

Name: Jason T. Raupp, PhD, RPA

Title: Assistant Professor
Program in Maritime Studies
East Carolina University

Email: rauppj14@ecu.edu

Abstract Title: “Reconstructing the Castle: Exploring the Industrial History of Castle Island, Washington, North Carolina”

Abstract Description: Situated at the confluence of the Pamlico and Tar Rivers, the town of Washington, North Carolina was established in the late 18 th century as an intended entrepôt for goods and materials harvested from the surrounding hinterland. Thanks in large part to the deep channel on which it sits, Washington quickly established a place as the center of the Tar-Pamlico trade. As the town grew, inhabitants established shipyards, turpentine stills, sawmills, and fisheries which further contributed to its prosperity. Among the developed areas was the small plot of land located in the middle of the Tar River known as Castle Island. Originally established as a shipyard, Castle Island was later the site of a large sawmill, a brick lime kiln, a depot for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and eventually a vessel abandonment area. Despite investment to transform it through the construction of extensive maritime infrastructure, the island was abandoned and eventually used as a catchment for spoil from dredging operations. Archaeological investigations at the now heavily vegetated site provide insight into the sequence of industrial activities that took place there. This presentation provides an overview of this important component of Washington’s port, discusses the results of both terrestrial and underwater surveys, and considers the significance of this largely forgotten industrial landscape.