

# FORTRESS WEST POINT



West Point  
**READY** 

READY TO SERVE. READY TO LEAD.



Artillery uniform button unearthed at Fort Wyllis.

## FORTRESS WEST POINT

After the Battles of Lexington and Concord on 19 April 1775, one of the first military acts taken by the Continental Congress, upon convening in May 1775, was to appoint a committee “to consider what posts are necessary to be occupied in the Colony of New York.” They named then Delegate George Washington to serve on the committee. From the outset, the strategic significance of the Hudson River was recognized. Based on the committee’s report, Congress resolved that positions should be fortified “on each side of Hudson’s River and batteries erected in such a manner as will most effectively prevent any vessels passing” up the river. Control of the waterway by the British Navy would cut the colonies in half. Fortifications—Fort Constitution—began in the fall of 1775 on Constitution Island. In January 1778, soldiers crossed the frozen river and staked out positions on the dominant point of land jutting out from the west bank—the “west point” of the Hudson. Glaciers had carved a narrow channel making an “S-shaped” curve between there and Constitution Island. From that day to this, the American flag has never ceased flying over West Point, bestowing on it the honor of being the oldest, continuously existing garrison in the U.S. Army, the post Washington called “the key of America.”

## NATIONAL TREASURE

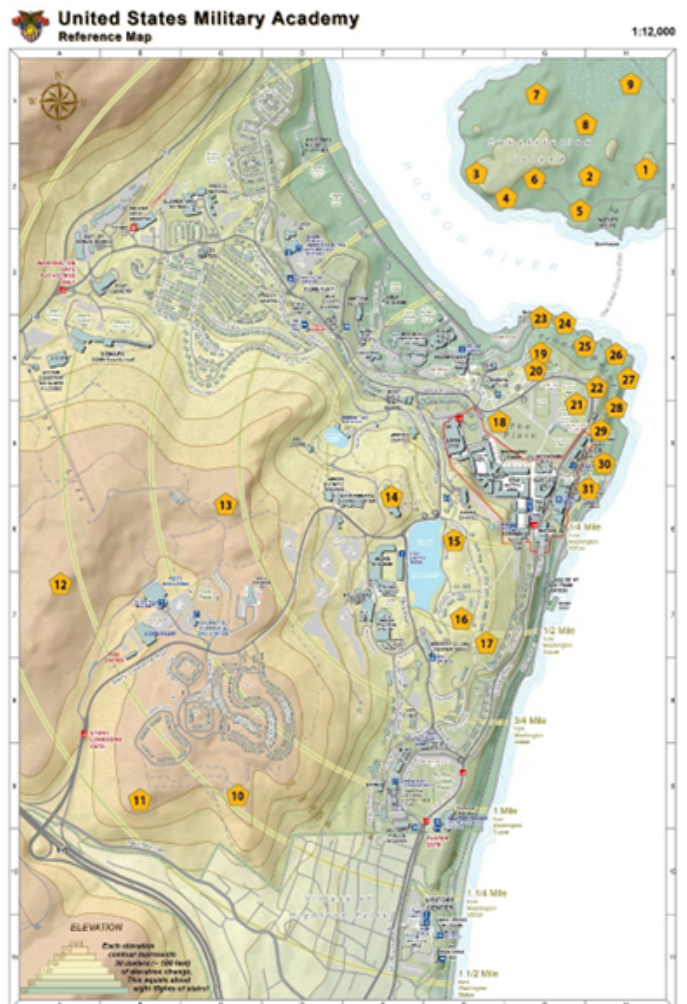
The Revolutionary War-era West Point fortification system is being meticulously reborn through the Fortress West Point Project. Through this renewal, the goal is to preserve the George Washington fortification system in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution (1775-1783), which includes several defense fortification positions being resurrected during the semi-quincentennial period. It is fortuitous that so many traces of the military fortress — key to winning our independence — remain at the United States Military Academy, itself so central a factor in maintaining that freedom. The ghost of the fortress undergirds the strength of the Academy.



Fort Clinton

## AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY FORTIFICATIONS

The purpose of the strategic plan to preserve Fortress West Point is twofold: 1. To provide detailed plans for preserving over thirty iconic American Revolutionary sites comprising Fortress West Point constructed between 1775-1783 before the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in 2025, including the celebration of the establishment of the U.S. Army and its first Commander in chief, George Washington. 2. To preserve the fortress that General Washington identified as the most critical to America’s Revolutionary War effort—by preventing the British from cutting the New England from the Middle Atlantic states along the line of the Hudson. This was the iconic site of Major General Benedict Arnold’s treason against America.





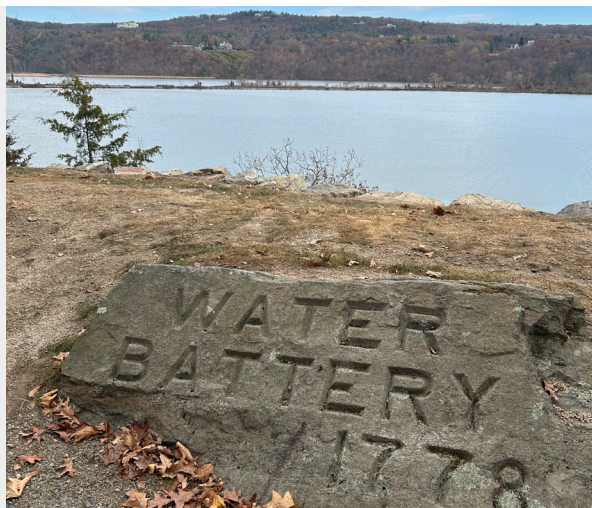
Key objectives of the restoration project include complete comprehensive archaeological investigations while preserving select structures of the sites. Cadets will be involved in activities like the construction of the trails and viewing platforms as well as an augmented digital staff ride of the Fortress West Point.

#### Fortifications & Redoubts Legend:

1. Redoubt 5
2. Redoubt 6
3. Redoubt 7
4. Hill Cliff/Greaton's Battery
5. Tents/Barracks/Huts
6. Gravel Hill Battery
7. Roman's Battery
8. Fort Constitution
9. Marine Battery
10. Redoubt 1
11. Redoubt 2
12. Redoubt 3
13. Redoubt 4
14. Fort Putnam
15. Fort Webb
16. Fort Wyllis
17. Fort Meigs
18. The Plain
19. Sherburne's Redoubt
20. The Great Chain
21. Hudson River Interpretation
22. Fort Clinton
23. Captain Gee's House Foundation
24. Gee's Supply Landing
25. Chain Battery
26. Lanthorn Battery
27. Revolutionary Supply Trail
28. Water Battery
29. Battery Knox
30. Kosciuszko's Garden / Trail
31. Moore House - Washington's Headquarters

### LINKING PAST AND FUTURE

Preservation work on five of these historic sites were completed in the summer and fall of 2024: Fort Clinton, Fort Meigs, Chain Battery, Lanthorn Battery, and Water Battery. Reconstruction and preservation of these Forts, Redoubts, and Batteries will improve access to these sites by augmenting the existing educational activities at the Academy related to Fortress West Point's role in the American Revolution. These fortifications will offer the community and visitors the opportunity to be forever linked to the beginnings of one of the most iconic institutions in the United States, an institution that played a pivotal part in the founding of our nation.



Water Battery



Lanthorn Battery



Lanthorn Battery

*"Many decades of erosion of Fortress West Point have left the 'key of America' in a state of disrepair. Unless corrected, many sites will be lost forever in our lifetime. The Fortress West Point Strategic Plan signals the beginning of a much-needed effort to save these unique sites built by our country's dedicated American Revolutionary soldiers."*

— Lieutenant General (Ret) Dave Palmer

USMA Class of 1956, Superintendent USMA 1986-1991

Author of *The River and the Rock: The History of Fortress West Point, 1775-1783*





Photo: Lee Ross '73

# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

**West Point Fortifications Restoration Project Fund ..... \$5 million**

Funding Requirement per Fortification..... \$250,000 - \$2.5 million

Chain Battery *(completed)*

Water Battery *(completed)*

Lantern Battery *(completed)*

Fort Clinton *(completed)*

Fort Meigs *(completed)*

MARGIN OF EXCELLENCE



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as of January 15, 2025