



**North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources**  
**State Historic Preservation Office**

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Roy Cooper  
Secretary Susi H. Hamilton

Office of Archives and History  
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

July 7, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kate Husband  
Office of Human Environment  
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Renee Gledhill-Earley *Renee Gledhill-Earley*  
Environmental Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: Historic Structures Survey Report, Replace Bridge 140 on SR 1194, Howards Creek Mill Road over Howard's Creek, PA 16-11-0009, Lincoln County, ER 17-1034

Thank you for your memorandum of May 23, 2017, transmitting the above-referenced report. We have reviewed the report and offer the following comments.

Based upon the information provided, we are unable to agree that Howards Creek Mill (LN0146) is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for Agriculture and Industry and Criterion C for Architecture. The mill has many additions called "post-1950" additions. It also mentions additions "inside the period of significance" as well as "modern additions." These terms are somewhat vague and unexplained. To make a definitive determination of eligibility the following information is needed:

- What is the period of significance?
- What are the specific dates for the additions to the mill?

This additional information will allow us to determine which sections of the mill date from the period of significance, and whether the mill retains enough historic integrity to convey its significance.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-807-6579 or [environmental.review@ncdcr.gov](mailto:environmental.review@ncdcr.gov). In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr, NCDOT, [mfurr@ncdot.gov](mailto:mfurr@ncdot.gov)



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

JAMES H. TROGDON, III  
SECRETARY

May 23, 2017

MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Renee Gledhill-Earley  
Environmental Review Coordinator  
North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office

**FROM:** Kate Husband  
Architectural Historian  
NCDOT Division of Highways

**SUBJECT:** PA No. 16-11-0009, Replace Bridge No. 140 on SR 1194 (Howards Creek Mill Road) over Howard's Creek, Lincoln County

*6/12/17  
To John B  
PLEASE RETURN COMMENTS  
TO RGE  
THANKS  
ER 17 1034  
H. Gledhill-Earley  
RGE 6/27/17  
due 6/26/17*

Enclosed please find the Historic Structures Survey Report, survey site forms, and additional materials for the above referenced project. Please feel free to contact me by phone (919-707-6075) or email (klhusband@ncdot.gov) if you have any additional questions or comments. We look forward to hearing from you.



April 2017

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## HISTORIC STRUCTURE SURVEY REPORT

# REPLACE BRIDGE NO. 140 ON SR 1194 (HOWARDS CREEK MILL ROAD) OVER HOWARDS CREEK, LINCOLN COUNTY

**Howard's Creek Mill (LN0146)**  
**WBS# 17BP.12.R.104**

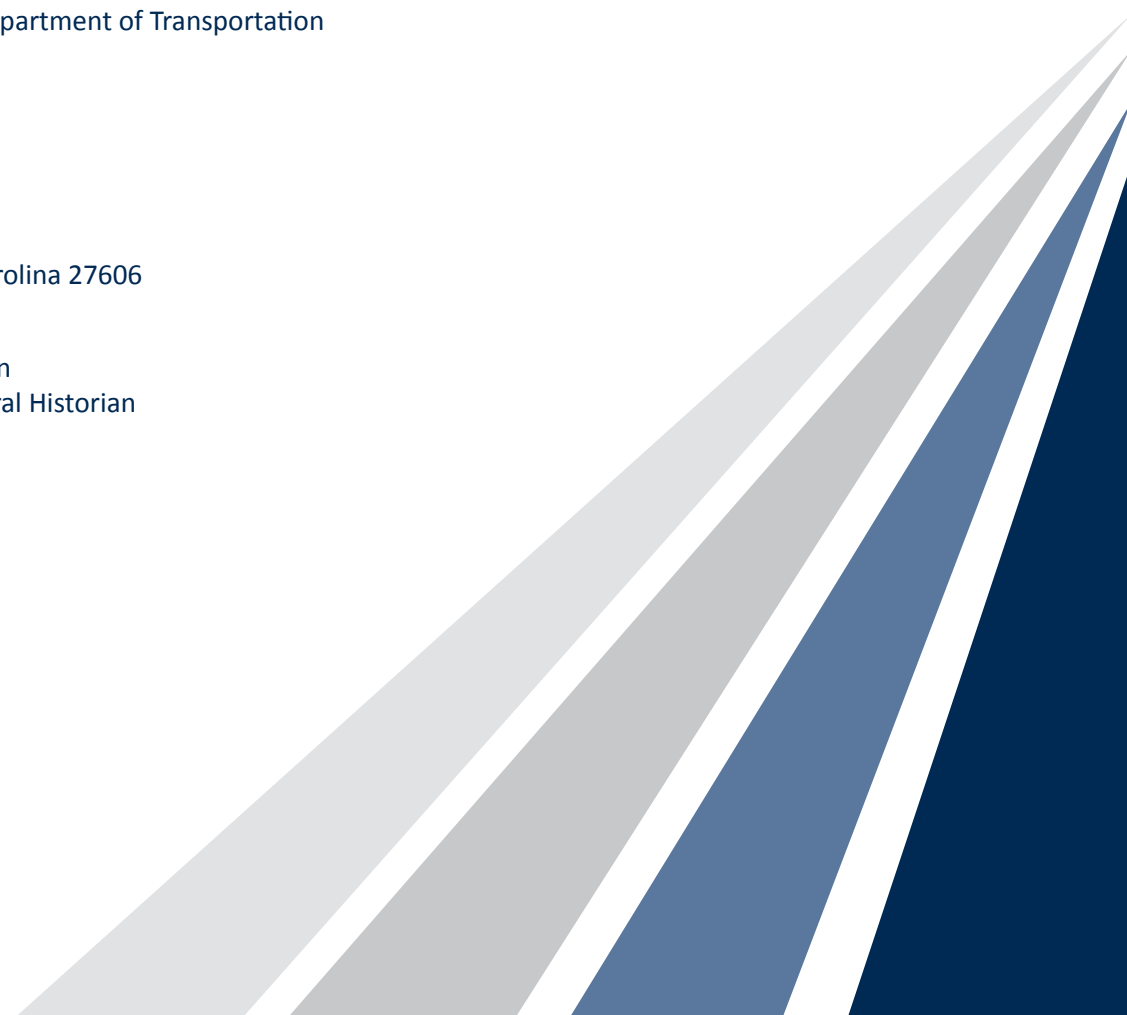
**Prepared for:**

North Carolina Department of Transportation

**Prepared by:**

JMT  
1130 Situs Court  
Suite 200  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27606

Sara B. McLaughlin  
Senior Architectural Historian



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Sara B. McLaughlin  
Senior Architectural Historian

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Sara B. McLaughlin, Senior Architectural Historian  
JMT

Date

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Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor  
North Carolina Department of Transportation

Date

### Management Summary

JMT prepared this report in March of 2017 in response to North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) proposal to replace Bridge No. 140 on SR 1194 (Howards Creek Mill Road) over Howards Creek in Lincoln County. The project area is located in the north-central portion of the county near Lincolnton. According to the Project Vicinity map provided by the NCDOT, the area of potential effects (APE) extends 75 feet from the center of the existing roadway each way and 300 feet from each end of the bridge (Figure 1). One property, the survey site Howard's Creek Mill (LN0146) has been identified within the APE as requiring further evaluation. Bridge No. 140, built in 1974, is under 50 years of age and therefore ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Investigations comply with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, other state and federal regulations, and NCDOT's current "Historic Architecture Group Procedures and Work Products and the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office's (HPO) Report Standards for Historic Structure Survey Reports/Determinations of Eligibility/Section 106/110 Compliance Reports in North Carolina".

Resource Name	NC SHPO Survey Number	NRHP Eligibility Recommendation	NRHP Criteria
Howard's Creek Mill	LN0146	Eligible	Criterion A - Agriculture and Industry Criterion C - Architecture

## **Project Description and Methodology**

JMT prepared this report in March of 2017 in response to North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT's) proposal to Replace Bridge No. 140 on SR 1194 (Howards Creek Mill Road) over Howards Creek in Lincoln County. NCDOT requested an intensive-level survey, in the form of an Eligibility Evaluation Report, of the Howard's Creek Mill in Lincoln County (Figures 1-3). Sara McLaughlin, Senior Architectural Historian at JMT, completed this report.

Fieldwork was completed on March 15, 2017. The interior of the mill property, which is currently vacant, was not accessed. Attempts to gain access to the property were unsuccessful. Therefore, all photos of the property were taken from the public right-of-way. At the time of this report, the property was for sale. Property listings show limited images of the mill's interior. Background historical research was conducted at the Lincoln County Charles R. Jonas Public Library in Lincolnton, North Carolina, the Lincoln County online Register of Deeds database, the Lincoln County online GIS service, and Ancestry.com. Additionally, the HPOWEB GIS service was consulted and revealed no other historic resources within the project area. JMT also reviewed National Register of Historic Places Registration Forms for other nearby properties similar to the subject property to provide further context. Approximate dates of construction were found via research.

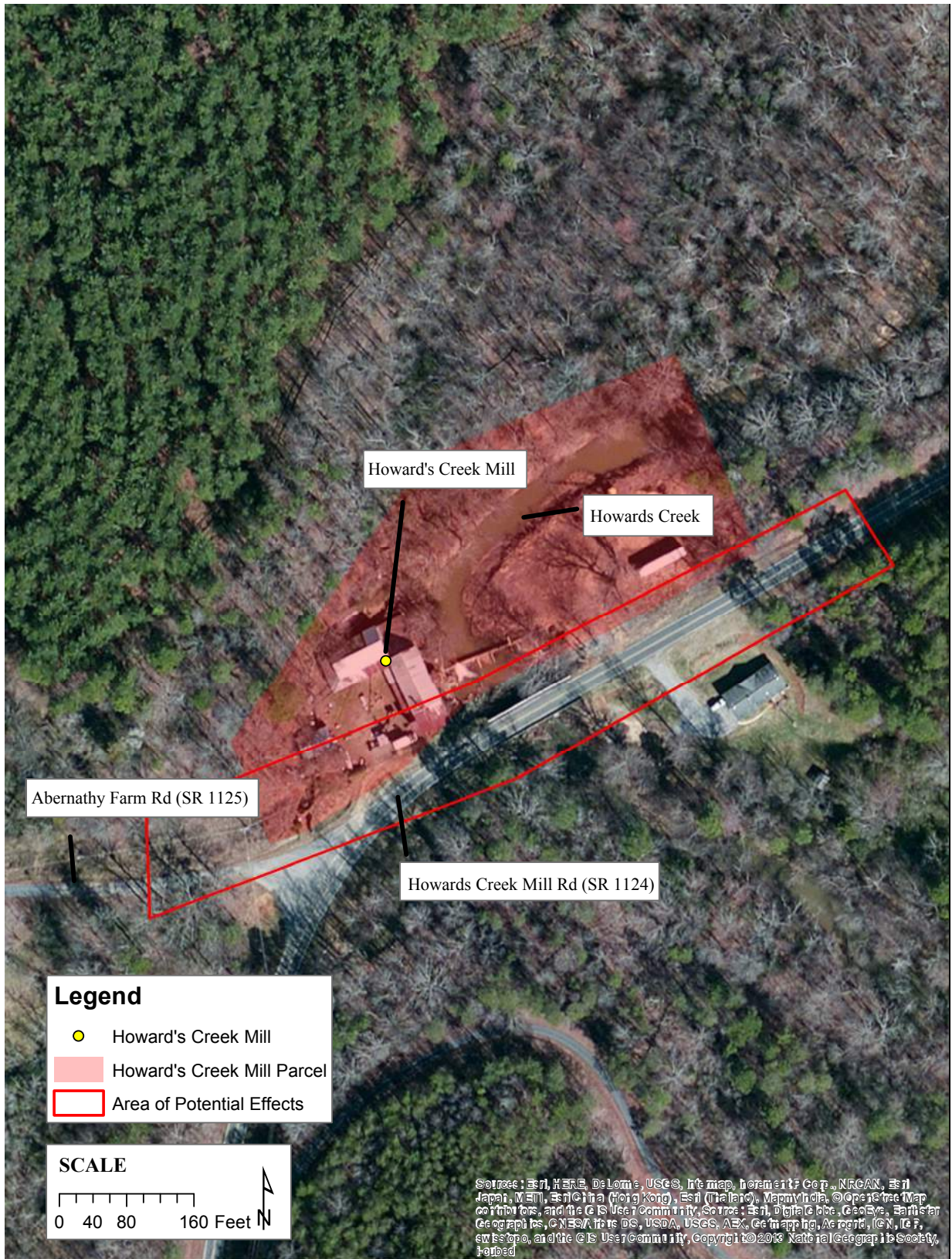


Figure 1: Howard's Creek Mill parcel boundary and APE (Source: ESRI)



Figure 2: Howard's Creek Mill (Source: ESRI)



## Description

Located along the northwest side of Howards Creek Mill Road (SR 1194), on the northeast side of the junction with Abernathy Farm Road (SR 1195) and directly west of Howards Creek, the Howard's Creek Mill located at 717 Howards Creek Mill Road sits on a 2.29-acre site. The property is located in the Vale vicinity, 9 miles northwest of Lincolnton and is privately owned. The property was originally constructed as a grist mill and appears to be vacant today. At the time of this report, the property was for sale. Property listings show limited images of the mill's interior.

The parcel is situated directly along the road on the northwest side of Howards Creek Mill Road (SR 1194). The surrounding area is rural agricultural land. The topography is characterized by gently rolling hills, dense forest, and agricultural fields. The property is clearly delineated by forest on two sides (north and west) and Howards Creek to the east.

Constructed c. 1897 as a grist mill, the two-story frame building served the rural, agricultural community for over 100 years. The mill is situated on a fieldstone foundation, is clad in weatherboard siding, and is capped by a front gable roof clad with standing seam metal vents. All window openings visible from the public right-of-way



Photograph 1: East elevation of Howard's Creek Mill; looking west. (2017)

Resource Name	Howard's Creek Mill
HPO Survey Site #	LN 0146
Street Address	717 Howards Creek Mill Road
PIN	2694-45-3577
Construction Date(s)	C. 1897
NRHP Recommendation	Eligible A, C

are original and consist of four-over-four double-hung wood sashes and multi-light wood casement windows of various sizes. Some glazing remains intact. Where the glazing is no longer extant, the original wood muntins remain intact. Multiple additions (both historic and modern) have been made to the mill and are located off of the front (south), rear (north), and side (west and east) elevations (Photograph 1). These additions are illustrative of the mill's long lifespan. Each addition represents the mill's continuous need to adapt to changes in technology and is responsible for the mill's century-long life.

The façade (south elevation) is two bays wide and features a one-story full-width shed addition. The addition is clad in wood and a window is located on the east elevation. Research and photographs show that this addition was constructed after 1950 and was once situated on a foundation of wood piers (Photograph 2). A second post-1950 shed addition was constructed onto the front (south side) of the addition. At some point the foundation of this addition was filled in with concrete block. Two additional shed additions pierce the slope of the earlier shed roof additions. These newer additions are clad in corrugated and standing seam metal and are capped by a standing seam metal shed roof. The visible gable from the original structure is clad in wood siding (Photograph 3).



Photograph 2: Howard's Creek Mill, ca. 1950; before additions. (Source: *Stumbling Towards Zion*)



Photograph 3: Facade (south elevation) of Howard's Creek Mill; looking north. (2017)



Photograph 4: East elevation of Howard's Creek mill; looking northwest. (2017)



Photograph 5: Mill dam, pond and race; looking northwest. (2017)

The east elevation is two rooms deep. The first story features a single, two-over-two double hung wood sash window located south of center. A small post-1950 one-story, one-bay shed addition is located north of center and is situated on a concrete and wood post foundation. The addition features three four-over-four double hung wood sash windows one on each elevation. Some of the glazing and muntins are missing. The second story features two equally spaced two-over-two double hung wood sash windows. The southernmost window aligns vertically above the first-floor window. The east elevations of the southern additions are clad in wood siding. The basement level is visible on east elevation only. The original mill structure is situated on a fieldstone foundation, and some of the wood siding is missing from the area directly above the foundation, making visible the original wood frame. Also visible are the southern additions' concrete block foundations (Photographs 1 and 4). The dam, pond, and mill race are located off of the east elevation and remain in fair to good condition (Photograph 5). The 1908 iron and sheet metal overshot mill wheel used to be located off of the east elevation (Haney 1991: 165). Years later, after the mill had been electrified, the old metal mill wheel washed out during a storm. It now sits across Howards Creek Mill Road where the miller's house once stood (Brown 1986: 116) (Photograph 6).

The rear (north elevation) is only partially visible from the public right-of-way. A large two-story fully engaged addition is located off of this elevation and is visible when looking at the east elevation from the bridge over Howard's Creek. The siding on the addition does not quite match up with the siding on the original portion and two wood beams tying the two sections together project out slightly from the east elevation. A one-story shed-roof addition is located off of the two-story addition. Both parts were constructed post-1950. A two-story rear ell roughly the size of the original mill is located off of the rear additions and runs perpendicular to the original mill (Photograph 4).

The west elevation is covered in corrugated metal. A centered sign that reads: "HOWARD'S CREEK MILL" is located



Photograph 6: 1908 overshoot mill wheel located across the road from the mill; looking southeast. (2017)

near the roofline. Running directly below the sign is a wide band of the Purina Brand's trademark checkerboard pattern. A one-story shed roof overhang runs the length of the east elevation (Photographs 7 and 8).

The two-story rear ell is visible when looking at the west elevation. The ell is clad in wood/weatherboard siding and is capped by a side-gable roof of standing seam metal. Purina graphics reading "PURINA CHOWS" and featuring the Purina checkerboard logo are located on the second story of the south elevation. A three-over-three double hung wood sash window is also located on the second story. A one-story half-hipped standing seam metal overhang runs along the west half of the south elevation and wraps around the entire west elevation. A two-story partially enclosed structure with a shed roof projects off of the east half of the south elevation. This structure shelters a two-story metal grain silo (Photographs 7 and 8).

Two outbuildings are partially visible from the public right-of-way. A small, one-story privy (c. 1900) is located west of the mill building (Photograph 9). It is clad in weatherboard siding and is capped by a shed roof of corrugated metal. A large, one-story shed (c. 1930) is located west of the mill building (Photograph 10). The façade (southeast elevation) is clad in corrugated metal and T-11 plywood (later alterations) and is capped by a front-gable roof of standing seam metal. The southwest elevation is clad in wood siding. These outbuildings appear to be historic additions to the property and would be considered contributing structures.

The mill appears to have been significantly altered since its construction. However, many of these alterations are historic additions that took place within the period of significance. Minor alterations have also taken place. Screens have been added to some windows, and others are missing some glazing and muntins. The standing seam metal roof is a modern replacement, and the west elevation has been covered with corrugated metal. In addition, the foundation of the front additions was filled in with concrete blocks.

According to images associated with the real estate listing, much of the original/historic machinery remains intact. Wood ceiling joists and framing appears to be intact and in good to fair condition (Photographs 11-15).



Photograph 7: West elevation of mill and south elevation of ell addition; looking northeast. (2017)



Photograph 8: West elevation of mill and south elevation of ell addition; looking northeast. (2017)



Photograph 9: Privy c.1900; looking northwest (2017)



Photograph 10: Large one-story shed, c. 1930; looking northwest (2017)



Photograph 11: Interior of mill, ceiling rafters. Source: Carolina MLS, 2016. ([https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/717-Howards-Creek-Mill-Rd-Vale-NC-28168/2103284418\\_zpid/](https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/717-Howards-Creek-Mill-Rd-Vale-NC-28168/2103284418_zpid/))



Photograph 12: Interior of mill, ceiling rafters. Source: Carolina MLS, 2016. ([https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/717-Howards-Creek-Mill-Rd-Vale-NC-28168/2103284418\\_zpid/](https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/717-Howards-Creek-Mill-Rd-Vale-NC-28168/2103284418_zpid/))

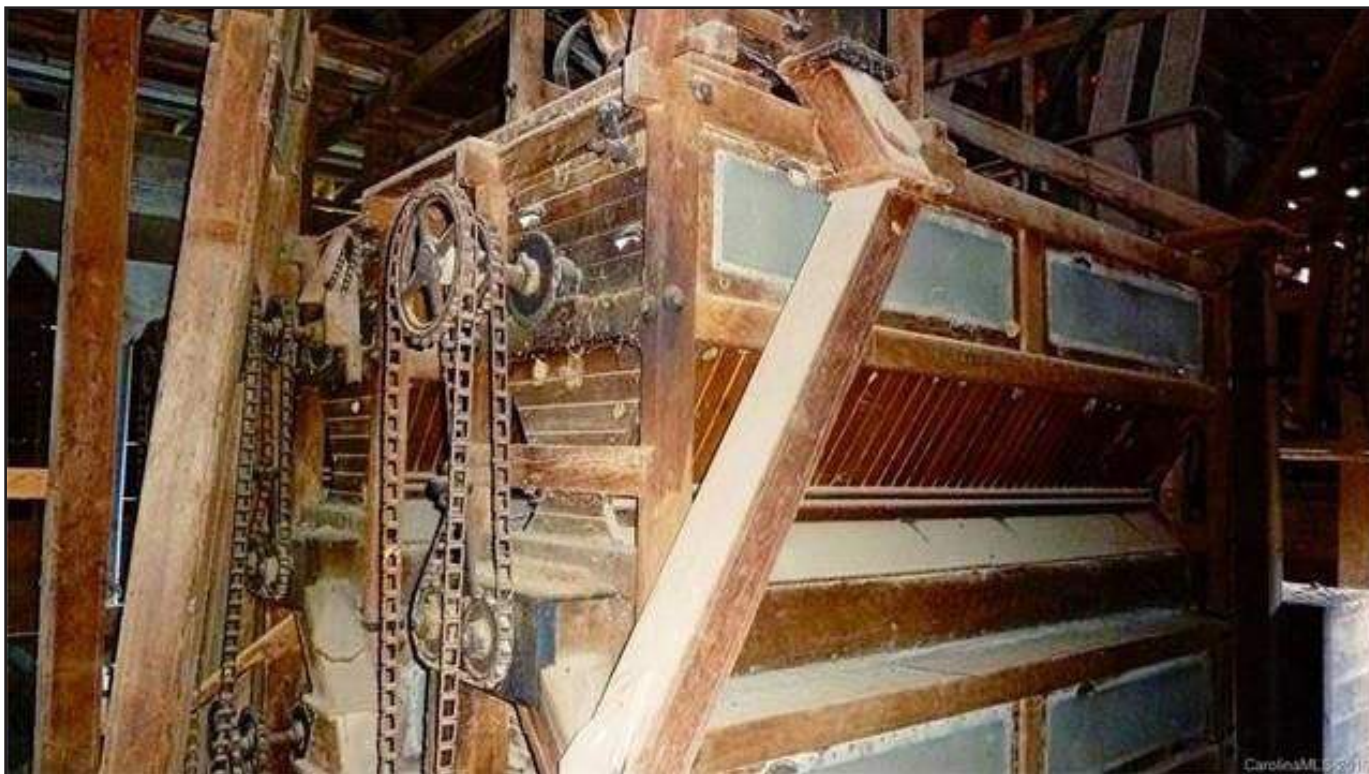




Photograph 13: Interior of mill. Source: Carolina MLS, 2016. ([https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/717-Howards-Creek-Mill-Rd-Vale-NC-28168/2103284418\\_zpid/](https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/717-Howards-Creek-Mill-Rd-Vale-NC-28168/2103284418_zpid/))



Photograph 14: Interior of milling equipment still present in mill. Source: Carolina MLS, 2016. ([https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/717-Howards-Creek-Mill-Rd-Vale-NC-28168/2103284418\\_zpid/](https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/717-Howards-Creek-Mill-Rd-Vale-NC-28168/2103284418_zpid/))



Photograph 15: Interior of milling equipment still present in mill. Source: Carolina MLS, 2016. ([https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/717-Howards-Creek-Mill-Rd-Vale-NC-28168/2103284418\\_zpid/](https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/717-Howards-Creek-Mill-Rd-Vale-NC-28168/2103284418_zpid/))

## History

Howard's Creek Mill is located in western Lincoln County, approximately nine miles northwest of the town of Lincolnton. Located in the hilly, southwestern portion of North Carolina's Piedmont region, Lincoln County comprises a narrow strip, ten miles in width with an average length of 30 miles and totaling 305 square miles (Harpe 2000: 7). The area was originally settled by Scotch-Irish and German pioneers in the mid-18th century, and the county was officially founded during the Revolutionary War (Nixon 1910: 137-138, 143). The Scotch-Irish populated much of the eastern portion of the county near Beatties Ford and the Catawba River, while the German settlers inhabited the land in the center and western part of the county (Harpe 2000: 7). This includes the area where the Howard's Creek Mill was constructed (on the Mosteller Family Homestead). Settlers took advantage of inexpensive land and rich farmland and built small, family farms throughout the county. According to the 1910 Census, Lincoln County had 2,244 farms with an average size of 77 acres. The most popular crops were corn and cotton. Most farms also produced wheat which was mainly used for the family's subsistence. (Lincoln County Heritage 1997: 301).

Howard's Creek Mill was constructed on a small portion of the Mosteller Family's Homeplace. The Mosteller Family has a long history in Lincoln County, but can trace their roots back to Germany. Elias Israel Mosteller grew up on the land near Howards Creek, where his grandfather, Michael Mosteller had settled years before. It was Michael Mosteller who originally had the idea to build Howard's Creek Mill in the 1830s, although his plans did not come to fruition during his lifetime. Michael believed that the shoals of Howards Creek would be the perfect place to establish a mill. If he could dam up the creek, he would be able to harness the water power for the purpose of milling (Haney 1991: 163) (Brosnan 1991: 5).

Years later in 1897, Michael's grandson, Elias (Eli) Israel Mosteller, revived this plan. A teacher by trade, Eli decided to pursue a new venture in hopes of securing greater financial stability for his growing family. At the time, there were no functioning grist mills left in western Lincoln County, and Eli hoped to construct the mill in order to serve the farming community in the area. Eli did not have enough capital to start the mill on his own, so he convinced friends and family to join him and form a corporation, which they called the Howard's Creek Milling Company. The company was formally organized on June 26, 1897 and consisted of Elias I. Mosteller, David J. Beam, Charles A. Leonard, John E. Hoover, Cephas Cole Hoover, and Thomas Monroe Hoover. Leonard was elected president of the company, Mosteller, secretary and treasurer, and Beam, director (Haney 1991: 164).

Company director, D.J. Beam, who was a lumberman and millwright, sold the company the building materials and oversaw the construction of the mill. The company agreed that they would hire 2 horses and a wagon for sixty and twenty-five cents a day respectively. By December 1898, the mill house had been built, the mill machinery installed, and the dam constructed across the shoals of the creek. All of this was completed for a cost of \$1,842.16 (Haney 1991: 164).

That same year, Eli Mosteller sold his partners three-fourths interest in the "mill tract," which comprised approximately four acres along Howards Creek and the area surrounding the mill site. Eli retained one-fourth interest. The three Hoover brothers acted jointly and purchased one-fourth interest for \$100. Beam and Leonard also each purchased one-fourth interest for \$100 per person (Haney 1991: 164) (Lincoln County Deeds). In 1901, John Goins was hired as miller and served in this capacity until 1922 when his brother O. "Aus" Goins took over. In 1906, the company constructed a miller's house a few hundred feet down the creek. This building is no longer extant. After O. "Aus" Goins, the Hoover brothers took over as millers and remained until the mid-1930s.

The mill was a quick success, and as Eli had hoped, farmers came from as far away as South Mountain to have their grain and corn ground into flour, cornmeal, or feed (Bray 1981: 1). It was so successful in fact, that by 1905, Eli had made enough money from the mill to purchase Beam's interest in the company back. In 1912, he was able to purchase Leonard's as well. This restored three-fourths interest to Eli and the Mosteller family. But, like any business, the mill faced times of misfortune as well. In 1899, rainfall washed the original wood dam away and it had to be quickly replaced. The second wood dam lasted until the flood of 1916 washed it away. This dam was replaced with a concrete dam, which still exists, but had to be repaired in 1929 and 1933. Originally, a roller mill was installed and powered by a turbine in the creek. In 1908, it was replaced with an overshot mill wheel of iron and sheet metal (Haney 1991: 165). Years later, after the mill had been electrified, the old metal mill wheel washed out during a storm. It now sits across Howards Creek Mill Road where the miller's house once stood (Brown 1986: 116) (Bray 1981: 1). During the Great Depression, the mill continued to be productive, but crop prices plummeted, and local people often asked to pay for their milling on credit. Mosteller obliged (Haney 1991: 200).

Eli Mosteller passed away in 1935, and his son, Dan F. Mosteller took over controlling interest in the mill in 1939 (Haney 1991: 164) (Lincoln County Deeds). Mosteller soon hired John Abernathy as miller. Abernathy worked as miller for five years and during his time there, trained Frank Carpenter, who became sole owner of Howard's Creek Mill in 1951 (Bray 1981: 1) (Lincoln County Deeds). Carpenter operated the mill until 1979 when he sold the property to David and Celeste Lutz. David Lutz only operated the mill for a short while and quickly sold the property to Joe David Scronce, Sr. and his son Ricky Joe Scronce in 1981 (Lincoln County Deeds). In 1987, the Scronce's sold the mill property to Garland Ray Cloninger and his wife, Ruth B. Cloninger (Lincoln County Deeds). The widowed Ruth B. Cloninger gave the property to her relative James Erik Distasio in 2009 (Lincoln County Deeds). Distasio continued running the mill, cleaning grass seed for about twenty farmers (Turbyfill). In 2000, he began to use the space as a haunted house during the Halloween season (Grano: 2005). In 2016, Distasio sold the property to David M. Dull who owns the mill today. At the time of this report, the property was for sale and no longer operating as a mill.

In order to remain in business well into the twenty-first century, Howard's Creek Mill had to adapt and transform along with society and its rapidly changing technologies. In 1941, the mill was electrified, and by 1951, the mill was powered solely by electricity and the wheel became obsolete (Brown 1986: 116). The mid-1950s marked a real change for the mill, when the Food and Drug Administration set in place strict restrictions on making flour and meal. These changes were too difficult for such a small operation to comply with, so the mill began to clean seed and grind feed grain instead (Bray 1981: 11).

## Architectural Context

For a century after the Civil War, North Carolina remained predominately rural despite the rapid industrialization of the state. As late as 1900 more than 90 percent of North Carolinians were country dwellers. In much of the Piedmont region, including Lincoln County, many of these farmers ran small operations with the goal of sustaining their families and perhaps making a small profit (Bishir and Southern 2003: 42). Once they had harvested their crops, local farmers needed somewhere to take their grain and corn to be ground into flour and cornmeal. According to architectural historian's Catherine Bishir and Michael Southern,

Essential to rural life were grist- and sawmills, from the 18th c. well into the 20th c. They served as centers of social as well as economic activity and were often accompanied by other small industries and a country store (Bishir and Southern 2003: 45).

In 1820, 71 grist mills were operating in Lincoln County. By 1840, the number of grist mills in the county had increased to 90. A decade later, however, the situation had changed. The 1850 census recorded only 18 grist mills and by 1860 only 15 remained (Brown 1986: 254, 266). After the Civil War most North Carolina Farmers were quickly able to return to pre-war levels of crop production (Brown 1986: 268). The number of grist mills also rebounded. In 1867, there were 25 grist mills in Lincoln County, and by 1884, there were 32. This rebound did not last long, however, and the number of mills declined soon after with business directories in 1897 listing only 20 mills (Brown 1986: 270). During the late nineteenth century, industry in the county and the Piedmont region continued to grow. Small cotton mills rebounded quickly after the Civil War and Lincoln County also became heavily involved in the textile, tobacco and furniture industries after 1880 (Brown 1986: 268). The textile industry became especially prominent and the physical legacy of this endeavor can still be seen throughout the area. Many of the large, brick mills, most of which were constructed after the 1880s, are still extant, although underutilized (Brown 1986: 46). As prevalent and important as grist and roller mills were in the nineteenth century, today few remain. According to the HPOWEB GIS service, Howard's Creek Mill is the only water-powered grist mill that has been identified in Lincoln County. One previously identified roller mill, named Banner Roller Mills, is located in Lincolnton, Lincoln County, North Carolina.

Banner Roller Mills, a contributing resource in the Lincolnton Commercial Historic District (LN0572), is located approximately seven miles southeast from Howard's Creek Mill and was owned and operated by the Ramseur Brothers. The c. 1908 mill building was a "three-story, weatherboarded frame, flour mill with an attached one-story brick engine house" (Phillips 2005: 7-39). The building was originally powered by a coal-fired steam engine, which was later replaced by a diesel engine and then by electricity. The Ramseur brothers only operated the mill for a few years before being bought out by a corporation. The mill continued to operate as a flour mill until the 1960s, after which it was began operating as a feed mill. When a 1977 fire partially destroyed the mill and mill equipment, the building's life as a mill ended. Today it houses the local Lincolnton business, Hoyle's Hearth and Home.

Comparatively, Howard's Creek Mill is an equally significant and more intact resource. Like Banner Roller Mills, Howard's Creek Mill is a rare, extant example of the once vital grist or roller mill building type. Unlike Banner Roller Mills, Howard's Creek Mill was originally constructed as a water-powered grist mill. Howard's Creek Mill served the local community, whereas Banner Roller Mills was a larger commercial venture. Both mills maintained a long period of significance by adapting to societal shifts, as additions and alterations were made to both buildings so they could remain in operation. They are both important example of the milling history of Lincoln County.

Since no other previously identified water-powered grist mill was found in Lincoln County, architectural comparisons were sought in surrounding counties. Murray's Mill, a contributing resource to the National

Register listed Murray's Mill Historic District, serves as an early-twentieth-century example of a grist mill. Located in Catawba County, approximately 25 miles northwest of Howard's Creek Mill, Murray's Mill Historic District includes sixteen contributing resources, with the c. 1913 mill building being the centerpiece. The fifteen additional buildings are those associated with milling operations and the Murray family. The 1913 mill building replaced a late-nineteenth-century mill building located in the same place. As described in the National Register Nomination for Murray's Mill Historic District,

The two-story-with-attic, frame building is two-bays wide by two-bays deep and rests on a poured concrete foundation. Covered with a gable roof, it was expanded on the northeast gable end by one bay. A recessed entrance and shed porch carry along the full northwest elevation of the building (Hood and Cross 1979: 7-3).

Murray's Mill Historic District is largely significant as a complete mill complex with a number of intact resources. The buildings are simply constructed and each contributing building is representative of its building type.

Comparatively, Howard's Creek Mill is an equally significant and intact grist mill. Like Murray's Mill, Howard's Creek Mill is a simple two-story, front-gable frame structure clad in weatherboard that serves as good example of a vernacular grist mill. Both mills are rare, extant examples of this once vital industry and resource type. Murray's Mill and Howard's Creek Mill both maintained a long period of significance by adapting to societal shifts, as additions and alterations were made to both buildings so they could remain in operation. Howard's Creek Mill is an important example of the milling history of Lincoln County as Murray's Mill is to Catawba County.

## National Register of Historic Places Evaluation

Based on research completed for this report, JMT recommends the Howard's Creek Mill as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The property was previously surveyed by the State of North Carolina and remains in fair condition. The resource maintains its integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association. Despite the mill being in fair condition and its multiple additions and alterations, the building retains a high degree of integrity. These changes represent the building's long life as an active mill (ca. 1897-2000) and its attempts to adapt to technological and societal changes. Howard's Creek Mill is a two-story, frame mill building with a front-gable roof and weatherboard siding. The mill serves as a representative example of nineteenth-century grist mills once a common building type in the Piedmont region and Lincoln County. As one of an extremely scarce number of intact examples, Howard's Creek Mill illustrates traditional architectural forms associated with southern agriculture and industry.

Howard's Creek Mill is **eligible** for the National Register under Criterion A (event). *To be eligible under Criterion A, a resource must be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.* Howard's Creek Mill, is an intact and rare remaining example of a traditional local architectural form (grist mill) associated with southern agriculture and industry. The once common, now rare grist mill filled a vital role in the lives of rural southern farmers. Howard's Creek Mill provided a place for small, local farmers in western Lincoln County to have their grain and corn ground, which they then sold or kept for personal use. Changing technologies and the movement towards other industries saw the decline of the local grist mill. Howard's Creek Mill demonstrates responses to these changes through its multiple additions and alterations. Comparatively, the Laboratory Historic District and the Eureka Manufacturing Company Cotton Mill, constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries respectively, are equally representative of the industrial history in Lincoln County and the Piedmont region.

Howard's Creek Mill is **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion B (person). *To be eligible under Criterion B, a resource must be associated with the lives of significant persons in our past.* Howard's Creek Mill is not directly associated with historically significant family members.

Howard's Creek Mill is **eligible** for the National Register under Criterion C (architecture). *To be eligible under Criterion C, a resource must embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.* Howard's Creek Mill is an intact and rare remaining example of a traditional local architectural form (grist mill) associated with southern agriculture and industry. Comparatively, the Laboratory Historic District and the Eureka Manufacturing Company Cotton Mill, are equally intact examples of common mill buildings. Howard's Creek Mill, however, is now one of only a few remaining examples of its type.

Howard's Creek Mill is **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion D (potential to yield information). *To be eligible under Criterion D, a resource must yield or be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.* The nineteenth-century mill is unlikely to contribute significant information pertaining to building technology or historical documentation not otherwise accessible from other extant resources and written records.





## References

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