

**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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 100-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name ECW (Emergency Conservation Work) Camp S-53 Mess Hall

other names/site number Delaware CRS #S-12179

2. Location

street and number southeast corner of Routes 40 and 213 not for publication

city or town Georgetown vicinity

state Delaware code DE county Sussex code 005 zip code 19941

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain). _____ _____	_____	_____

ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall
Name of Property

Sussex County, Delaware
County and State

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
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT
DOMESTIC: institutional housing

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION
SOCIAL: meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: prefabricated building

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls ASBESTOS
roof METAL
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheet

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 boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- 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.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1934-1939

Significant Dates

1939

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See Continuation Sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall
Name of Property

Sussex County, Delaware
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.16

UTM References (NAD 83)

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18N</u>	<u>462460</u>	<u>4288351</u>	3	<u>18N</u>	<u>462502</u>	<u>4288327</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>18N</u>	<u>462505</u>	<u>4288345</u>	4	<u>18N</u>	<u>462475</u>	<u>4288332</u>

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Courtney Lynch Clark and Douglas C. McVarish/Principal Architectural Historians, Grace H. Ziesing/Principal Archeologist

organization John Milner Associates, Inc. date June 2009

street & number 1216 Arch Street, 5th Floor telephone 215-561-7637

city or town Philadelphia state PA zip code 19107

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall Sussex County, Delaware

Narrative Description

Located in the southeast corner of the intersection of McColley's Chapel Road (County Road 213) and Redden Road (County Road 40), the property includes a twentieth-century, wood-framed building built as a mess hall for a nearby Civilian Conservation Corps work camp but now serving as a fellowship hall for the church (McColley's Chapel) across the road. The property also includes a small storage shed.

The mess hall is a one-story, wood-framed ca. 1934-1935 side-gabled building that faces north toward Redden Road. A one-room shed-roof extension projects from the rear wall, slightly off center towards the east end. The building measures five bays wide by three bays deep with regular fenestration on all sides. A gabled entry extends from the center of the façade sheltering the main, double door entrance. A modern handicap ramp with an iron railing extends up to this entry. Secondary, single-door entrances are located within both gable ends. The interior is lit by a combination of double-hung, one-over-one and casement wood-sash openings. The building is covered in cement-asbestos shingles, and sits on a concrete-block foundation. The roof is sheathed in metal. A concrete-block chimney rises from the exterior of the southwest corner of the building.

The interior of this building consists of three rooms, a large dining area and kitchen, located in the main block, and a storage closet in the rear extension. All of the openings appear to be original, and are cased in plain stained, wood molding. The wall between the kitchen and dining area is multi-functional; folded down it can serve as a counter top for serving between the two rooms, or kept up it can function as a wall. The dining area is open, and currently contains movable chairs and tables, and a piano. All of the original built-in features (cabinets, sink, heating elements, and countertops) remain in the kitchen, with the exception of a newer refrigerator. A small bathroom has been built in a corner of the storage room, but otherwise the interior remains intact.

Nestled behind the fellowship hall, to the rear of its eastern end, is a small, wood-framed storage shed. This one-story, ca. 1920s gabled-front building faces east. A single wood door opening pierces the center of its façade. The building is clad in vertical wood siding and rests on concrete-block piers. Its roof is sheathed in metal.

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ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall Sussex County, Delaware

Statement of Significance:

The former mess hall is a rare surviving example of an intact Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp facility in Delaware. Constructed ca. 1934-1935, the former mess hall at McColley's Chapel Road was a pre-fabricated, utilitarian building designed to support government-sponsored laborers. Its unelaborated rectangular form and wide-open floor plan reflect this use. A 1937 aerial photograph indicates that all of the buildings at ECW Camp S-53 had essentially the same footprint. Like most CCC camp buildings, the former mess hall was designed in the military style to be both utilitarian and functionally flexible. Though moved to its current location between 1954 and 1961, the building has been altered very little. The cement-asbestos shingles are probably not original, and though they are consistent with the period of construction, they do not match the look of the wood siding used on other camp buildings as seen in historic photographs. The windows and front doors are original, however, and the interior retains much of its original character. A small bathroom has been added to the rear ell, but the configuration has remained intact, as has all of the interior trim. As an example of a standardized CCC building in general and a mess hall in particular, this property is a rare survivor of a building type fast disappearing from the Sussex County landscape, and it is therefore eligible for the National Register under Criterion C.

Although other types of CCC constructions such as picnic areas and other recreational facilities are extant in Delaware, the former mess hall is one of only three known or suspected CCC *camp* buildings in Sussex County. The two others are a latrine that was moved to the Headquarters Unit of the Redden State Forest from ECW Camp S-53 and a former barracks that now serves as the church hall at St. John's Methodist Church at Springfield Crossroads (at the southeast corner of the intersection of Springfield Road [Route 47] and Gravel Hill Road [Route 30]). The latter came from an unspecified CCC camp near Georgetown, but since there were two CCC camps near Georgetown, it is unknown if the barracks came from ECW Camp S-53 or the other camp (Company 3220 at D-2/SCS-2; Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy 2004). The former barracks at St. John's was found to be a non-contributing element of the National Register eligible church property (Delaware CRS #S-03300), but it was noted as potentially eligible under different historical contexts, including its association with the CCC camps (Davis 2008).

As a moved property, it must also meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration B. The mess hall is remarkably intact and arguably retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling, as stipulated under Criterion Consideration B. Further, the building is of a highly standardized design meant to be placed in a cleared landscape anywhere in the eastern United States; its setting is therefore not critical to its architectural significance. Its integrity of association has been somewhat compromised as it is no longer part of a work camp, but its setting in a clearing with a wooded backdrop and its communal, utilitarian function still evoke its historic association, at least from an architectural point of view.

The small shed behind the mess hall appears to have been built at least a decade before the mess hall, and there is no clear historical association between the two. The shed does not contribute to the architectural significance of the mess hall and is therefore a non-contributing element of the property.

The building lacks the integrity necessary to convey significance under Criterion A for its association with an important era in the history of the Delaware State Forest system in particular and Sussex County more generally. Although the Depression-era development of the Redden State Forest is a pivotal chapter in the history of Delaware's state forests and in the shaping of the local community, the building is no longer in its original location, nor is it within a cluster of similar camp buildings. Standing on its own in a new location, the association between the former mess hall and important trends in history has been severed.

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ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall Sussex County, Delaware

Statement of Significance *(cont.)*

Historical Background

According to Reba Wells (2008), a neighbor and McColley's Chapel congregant, the church's fellowship hall, known as Redden Community Hall, originally served as a CCC barracks at a work camp to the south of Redden Road, approximately 1.5 miles further west of its current location. Historic-period aerial photographs indicate that the building was moved to McColley's Chapel Road between 1954 and 1961.

The work camp from which the building came was ECW Camp S-53, located on the east side of Gravelly Branch within the Jester Tract of Redden State Forest ("ECW" stands for Emergency Conservation Work, and the "S" indicates that it is on a state forest). The first ECW forestry camp in Delaware, construction was started by the United States Army Corps of Engineers on 4 September 1934, and the site was occupied by the beginning of October. The original occupants were Company 2210, CCC war veterans transferred from an Army flood control project near Montpelier, Vermont. In January, they were replaced by CCC junior Company 1293 from Camp Dix, New Jersey, and the camp was given its official designation of ECW Camp S-53 (Delaware State Forester 1936:12; Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy 2004; Page 2000).

Under the State Forestry Department's lead and administration, CCC camps throughout the state undertook a variety of projects, including mosquito control work along the marshes and inland bays, clearance and maintenance of drainage and flood control ditches, creation of wildlife refuges from wetlands, restoration of freshwater ponds, planting of new forests, blazing trails, and creating fire breaks (Meyer 2008). State forest work in Delaware began by establishing the boundaries of the 1,133-acre Jester Tract of the Redden State Forest. Property lines were brushed out, resurveyed, and blazed, and then marked at each corner with permanent concrete monuments. From 1934 to 1936, 7.6 miles of truck trails and 4.1 miles of horse trails were constructed, and bridges and culverts were also built (Delaware State Forester 1936:12-17).

The CCC workers lived in temporary camps that were built and administered by the Army under the auspices of the War Department. Each camp was staffed by a "company" of workers, usually numbering around 200 (O'Bannon and Henry 1986). The earliest CCC camps were composed of tents, which were soon replaced by permanent wooden buildings. Unlike the regional rustic style advocated for recreational buildings constructed using CCC labor, the camps that housed the workers usually consisted of standardized utilitarian buildings that mimicked military design (O'Bannon and Henry 1986). Camps typically consisted of approximately 24 buildings laid out in a rough "U"-shaped formation, around open space used for assemblies and sports activities. Wooden buildings were solidly constructed, usually of locally available wood, painted or stained, and often covered in creosote or tar paper. They were not easily dismantled once the camp had finished its work project. Sometimes they were turned over to a nearby community or sold at auction, but more often they were boarded up and left desolate. In 1934, in an effort to better allocate time and money and make buildings more portable, the army began designing buildings with interchangeable parts that could serve multiple uses (administrative, recreational, mess, or quarters). By 1936 this design became the standard for most camp buildings, which were mass produced and came in panels for easy construction. The exterior walls of this new construction type were painted or stained to prevent deterioration, and only the portions of the building subject to damage were treated with a preservative. This prefabricated portable variety was easy to dismantle at the end of a work project, and ready to be transported wherever a new camp was authorized (Salmond 1967; Paige 1985; Otis et al. 1986). Because the camps (and the buildings

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ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall Sussex County, Delaware

Statement of Significance *(cont.)*

Historical Background (cont.)

within them) were designed to be temporary, most were dismantled after the work for which they were built was finished. The mess hall, built ca. 1934-1935, is thought to be an example of the later, more portable variety.

ECW Camp S-53 was abandoned in July 1939, in part because Delaware had not appropriated funds for its operation (*Journal Every Evening* 1939). Four years later, towards the end of 1943, the lease the Department of Forestry had with the Army for the former camp expired. By that time there were five new Army-built structures at the camp, in addition to the older CCC buildings. The former CCC camp buildings, described as “numerous single story frame buildings,” were put up for sale at a public auction scheduled for April 1, 1944 (*Sussex Countian* March 28, 1944), but the sale was postponed at the request of the Sussex County agricultural community (*Sussex Countian* April 6, 1944). Some of the structures, including two warehouses (since demolished) and the camp latrine (extant), were eventually moved to the State Forest ranger station in the Headquarters Tract on the east side of U.S. 113, and lease agreements were reached with private individuals to move seven of the structures to Staytonsville. The remainder were rehabilitated on site for use by “Western hemisphere agricultural labor” (Delaware State Forester 1944:8). All buildings had been removed from the site by 1954, as seen on an aerial photograph from that year, but, aside from the fellowship hall at McColley’s Chapel, their final disposition is not known.

Although Ms. Wells—the McColley’s Chapel congregant interviewed by JMA during the field survey—identified the building as a barracks, it is more likely to have been a mess hall. The revised identification is based on the presence of a large kitchen at the east end of the building, connected to the main room by a wood panel pass-through. An interior photograph of a CCC mess hall in Connecticut (reproduced below) reveals remarkable similarities to the fellowship hall at McColley’s Chapel.

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ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall
Sussex County, Delaware

Bibliographical References

Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy

2004 "CCC Camp Lists." Website <http://www.ccclegacy.org/>. Website last modified 28 January 2009.

Civilian Conservation Corps Stories

n.d. Website <http://www.cccstories.com>. Accessed March 3, 2009.

Davis, Gwen

2008 Archaeologist, Delaware State Historic Preservation Office. Email correspondence, 20 January 2009 and 19 June 2009, with U.S. 113 North/South study project team including information regarding 1989 National Register nomination of St. John's Methodist Church. On file, John Milner Associates, Inc., Philadelphia, PA.

Delaware State Forester

v.d. *Annual Report to the State Forestry Commission*. Various years. Delaware State Forester, Dover.

Delaware State Forestry Department (DSFD)

v.d. Photographic collection of the Delaware State Forestry Department, 1930s through 1970s. On file, Delaware Department of Agricultural, Dover.

Journal-Every Evening

1939 One Man Keeps Guard Over Sussex "Ghost" CCC Camp. *Journal-Every Evening*, July 5, 1939 (Wilmington)

Meyer, Roger Dean

2008 "An Army of Restoration (CCC)." The Historical Marker Database (<http://www.hmdb.org/>). Accessed 28 January 2009.

O'Bannon, Patrick W., and William R. Henry, Jr.

1986 *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form for the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) Architecture in Pennsylvania State Parks: 1933-1942, Thematic Resources*. Prepared by John Milner Associates, Inc., 15 October 1986, Philadelphia, PA. Copy on file, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg.

Otis, Alison T., William D. Honey, Thomas C. Hogg, and Kimberly K. Lakin

1986 *The Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps: 1933-42*. United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, FS-395.

Page, Brian R.

2000 National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Civilian Conservation Corps Camp S-53, Redden State Forest. Draft. On file, Redden State Forest Headquarters, Georgetown, DE.

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Bibliographical References (*cont.*)

Paige, John C.

1985 *The Civilian Corps and The National Parks Service, 1933-1942: An Administrative History*. National Park Service, Department of the Interiors. Information extracted from Chapter Three: *The National Park Service Camps, Camp Description*, http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/ccc/index.htm, Jan. 28, 2009.

Salmond, John A.

1967 *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study*. Duke University Press. Information extracted from Chapter Eight: *A Day in the CCC*, <http://www.nps.gov/history/history/onlinebooks/ccc/salmond/index.htm>, Feb. 3, 2009.

Sussex Countian

1944 "Public Sale! of Former CCC Camp Buildings." Advertisement. *Sussex Countian* March 23, 1944. Copy at Delaware Public Archives, RG1380, Subgroup 005, series 016, Department of Agriculture, State Forestry Department (Administrative Files of the Department).

1944 "Sale of Former CCC Camp is Postponed." Announcement. *Sussex Countain* April 6, 1944.

Wells, Reba

2008 Church congregant, and local resident. Field interview with Courtney Clark, JMA Architectural Historian, 02 October 2008. Notes on file, John Milner Associates, Inc., Philadelphia.

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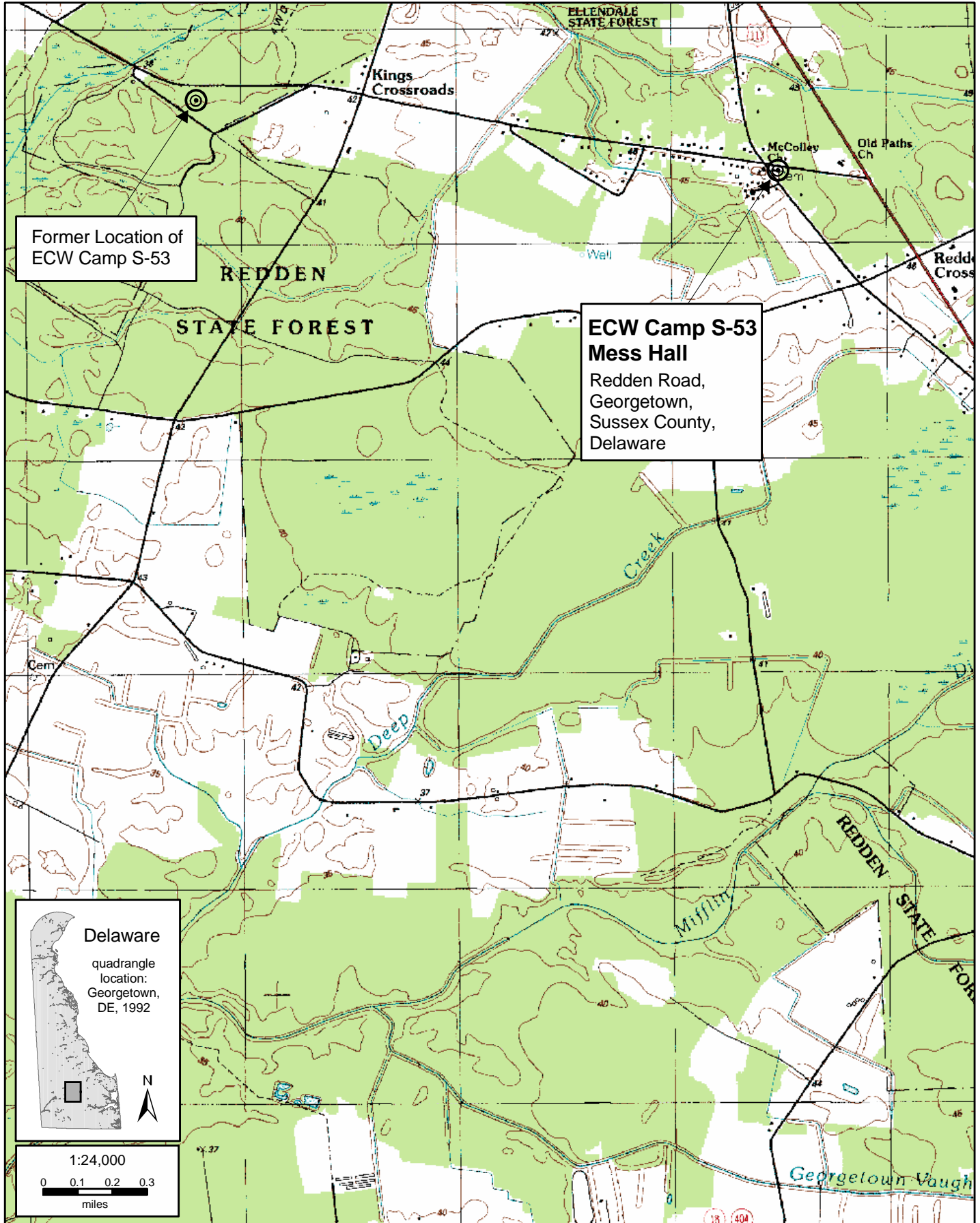
ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall
Sussex County, Delaware

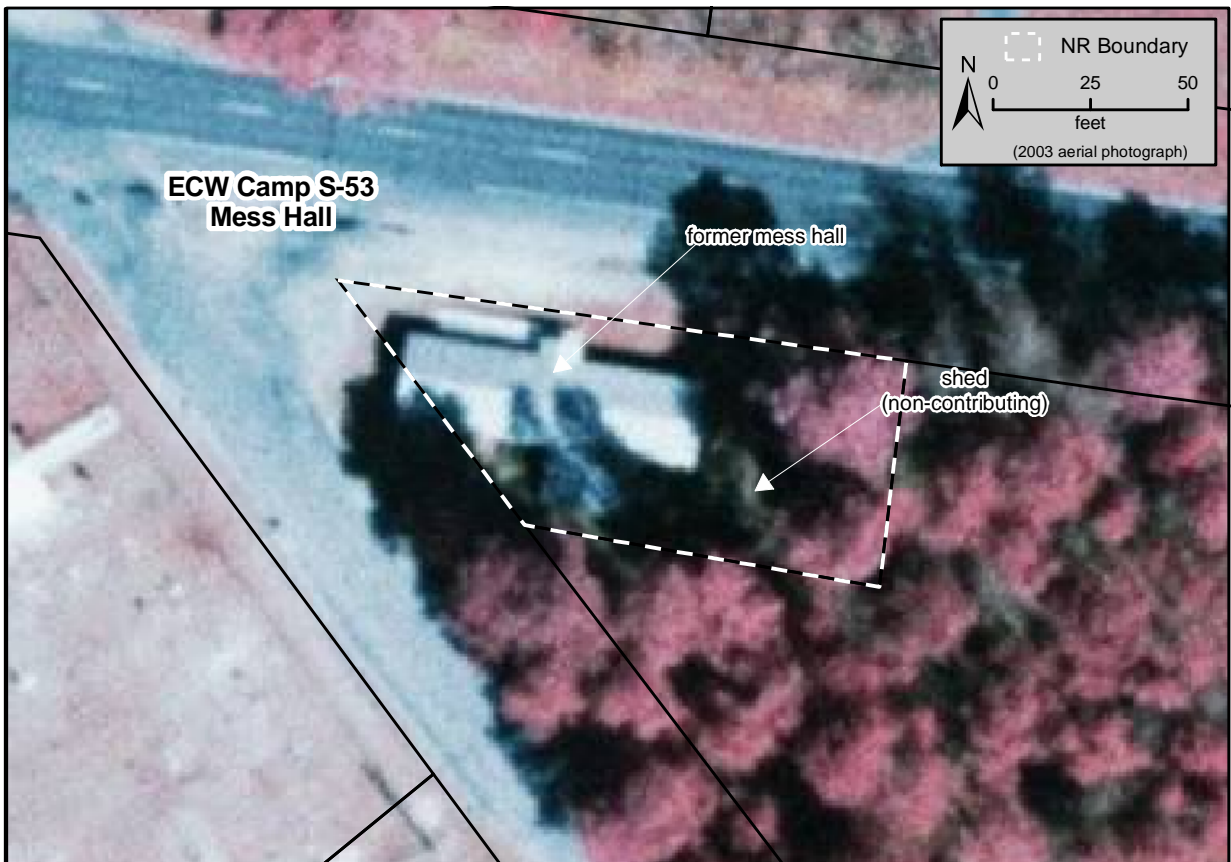
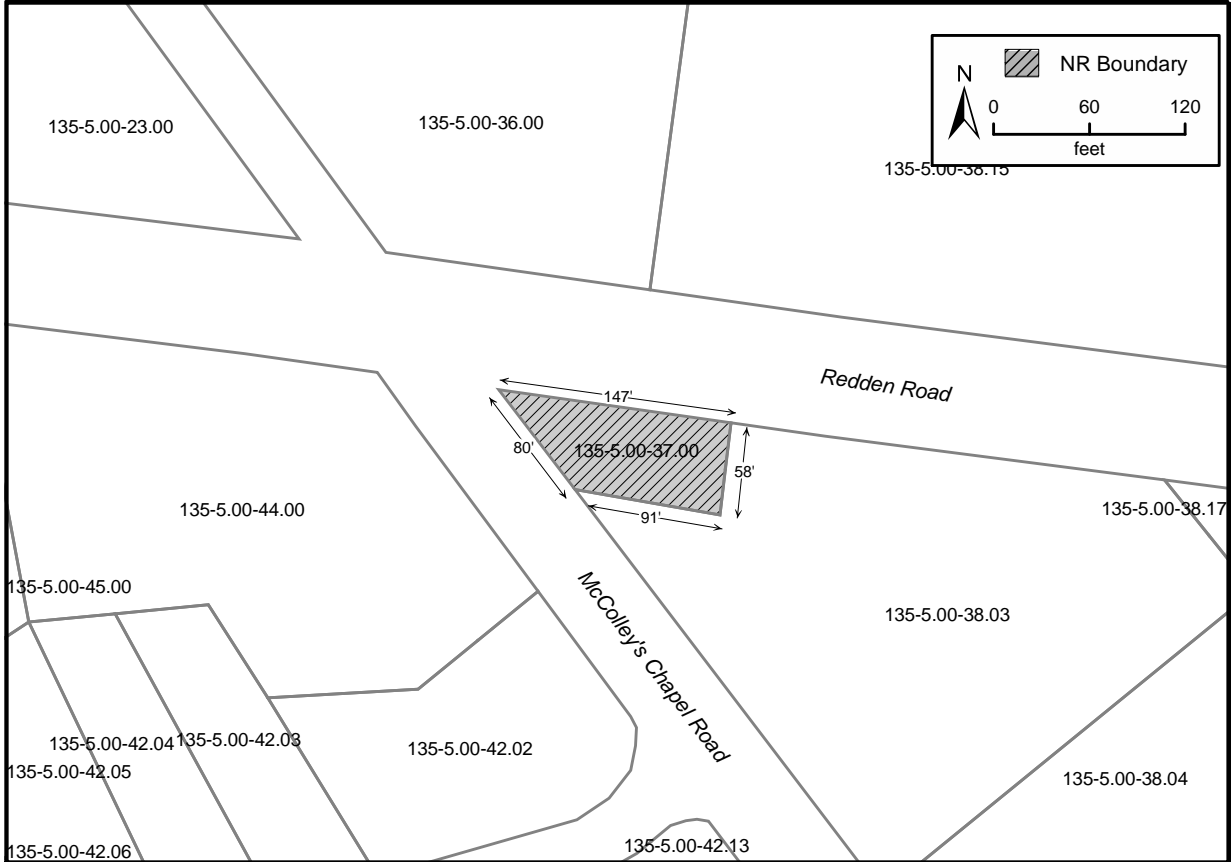
Verbal Boundary Description

The National Register boundary is the entirety of Sussex County tax parcel parcel 135-5.00-37.00, encompassing the mess hall and the shed (a non-contributing element). This parcel is approximately 0.16 acres and measures 147 feet along the Redden Road frontage, 58 feet to the south, 91 feet west, and 80 feet along the McColley's Chapel Road frontage.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn in accordance with guidelines set forth by the National Park Service, which stipulate that the boundary should encompass but not exceed the extent of the significant resources and land areas comprising the property.





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Additional Documentation Page 3

**ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall
Sussex County, Delaware**

Photographs

Photograph 1 of 6. View of façade and east side, camera faces southwest. (09/2008)

Photograph 2 of 6. View of west side and rear, camera faces northeast. (09/2008)

Photograph 3 of 6. View of shed (non-contributing element), camera faces southwest. (09/2008)

Photograph 4 of 6. View of interior, main room, camera faces east; the wooden panel in the center of the rear wall is a pass-through to a kitchen. (09/2008)

Photograph 5 of 6. Historic picture of multi-purpose building at ECW Camp S-53 for comparative purposes (i.e., this building is not the mess hall) (source: Delaware State Forestry Department 1934: Collection CCC, Negative 258)

Photograph 6 of 6. Historic picture of interior of mess hall at Cross CCC Camp S-51, Housatonic Meadows State Forest, West Cornwall, Connecticut for comparative purposes; note pass-through to kitchen at end of main room (source: Civilian Conservation Corps Stories n.d.).

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Sussex County, Delaware

Photograph 1 of 6:



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Additional Documentation Page 5

ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall
Sussex County, Delaware

Photograph 2 of 6:



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ECW Camp S-53 Mess Hall
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Photograph 3 of 6:



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Photograph 4 of 6:



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Photograph 6 of 6:

