

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER/GEORGIA REGISTER NOMINATION

1. Name: Fort Frederica (Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase)

2. Location: 6515 Frederica Road; St. Simons Island, Glynn County, GA

3a. Description: Fort Frederica was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 22, 1978, based on documentation prepared in 1974. The existing National Register documentation listed a single resource comprising a 217.97-acre property that included the Colonial-era circa 1736–1748 Frederica fort and townsite as well as the 1742 Battle of Bloody Marsh site. This nomination increases the boundary from the 1978 listing to a total of 304.49 acres and provides additional documentation. The additional documentation and boundary increase also expands the period of significance to incorporate additional historic contexts and areas of significance.

The property within federal ownership is currently administered as Fort Frederica National Monument, a unit of the National Park System established by enabling legislation passed by Congress on May 26, 1936 when an eighty-acre area on St. Simons Island, Georgia, was, “set apart as a national monument for the benefit and inspiration of the people and shall be called the Fort Frederica National Monument.” The monument was established for the purpose of protecting, preserving, and interpreting the resources associated with pre-Colonial Georgia military fortifications established by James Oglethorpe and an associated townsite. The Battles of Gully Hole Creek and Bloody Marsh were fought to defend English held Georgia territory from the Spanish based in St. Augustine, Florida.

Fort Frederica National Monument consists of two discontinuous units comprising four separate tracts. The Fort Frederica site (or main unit) is composed of three tracts that include the tabby ruins of the fort, the townsite, protective earthworks, commemorative monuments, the Oglethorpe house site, and Mission 66 era park administrative and interpretive features. The second unit is the Battle of Bloody Marsh site located six miles south of the fort, and is composed of a commemorative monument and Mission 66 era park features. The nomination contains a total of fifty-four counted resources. Of these, twenty-five contribute to the significance of the historic district, while twenty-nine do not. Contributing resources consist of six sites, five buildings, seven structures, and seven objects. Non-contributing resources include seven sites, one building, ten structures, and eleven objects. The resources primarily associated with the historic significance of the property retain physical integrity. The noncontributing resources are primarily located at the periphery of the property and associated with non-historic functions. Exceptions include the Deptford archeological site, which pre-dates European occupation of the fort and townsite. As such, it does not contribute to Fort Frederica, but warrants additional investigation under other historic contexts as part of future evaluations. Another exception is the Abbot Burials site, which post-dated Colonial occupation of the fort and townsite and predates the commemorative period of significance. Like the Deptford site, the Abbott Burials site warrants additional investigation under other historic contexts as part of future evaluations.

3b. Period(s) of Significance: 1736-1758 ; 1903-1970

3c. Acreage: 304.49 acres

3d. Boundary Explanation: The Fort Frederica (Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase) National Register nomination boundary encompasses the congressionally authorized National Park unit property.

4a. National Register Criteria: A and D

4b. National Register Areas of Significance: Archeology-Historic, Non-Aboriginal; Architecture; Other: Commemoration; Other: Conservation; Commerce; Community Planning and Development; Exploration/Settlement; Military; Entertainment/Recreation

4c. Statement of Significance: Fort Frederica (Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase) possesses significance under National Register Criteria A and D. The district has statewide significance under Criterion A in the area of Military as the site of the military fortifications established to protect the English Colony of Georgia. It served as headquarters for General James Oglethorpe’s troops who combined with local Native American tribes, Scottish Highlanders and British regimentals to fight the Battles of Gully Hole Creek and the Battle of Bloody Marsh. Together these battles comprised a definitive turning point in the English claim to territorial Georgia and secured the southernmost colony. The property also possesses statewide significance under Criterion A in the area of Archeology-Historic for its contributions to the development of the subdiscipline. Additionally, under Criterion A in the area of Other: Commemoration, the district is significant at the local level for the Abbott monument, a rare and early example of a monument to enslaved persons erected by an African American relative in 1929. The property also possesses significance at the statewide level under Criterion A in the area of Other: Conservation for its association with the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and later the Fort Frederica Association to commemorate and preserve the site and its associated battle sites. The property possesses significance at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/Recreation for development of the National Park unit through the Mission 66 program. Fort Frederica is also eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion D at the statewide level as a property that has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Surveys and excavations conducted at the fort and townsite have revealed archeological deposits with the demonstrated and potential ability to yield information about the early settlers, townsite layout, and military fortifications and ruins. The site may yield information important to research questions in the areas of Architecture, Community Planning and Development, Commerce, and Exploration/Settlement. The in-situ archeological deposits preserved within the park offer great research potential for the future, as most of the town is undisturbed and those areas previously investigated may still have significant intact deposits.

4d. Suggested Level of Significance: The district is being nominated at the national, statewide, and local levels of significance.

5. Sponsor: The nomination is sponsored by the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and the nomination materials were prepared by Melissa Dirr Gengler, Historic Resources Group, Inc.; Liz Sargent, Liz Sargent HLA; Robert Taylor and David Dutton, Dutton + Associates; and Stacy Reaves.