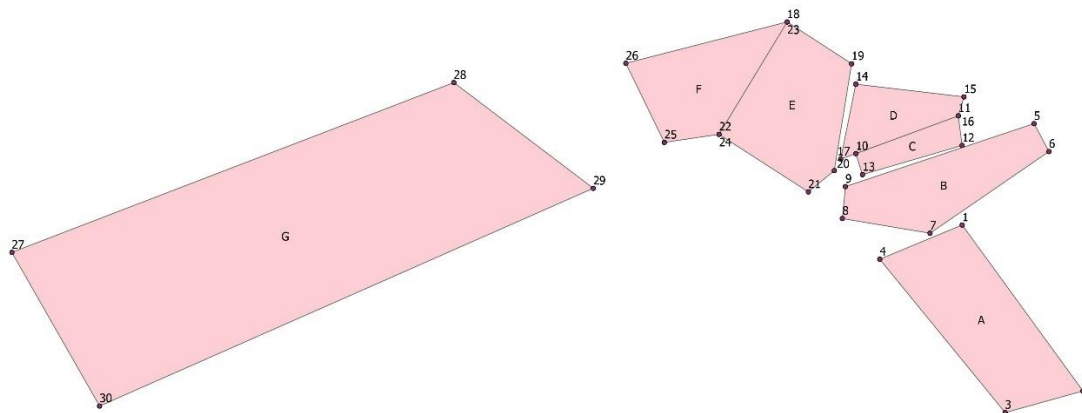


Figure 5. Battlefield Loci A-G and Latitude/Longitude Points.

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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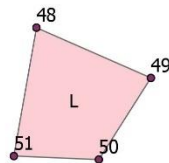
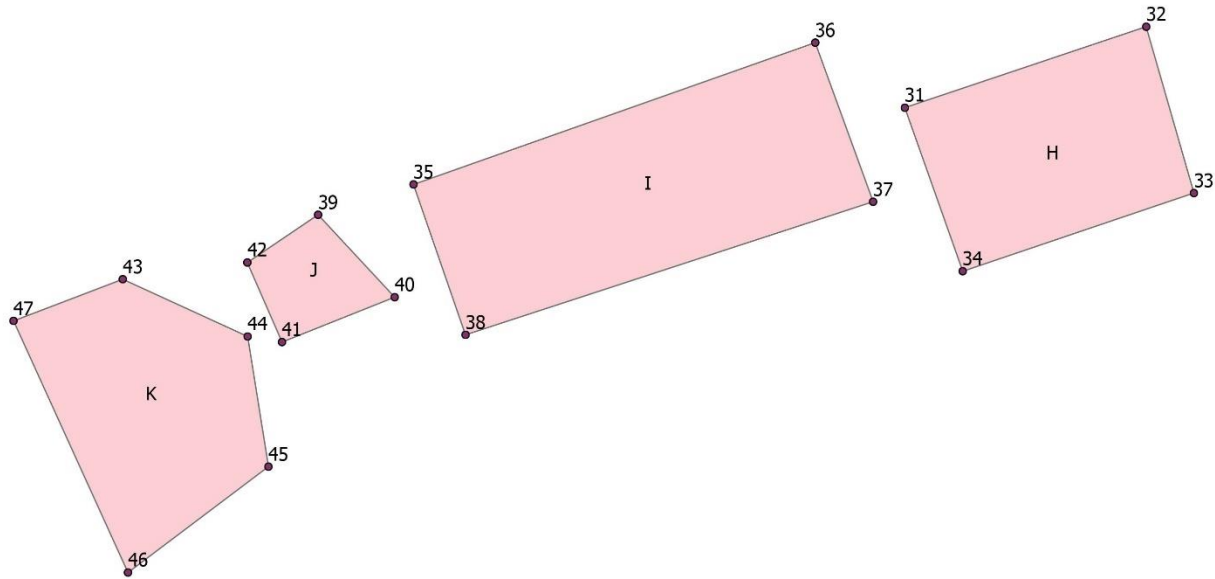


Figure 6. Battlefield Loci H-L and Latitude/Longitude Points

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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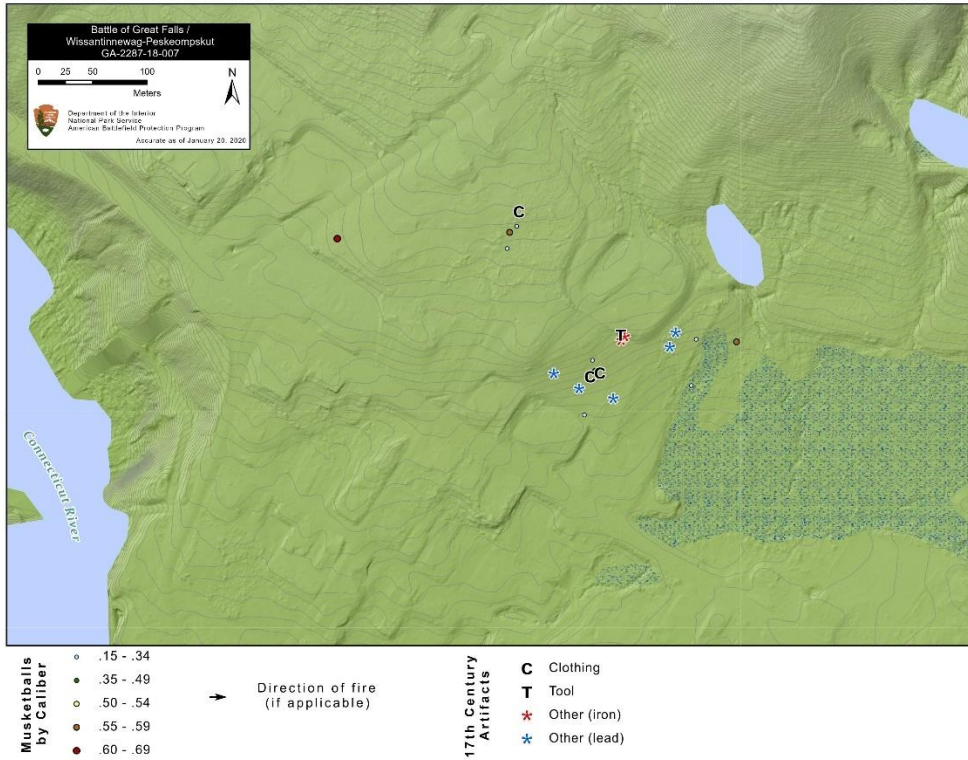


Figure 7. Locus A Artifact Distributions

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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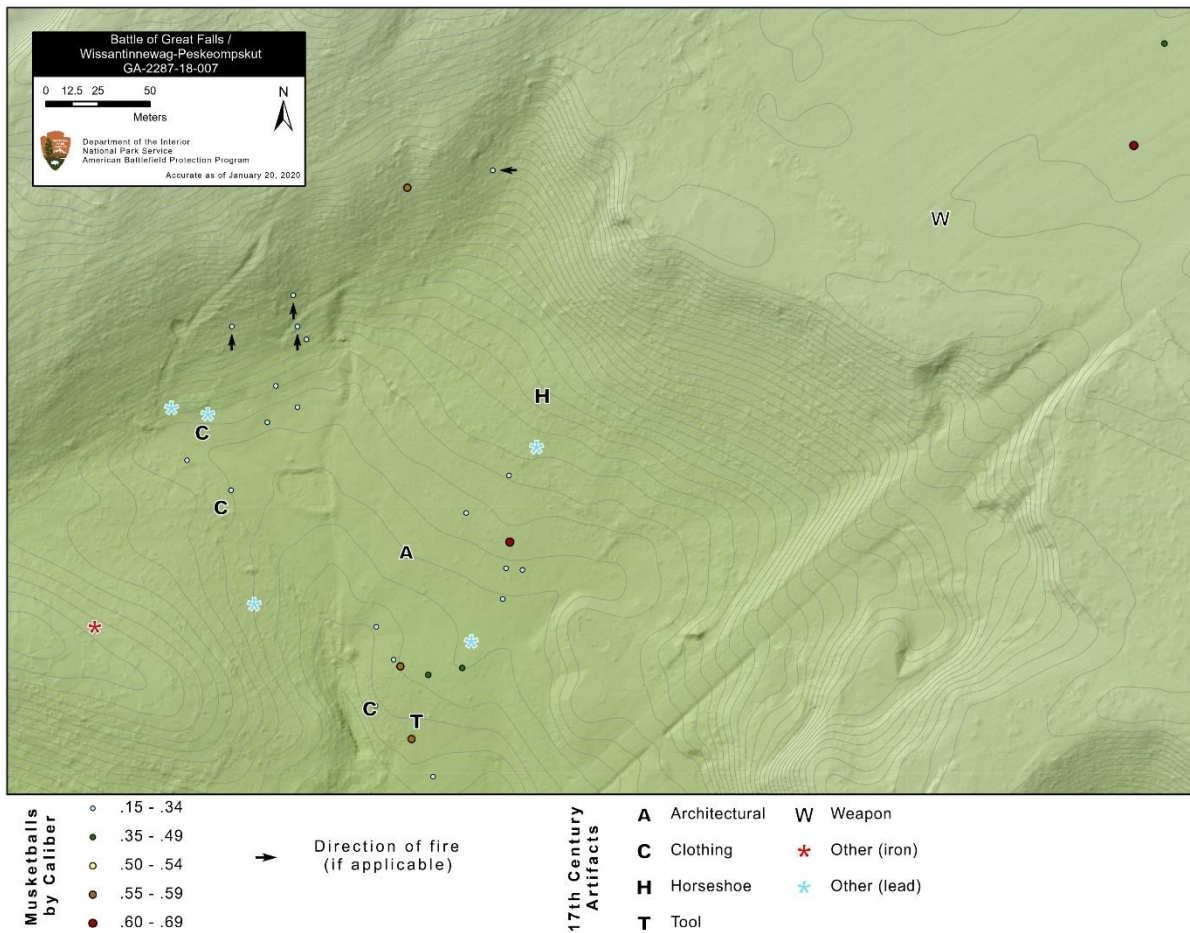


Figure 8. Locus B Artifact Distributions

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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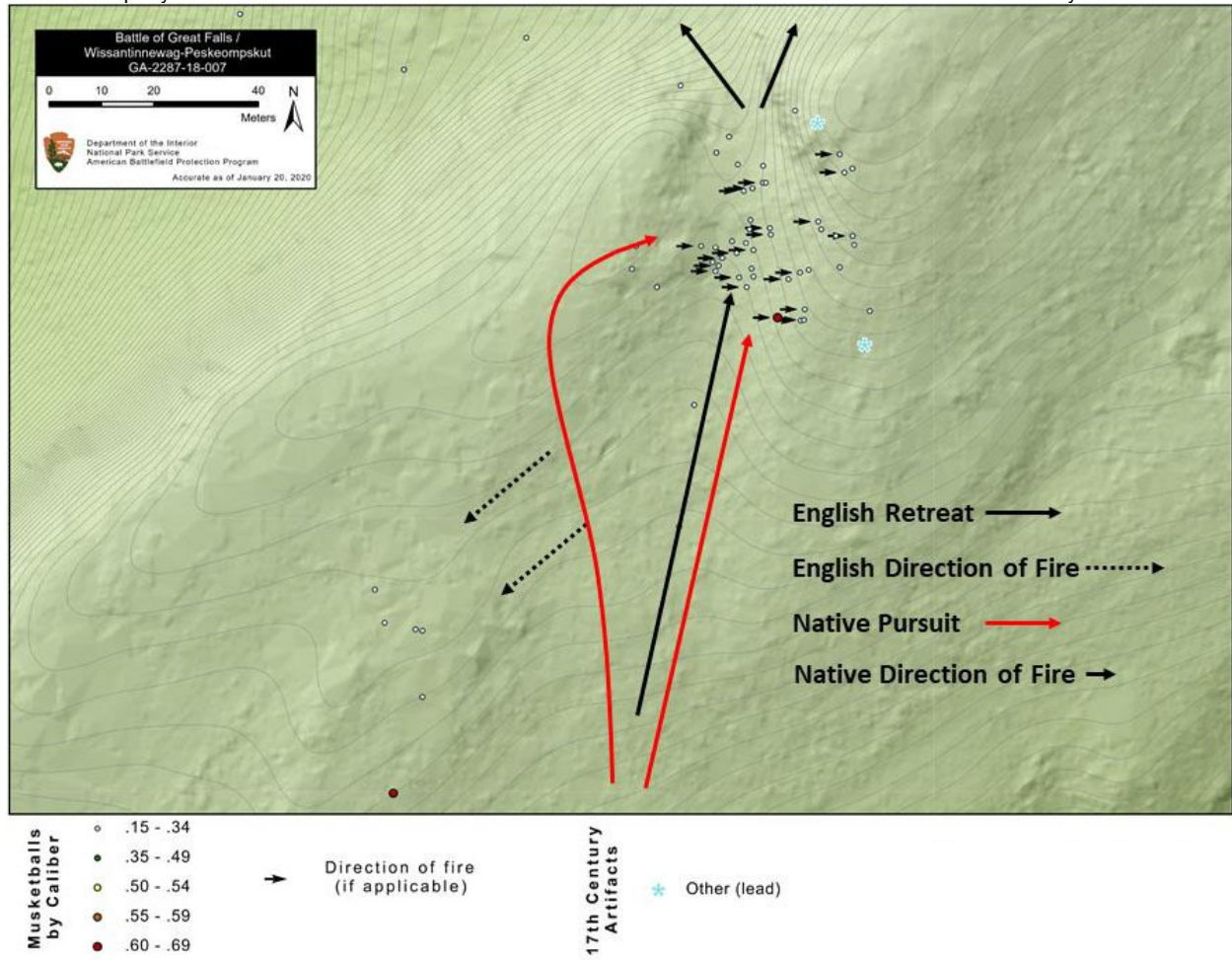


Figure 9. Locus C Artifact Distributions

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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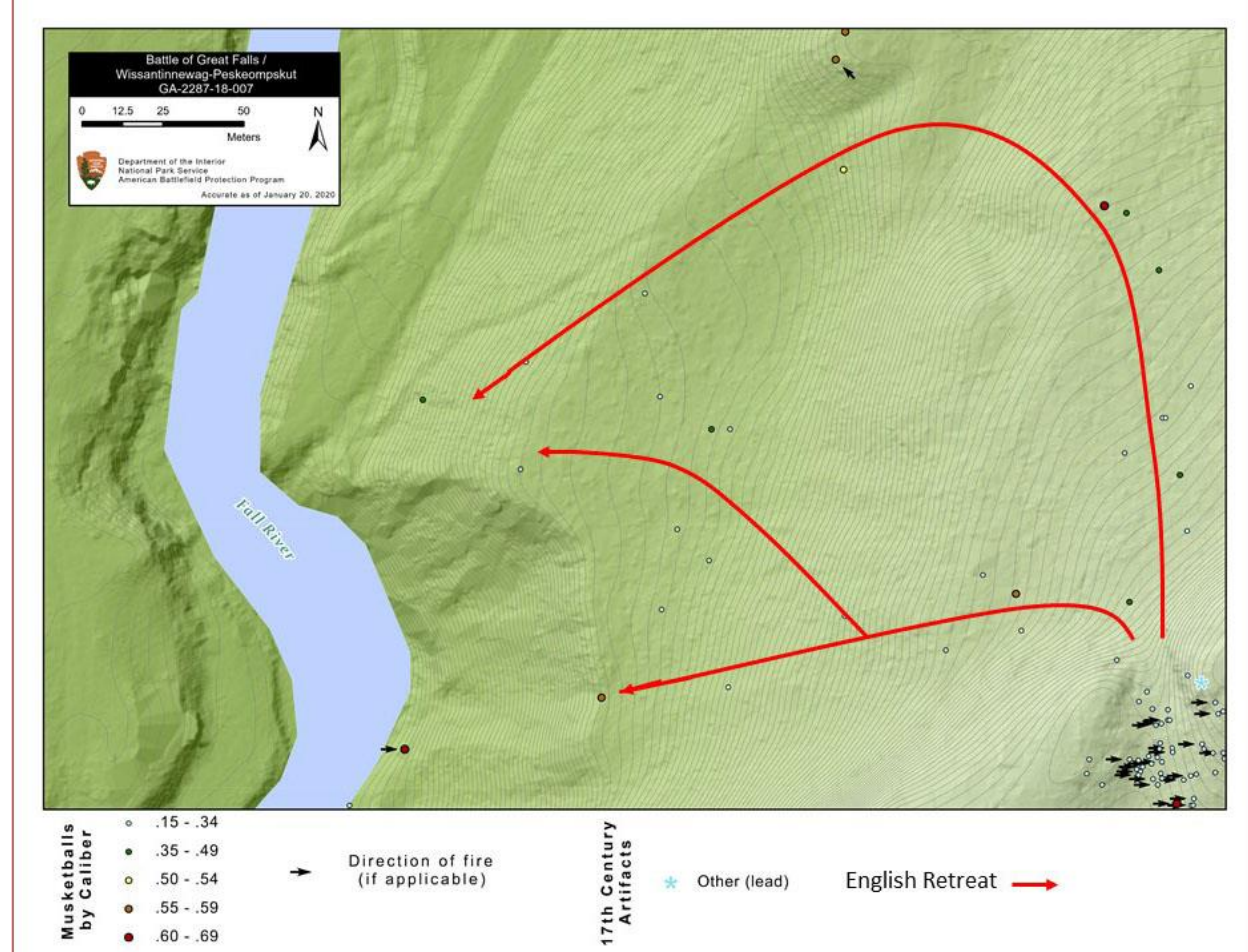


Figure 10. Locus D Artifact Distributions

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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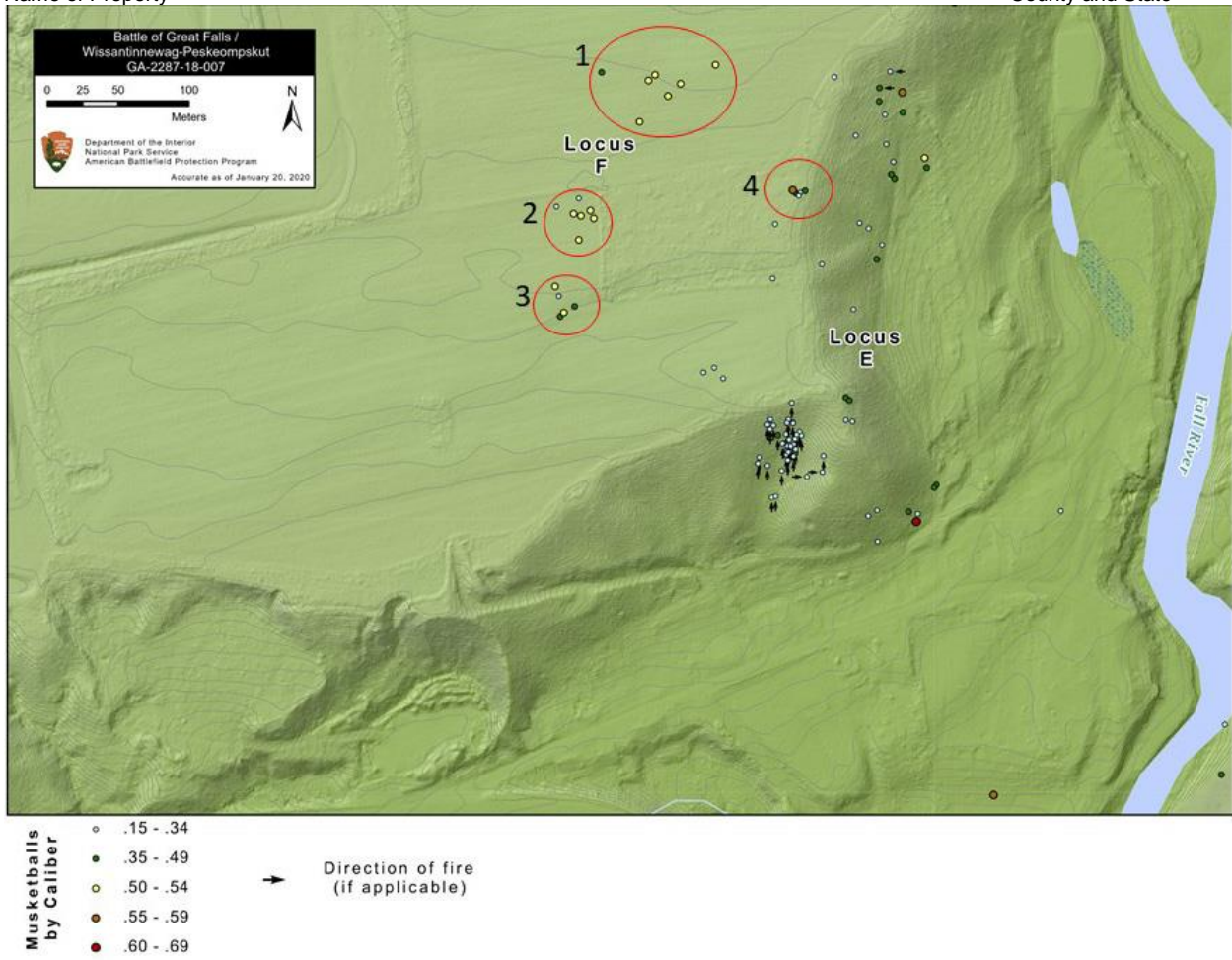


Figure 11. Locus E and F Musket Ball Distributions

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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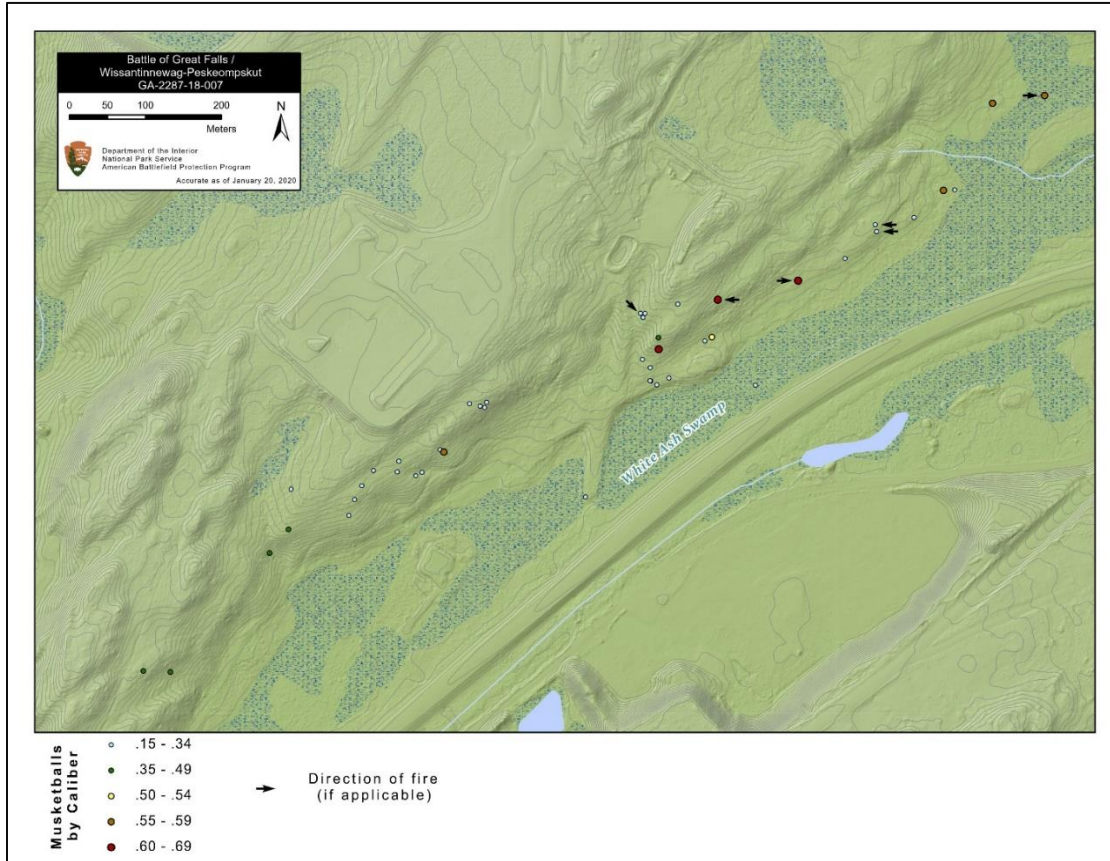


Figure 12. Locus G Artifact Distributions

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
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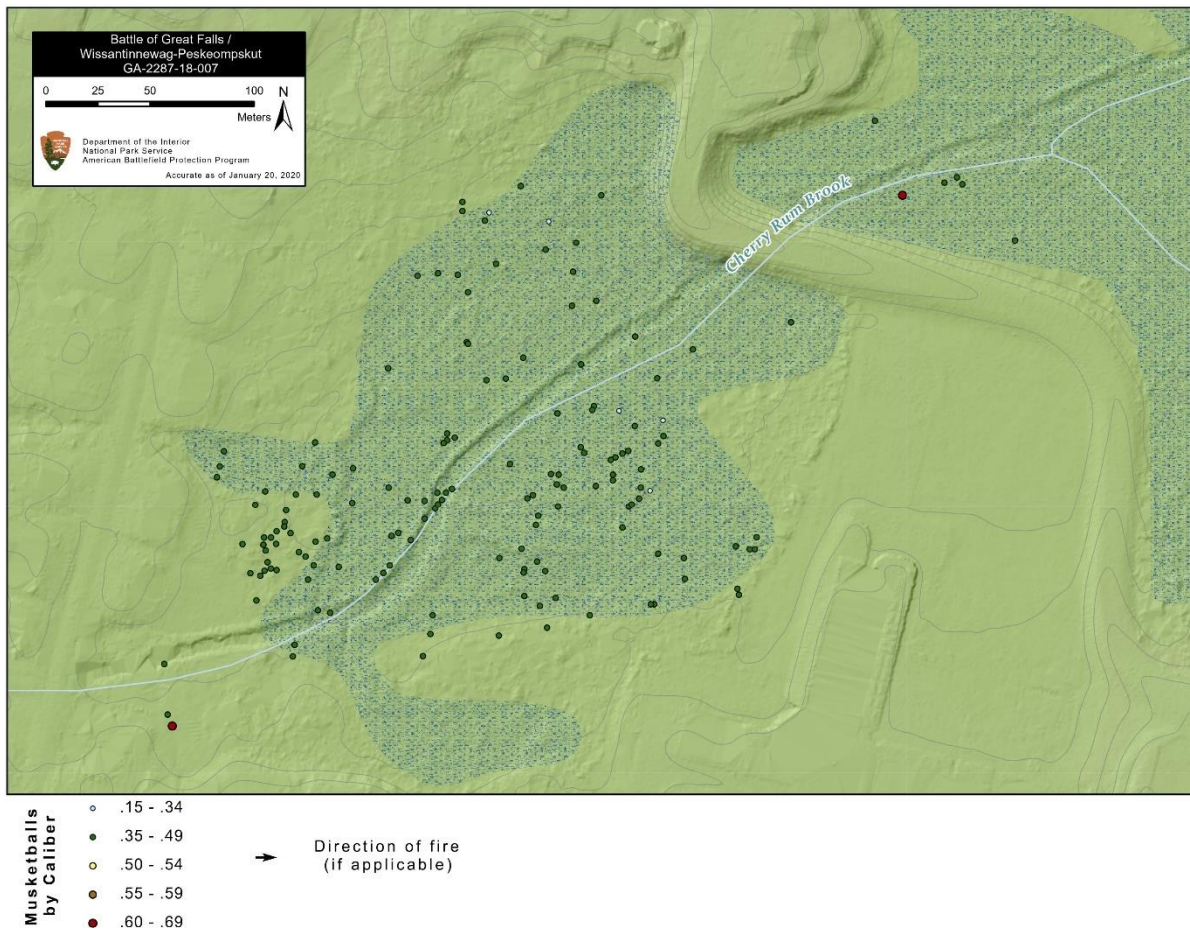


Figure 13. Locus H Artifact Distributions

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

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Massachusetts
County and State

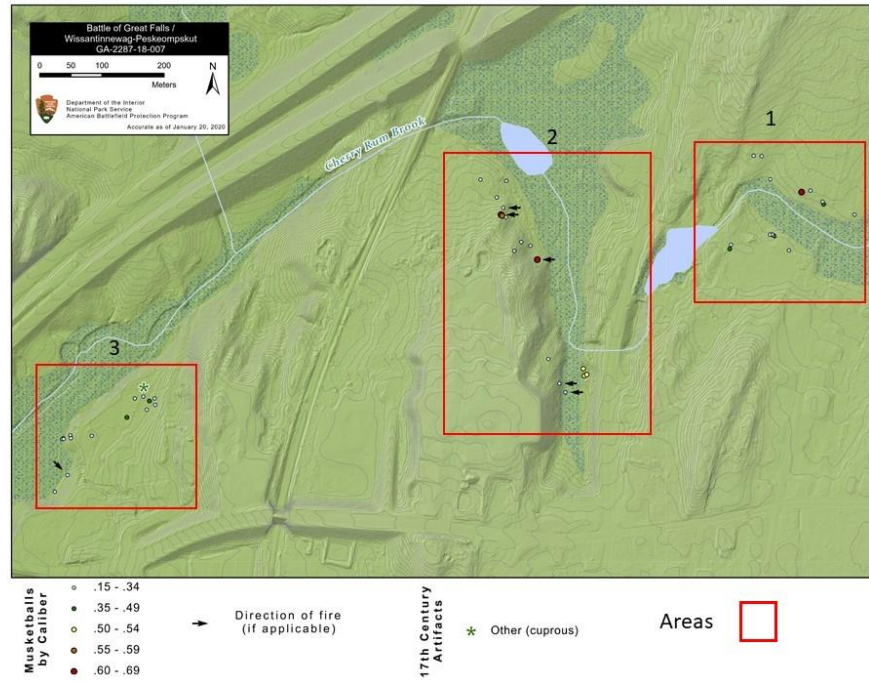


Figure 14. Locus I Artifact Distributions

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

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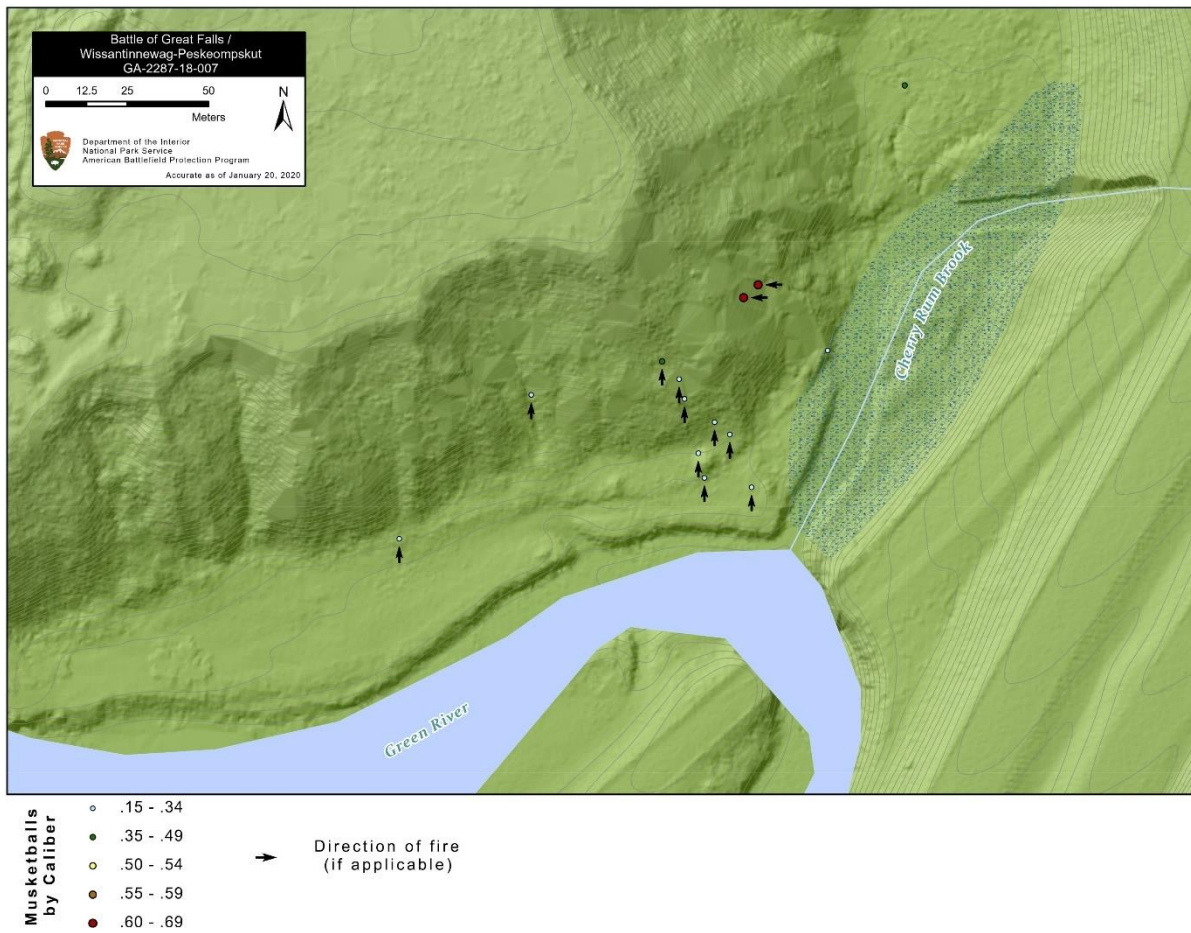


Figure 15. Locus J Artifact Distributions

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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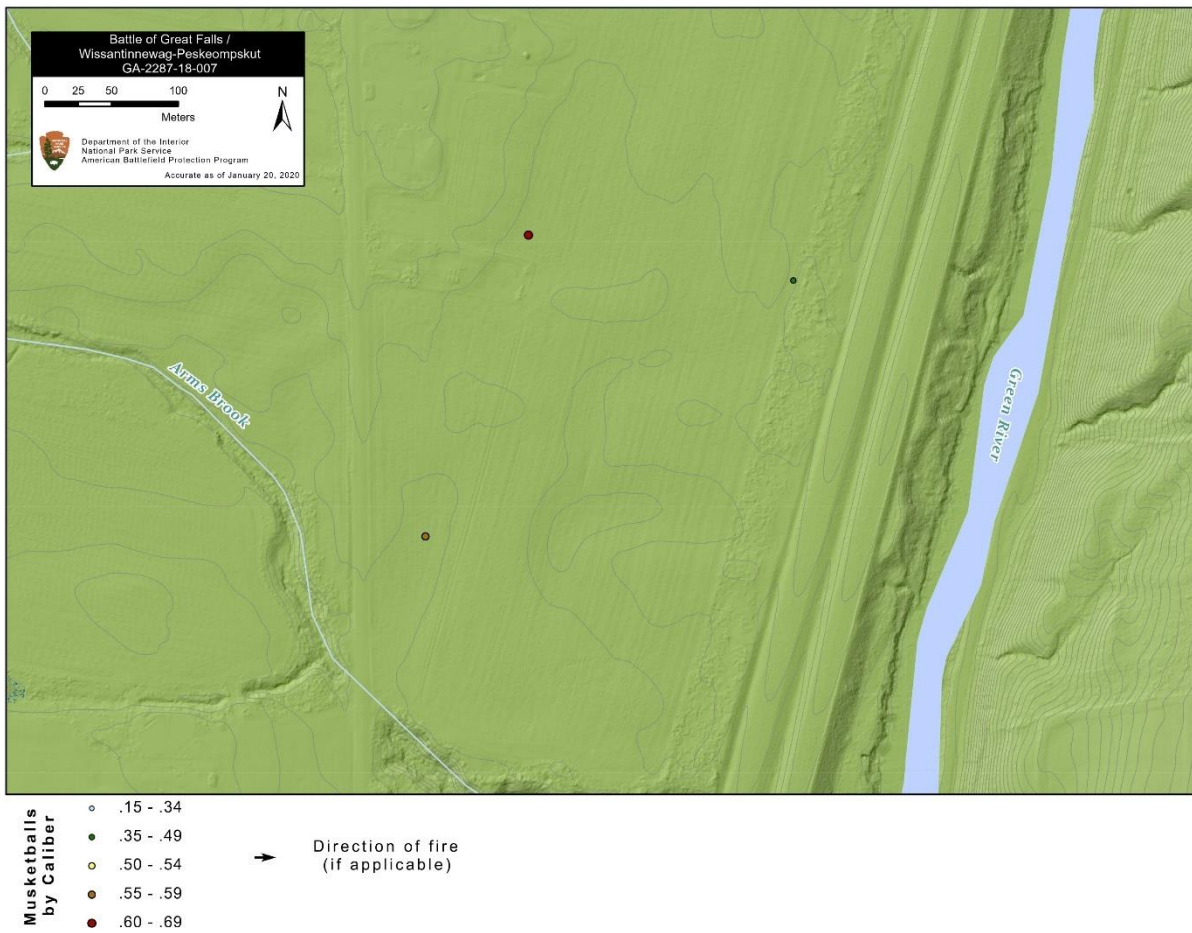


Figure 16. Locus K Artifact Distributions

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
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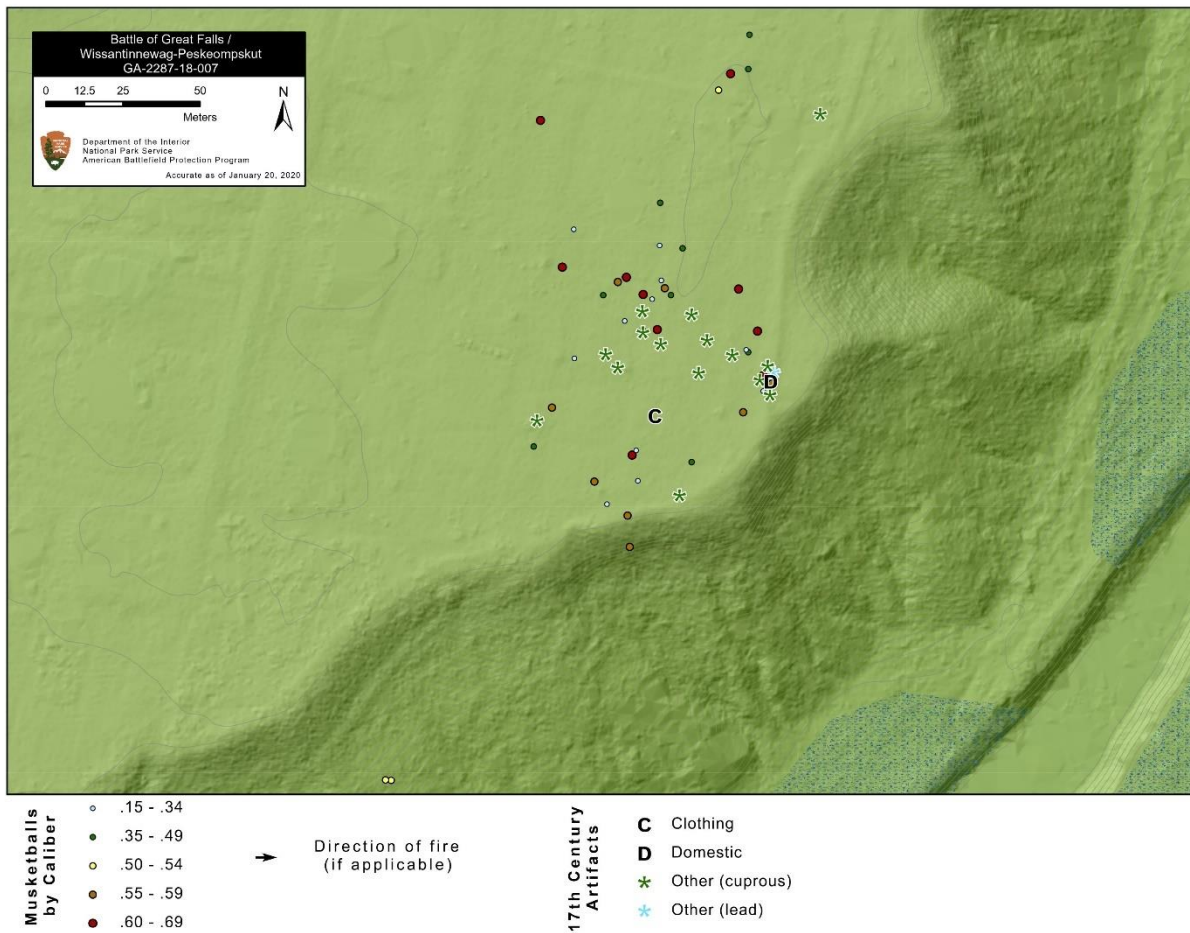


Figure 17. Locus L Artifact Distributions

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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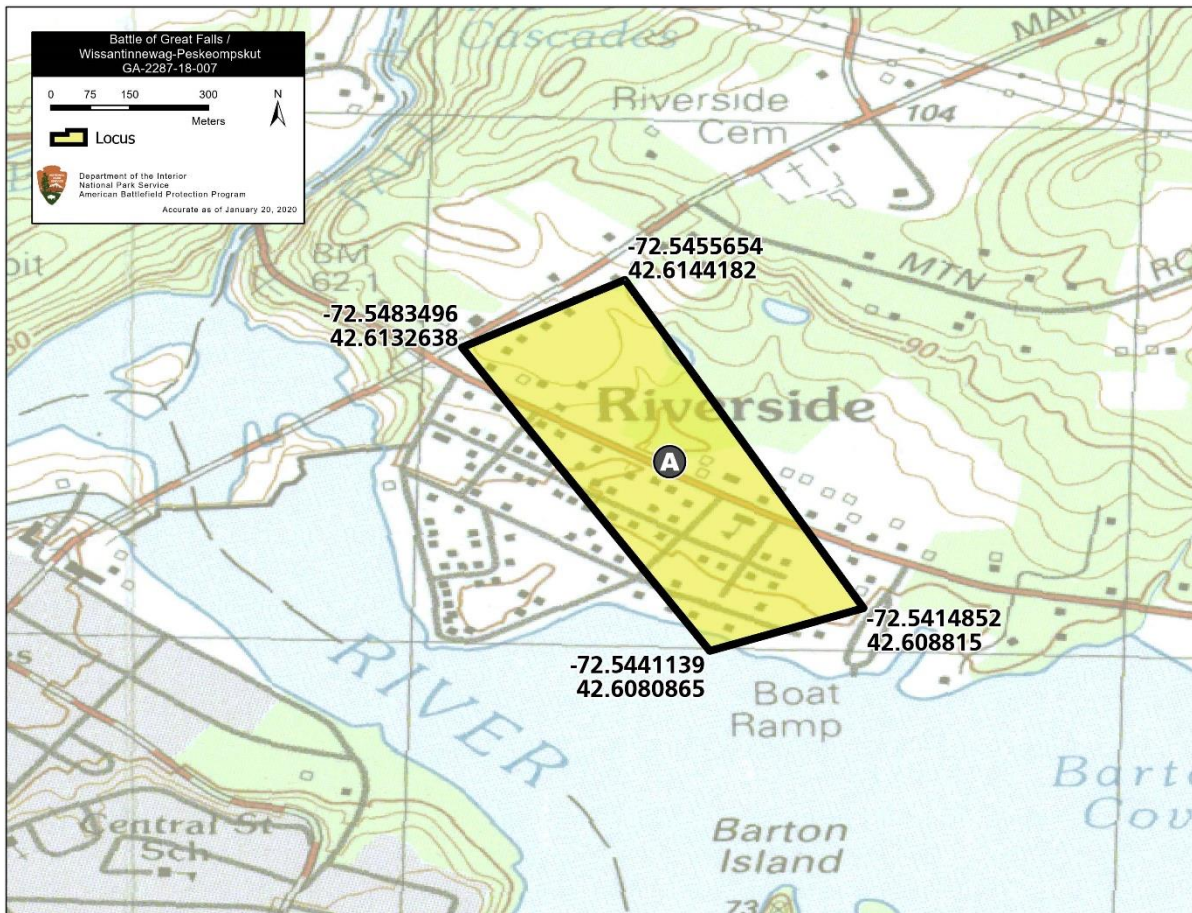


Figure 18. Locus A – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

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Massachusetts
County and State

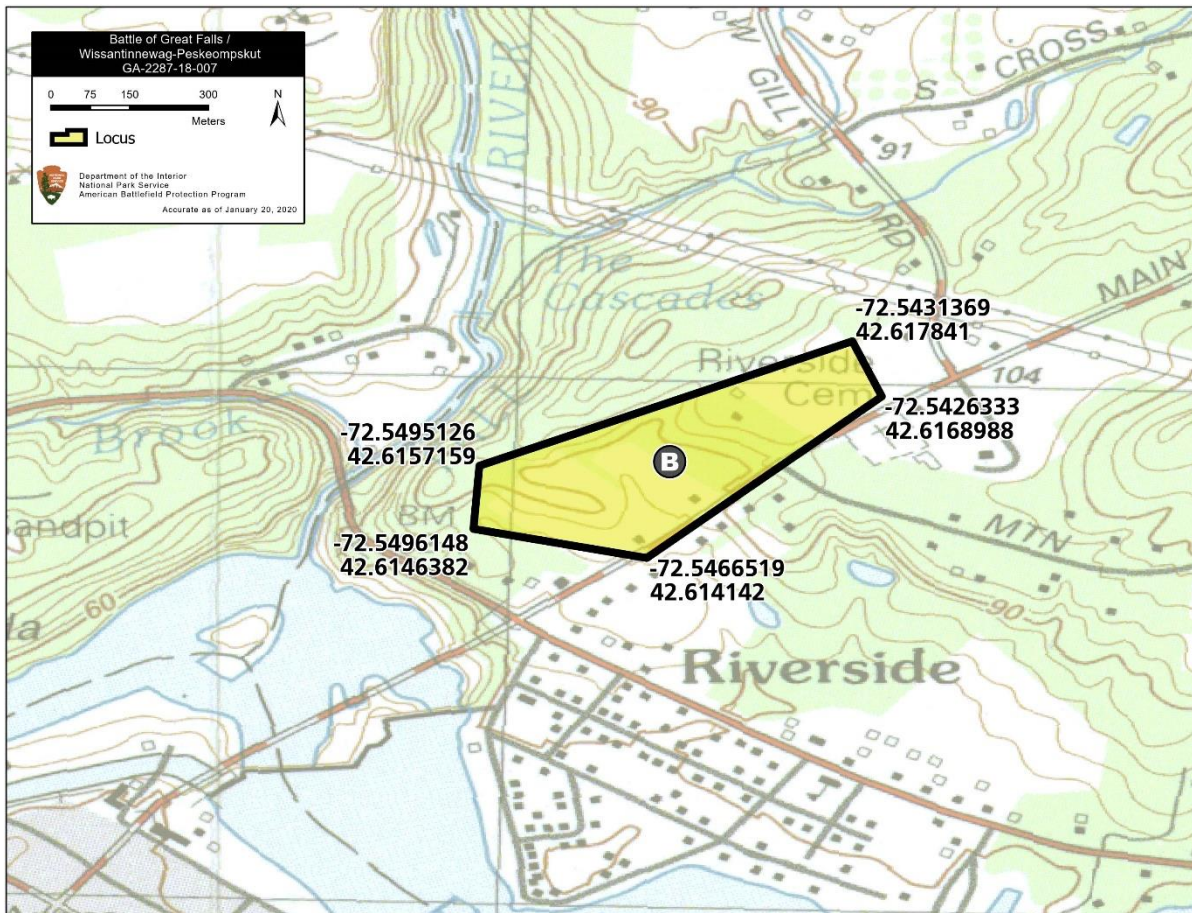


Figure 19. Locus B – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
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Massachusetts
County and State

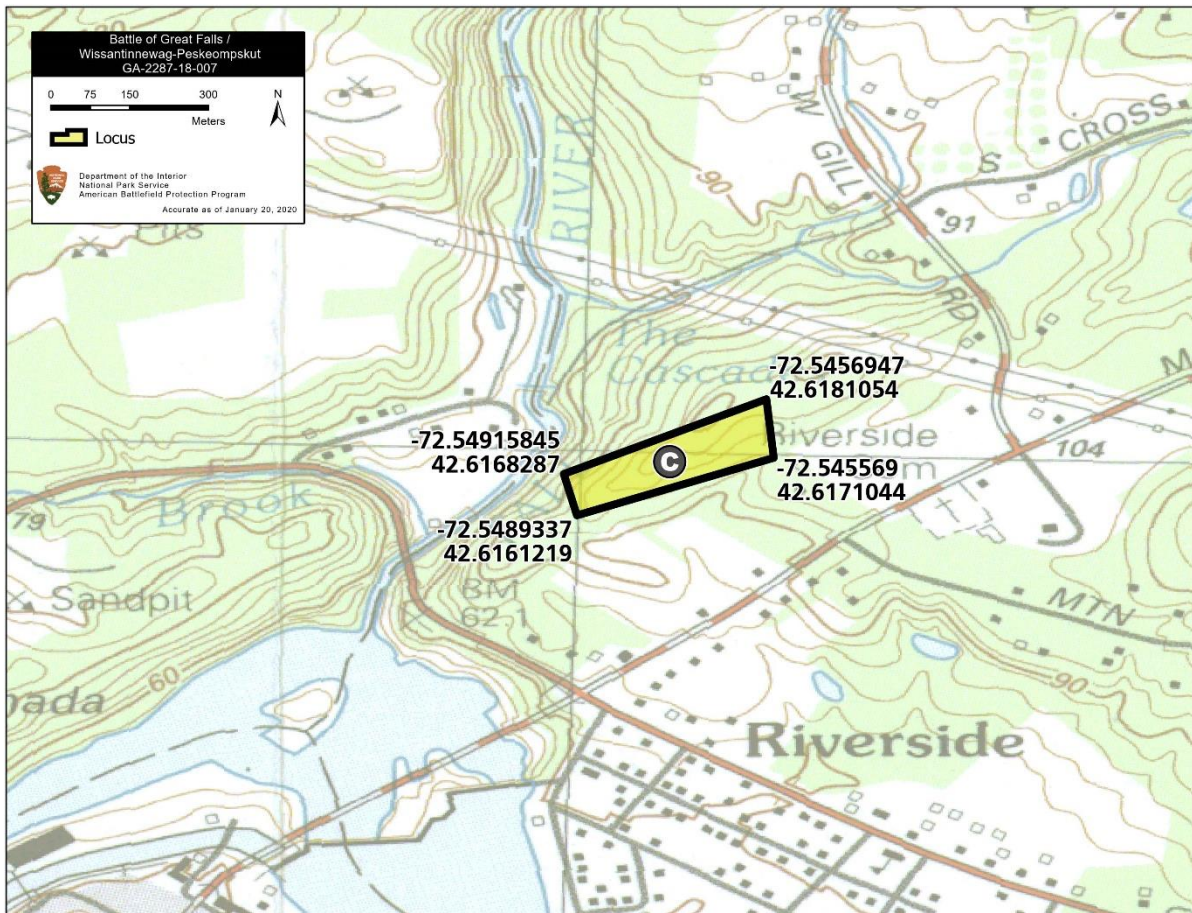


Figure 20. Locus C – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State

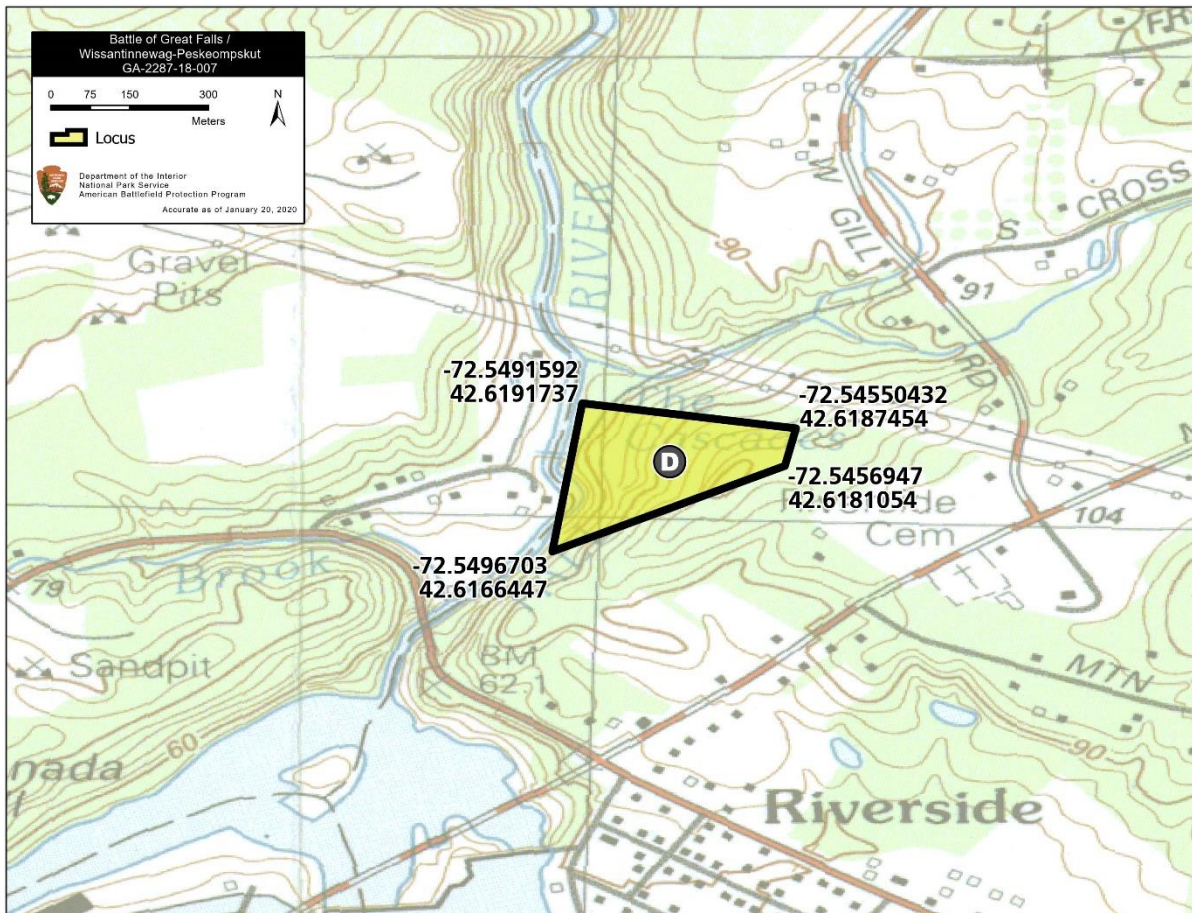


Figure 21. Locus D – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State

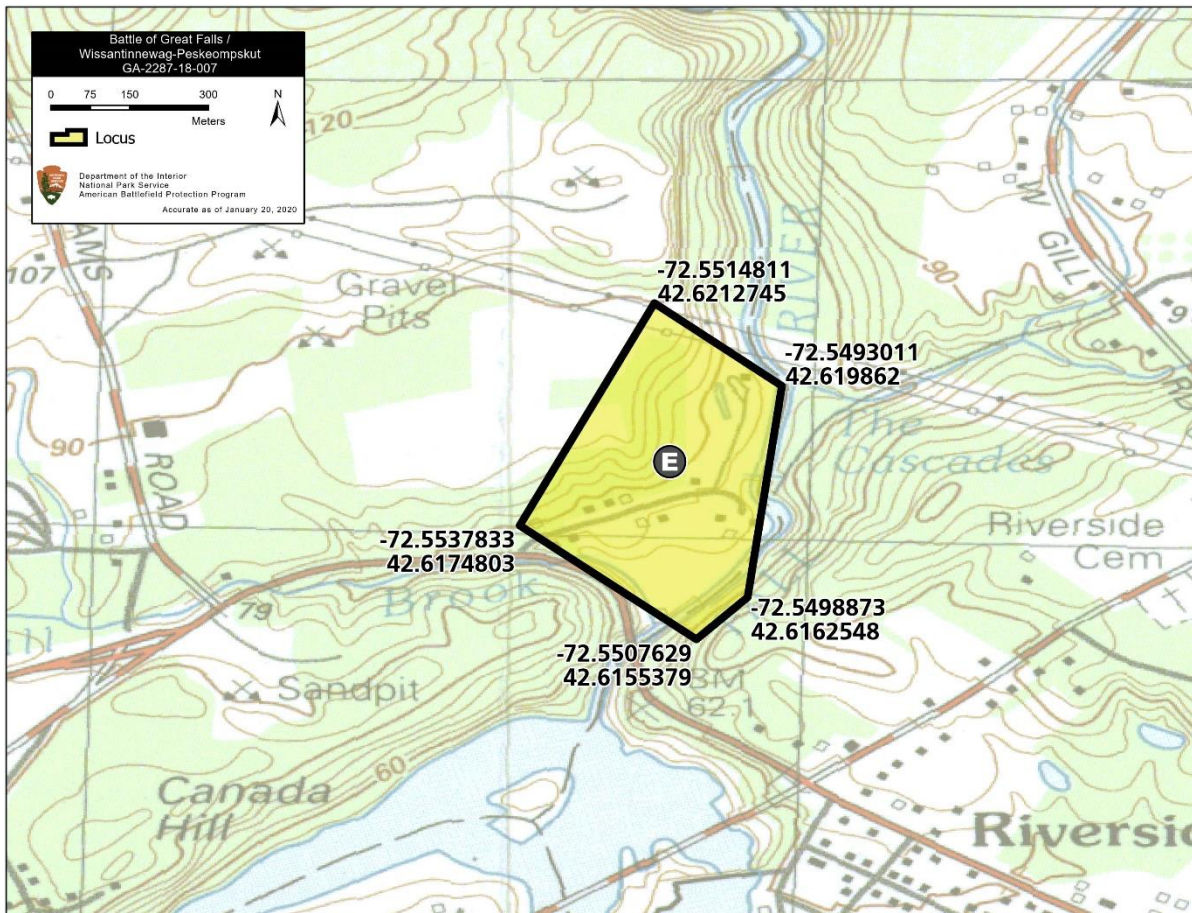


Figure 22. Locus E – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State

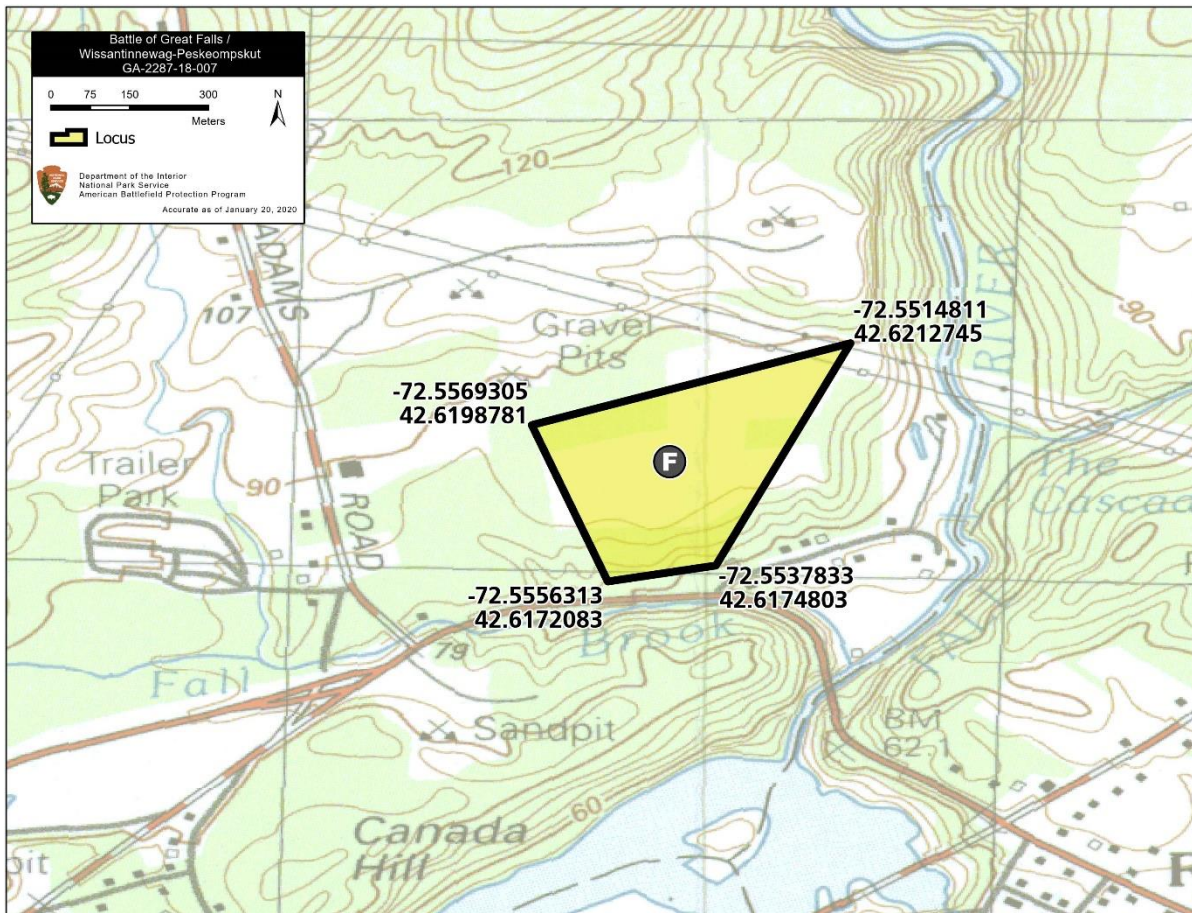


Figure 23. Locus F – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State

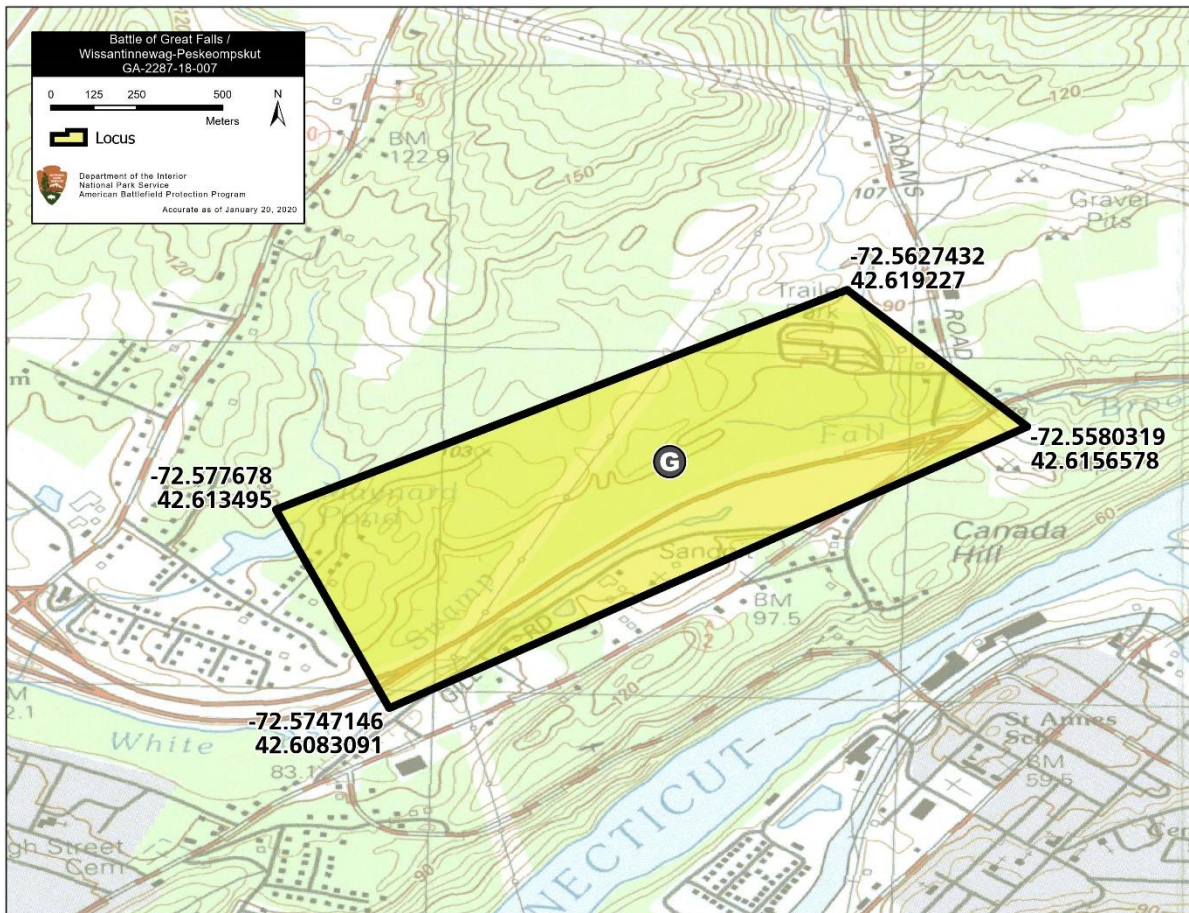


Figure 24. Locus G – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State

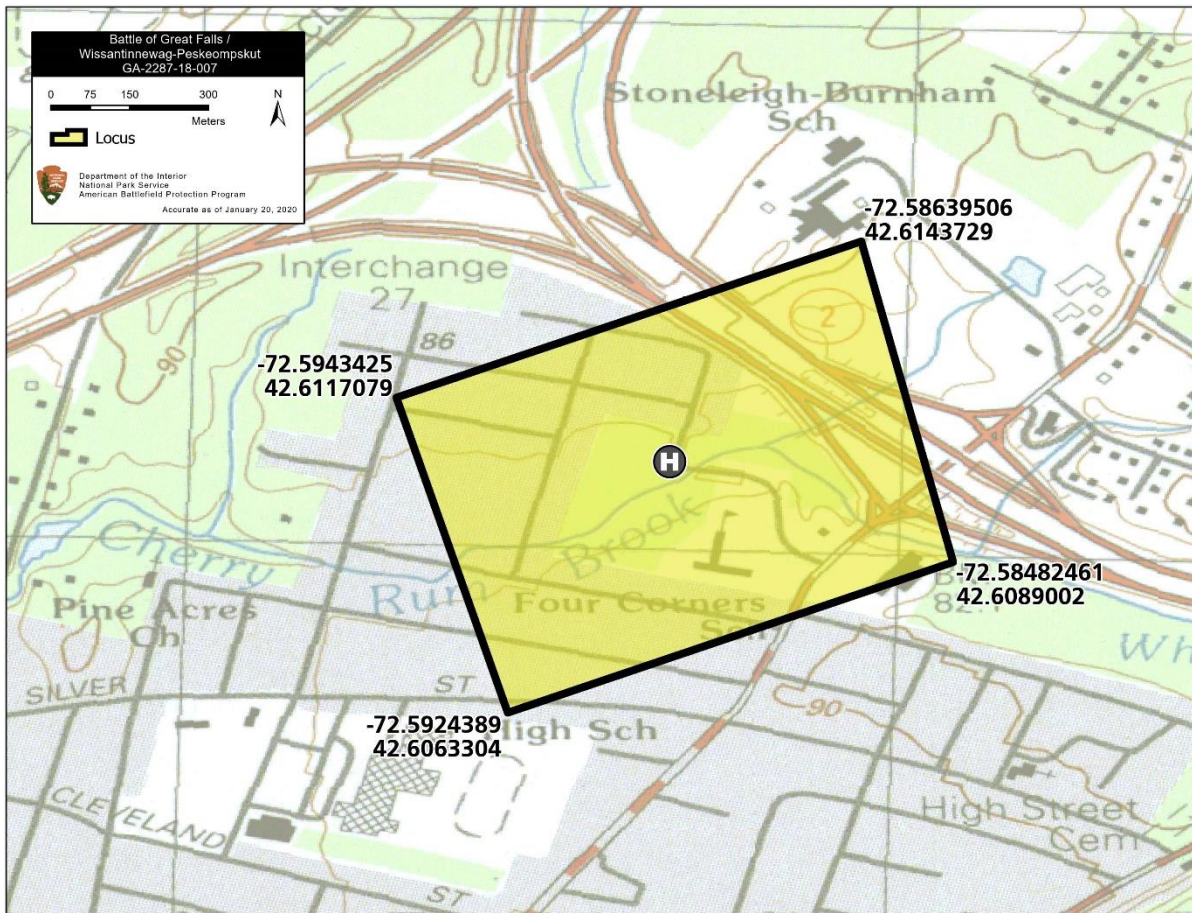


Figure 25. Locus H – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State

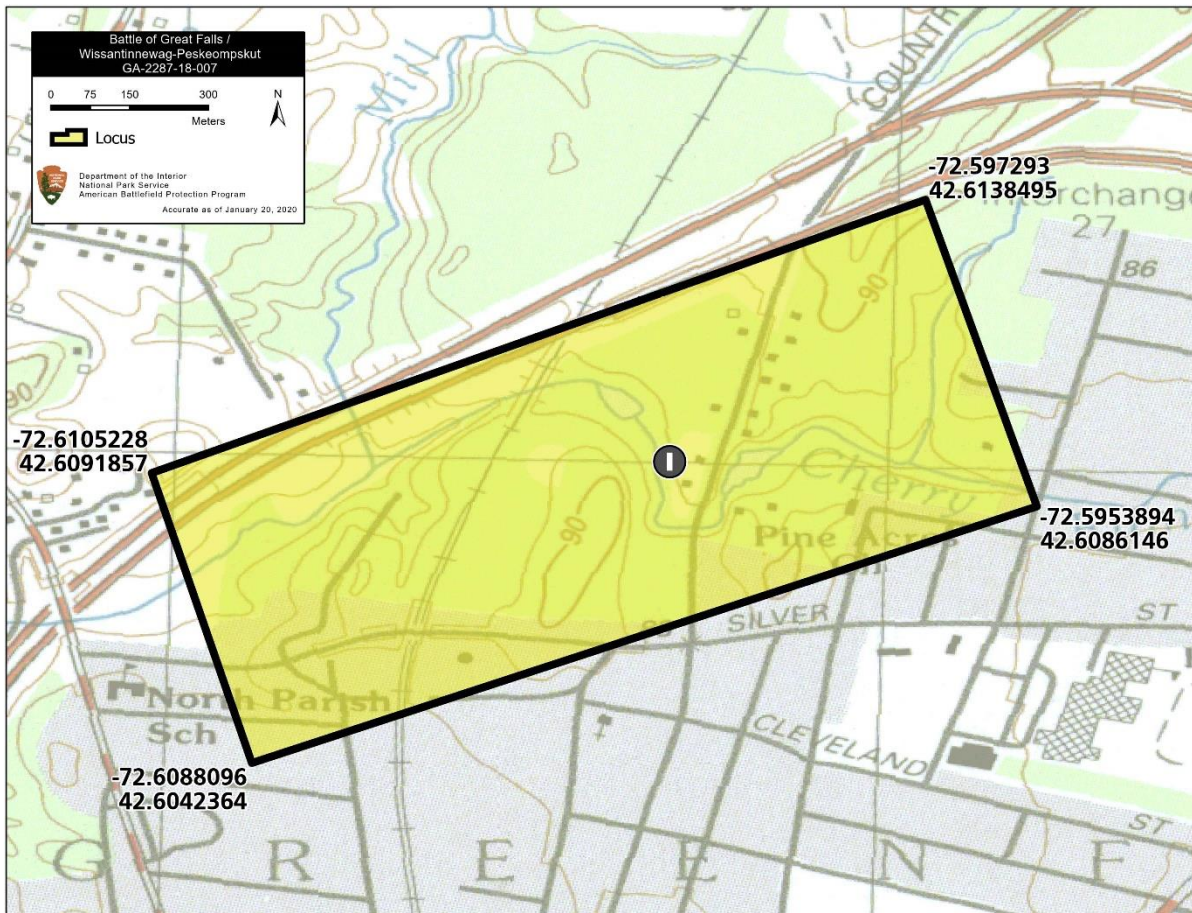


Figure 26. Locus I – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State

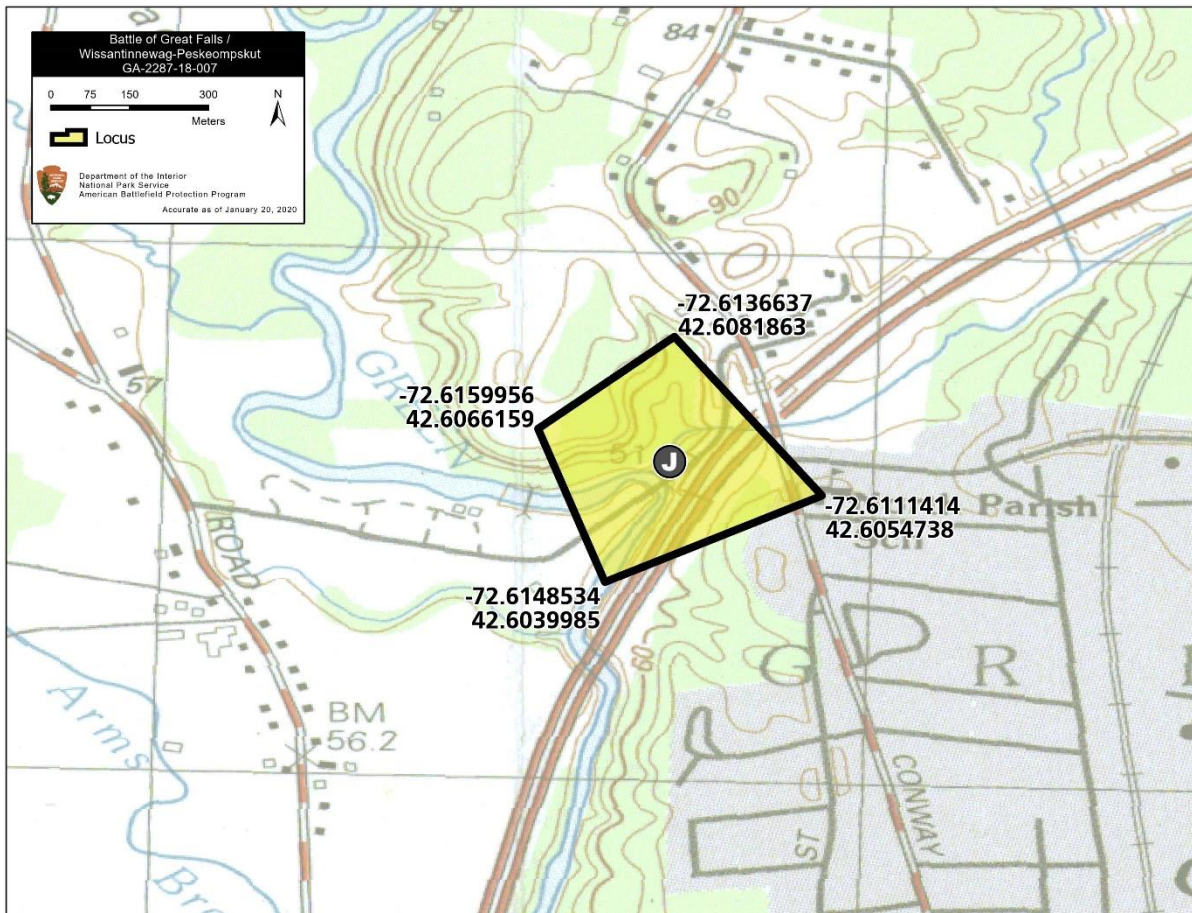


Figure 27. Locus J – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State

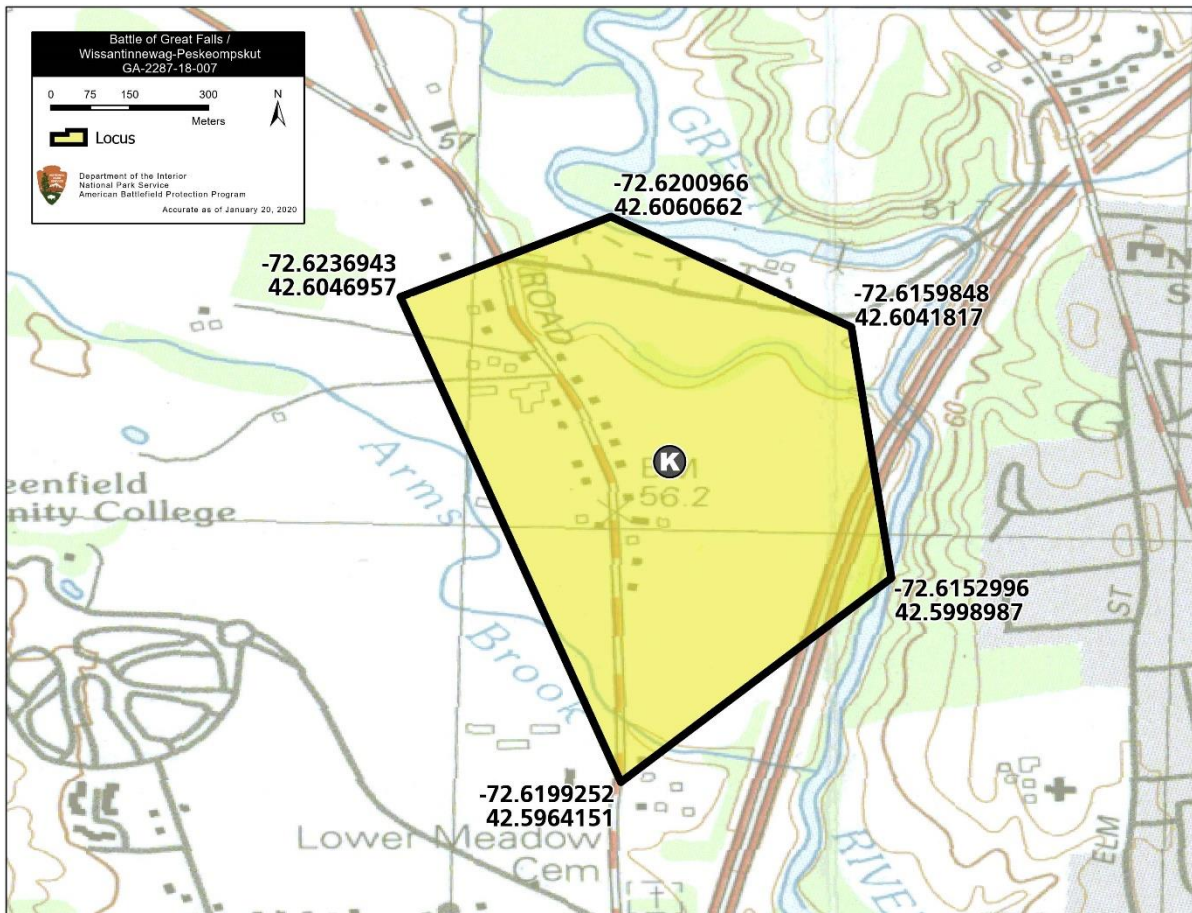


Figure 28. Locus K – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State

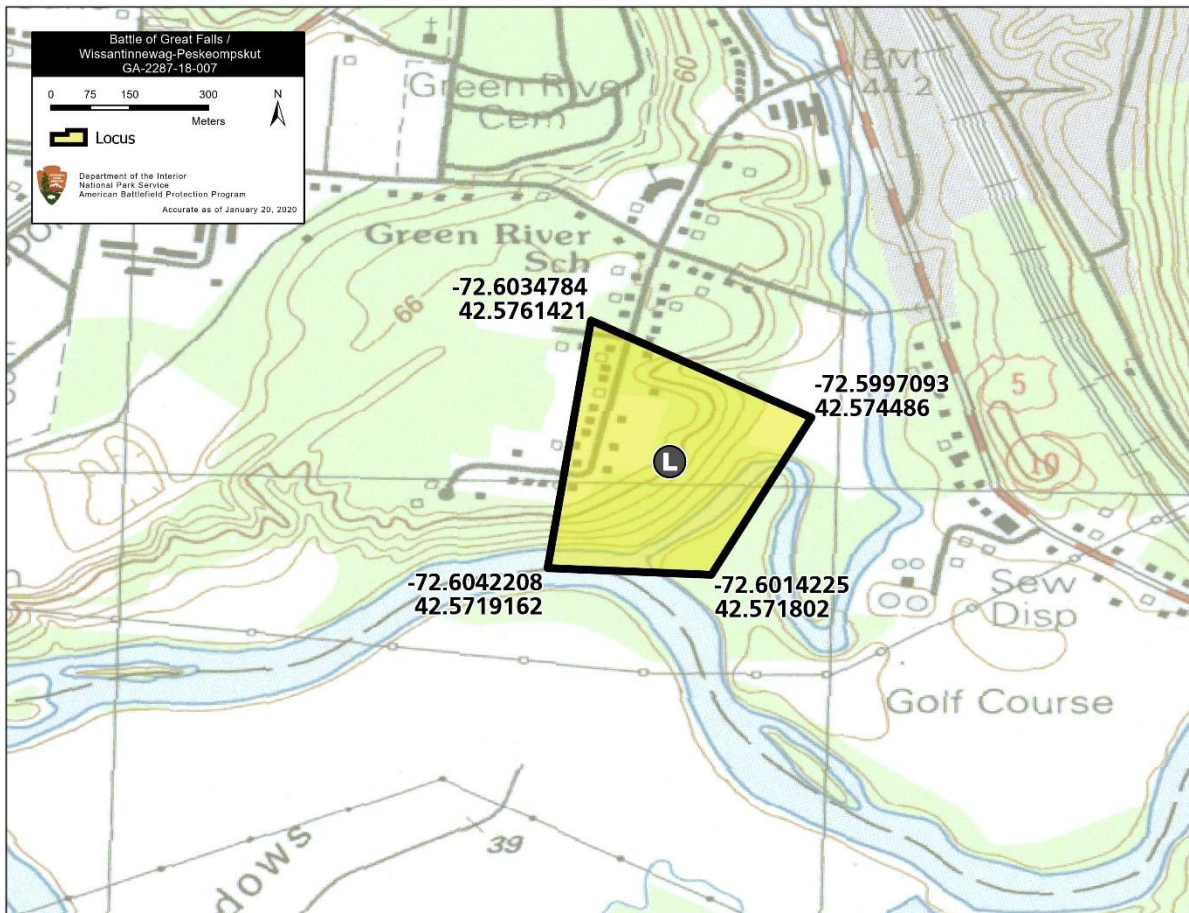


Figure 29. Locus L – U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" Series Topographic Map

Photographs

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus A

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus B

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus C

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus D

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus E

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus F

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus G

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus H

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus I

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus J

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus K

Battle of Great Falls/Wissatinnewag-
Peskeomskut Historic Archaeological District
Name of Property

Franklin,
Massachusetts
County and State



Locus L