

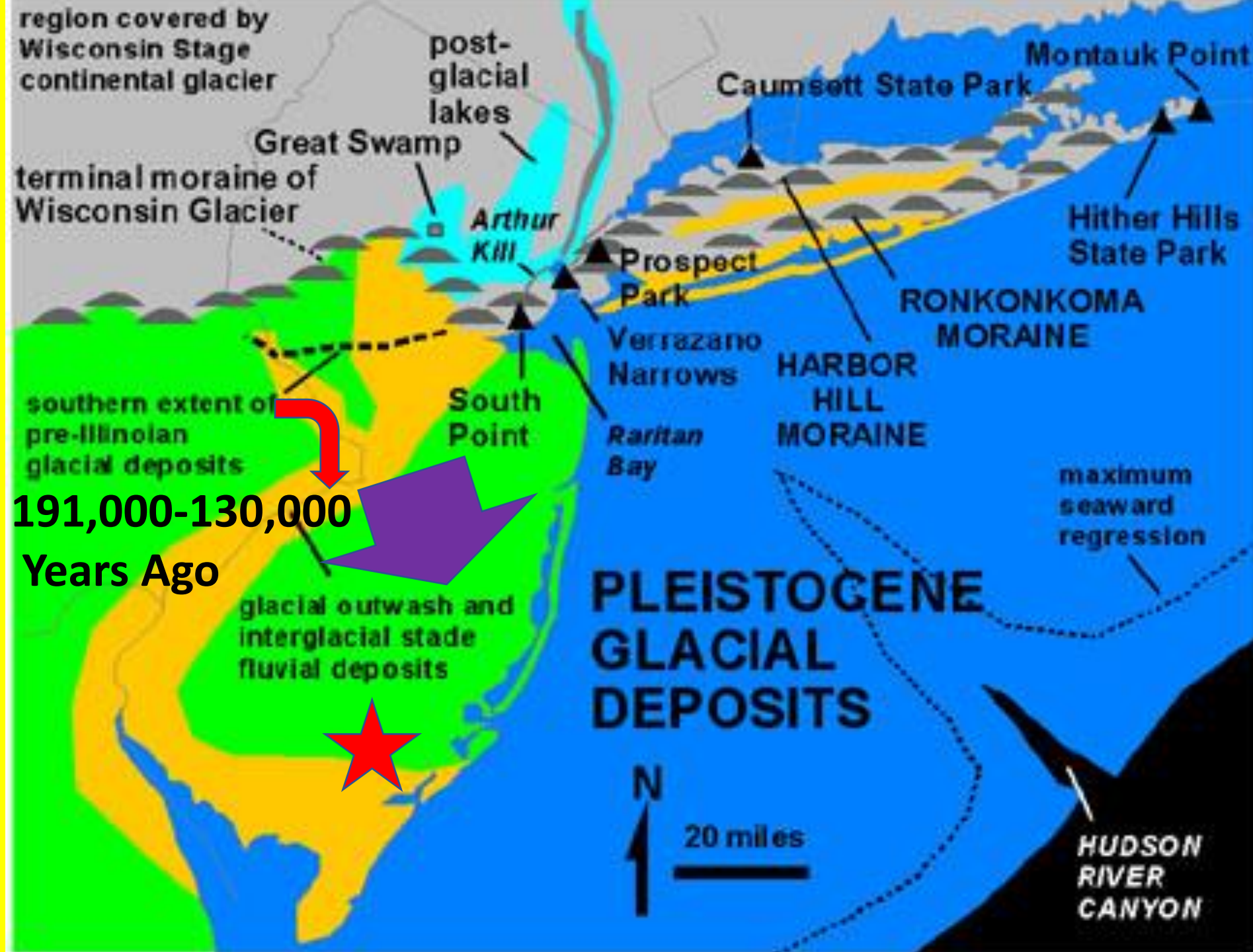
The English Creek Waterway: Its Early Mills and the Stream That Powered Them – 200,000 Years Ago to the Present

Col. Richard Somers Chapter, NJS SAR

May 13, 2021

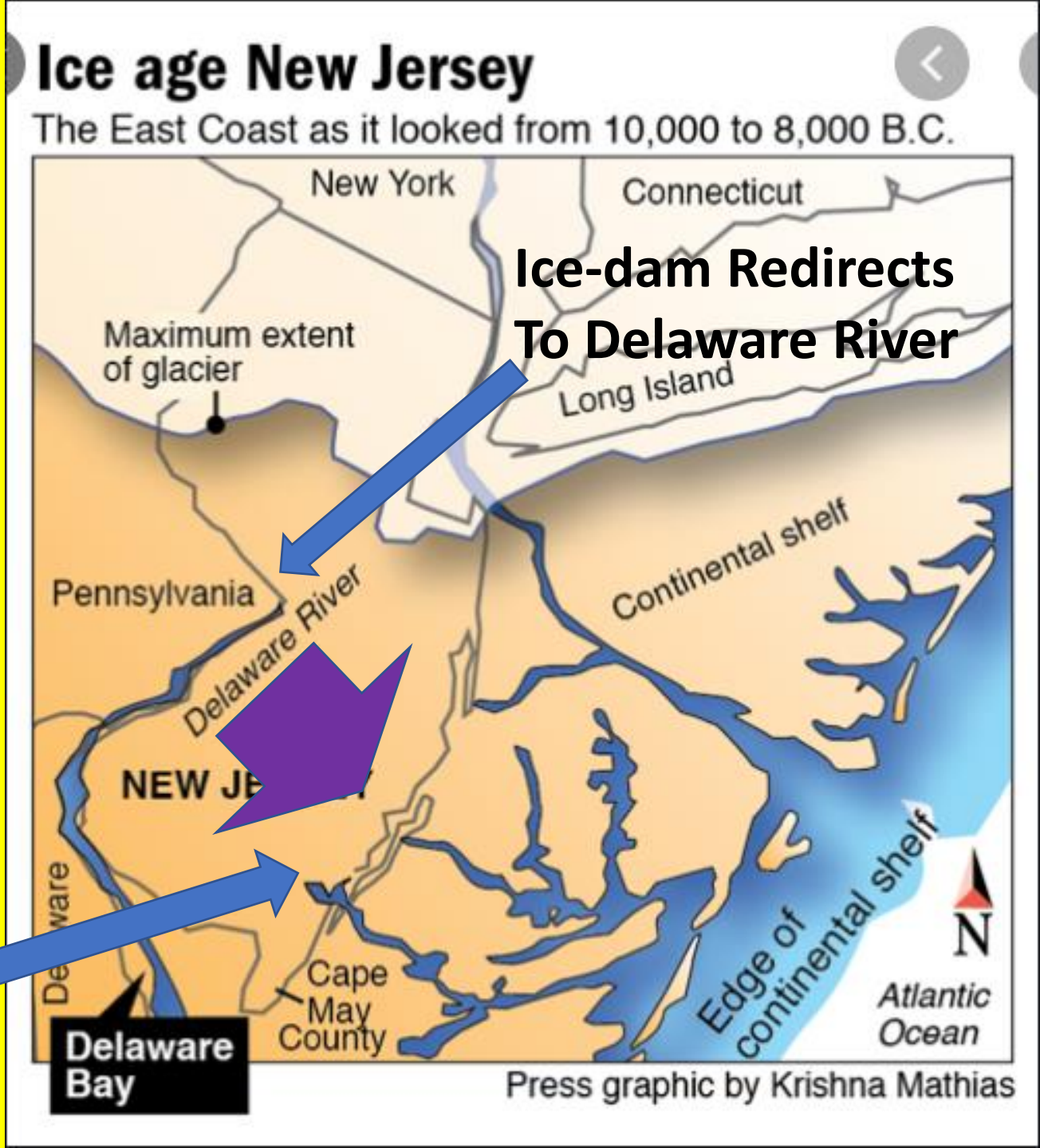
Norm Goos, Presenter

The Wisconsin Ice Age, from 10,000 to 75,000 years ago, produced an ice sheet over northern NJ that was 2000 to 5000 feet thick. Maybe a few mastodons roamed here?
(Found on www)



We Start By Taking A Ride Back In Time 75,000 to 10,000 Years During The Wisconsin Glacier Age

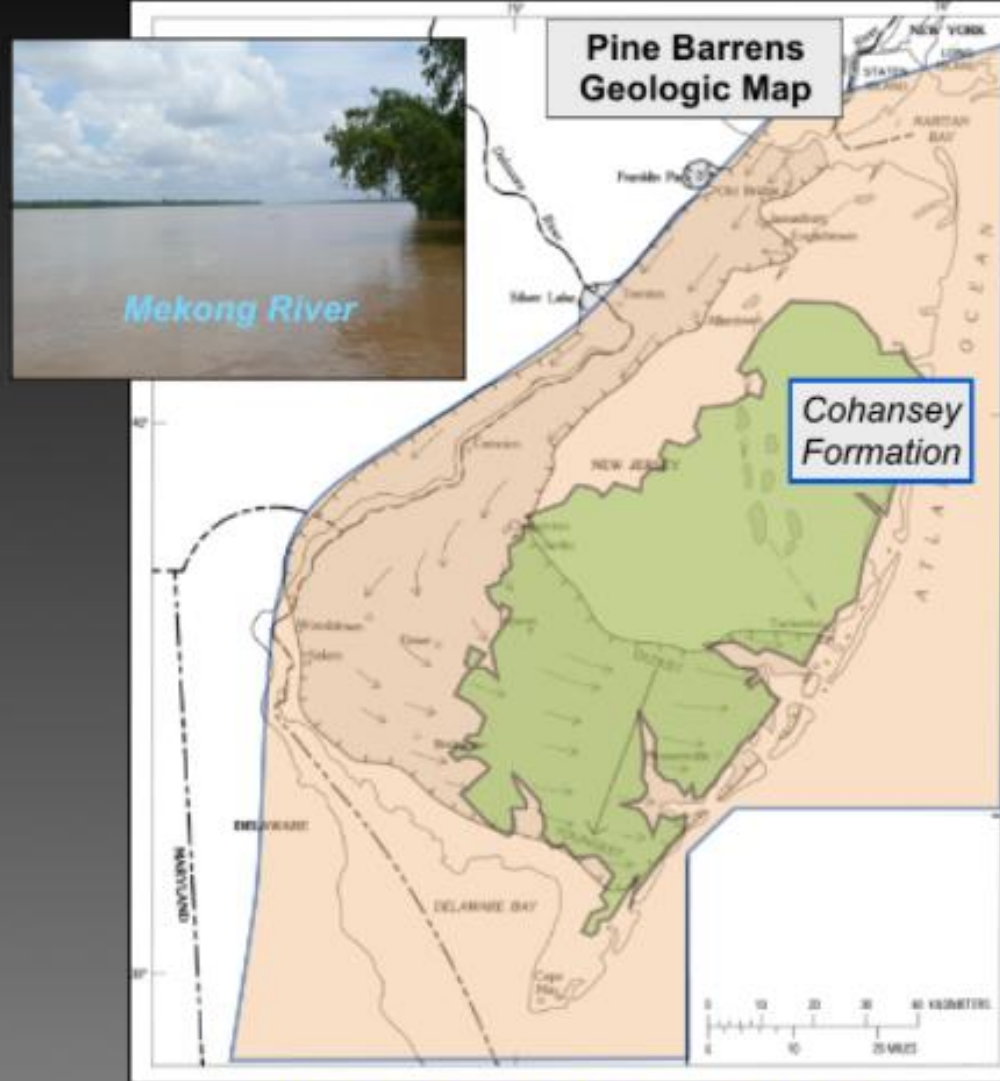
English Creek on the Great Egg Harbor River in 10,000 BC (note its 60-mile length to the continental shelf)



PINE BARRENS SEDIMENT

proto-Hudson River

≥10 MILLION



adapted from Owens & Minard 1979 : D17, Fig. 15

Courtesy of Prof.
Mark Demitroff

All of middle and southern NJ was covered by glacial melt water, depositing hundreds of feet of sand over millions of years.

The GEH River was once much wider when the ground was frozen. The 1-1 ½ mile wide river channels (blue) and up to ½ mile wide creeks were sculpted by snowmelt floods over frozen ground during the last Ice Age, which were filled with windblown sand. Then peat moss accumulated as the climate warmed and Atlantic white cedar lined the channels (black). Imagine the volume of water that must have flowed to cut these wide water paths??!! (NJ Topo Map - DEP)





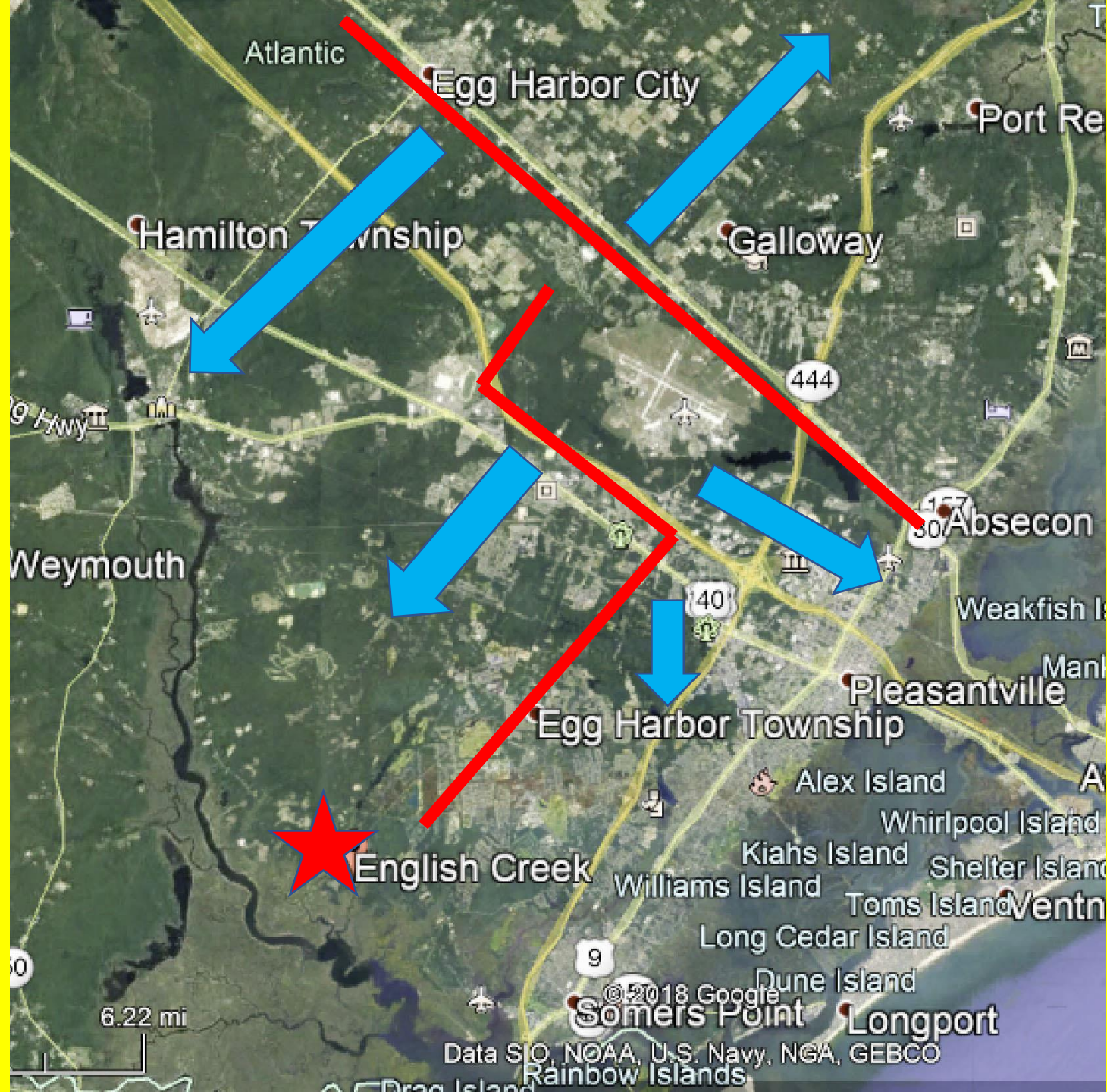
**Drone 2019
photo by John
Dilks' nephew
– name
unknown.**

**Consider the
amount of
Ice Age melt
water it
took to cut
out this
creek-bed!**

English Creek and the Great Egg Harbor River

The **RED LINES** are the higher watershed divides that direct the water flow downhill. The **BLUE ARROWS** denote the direction of waterway flow.

Source: Google Maps



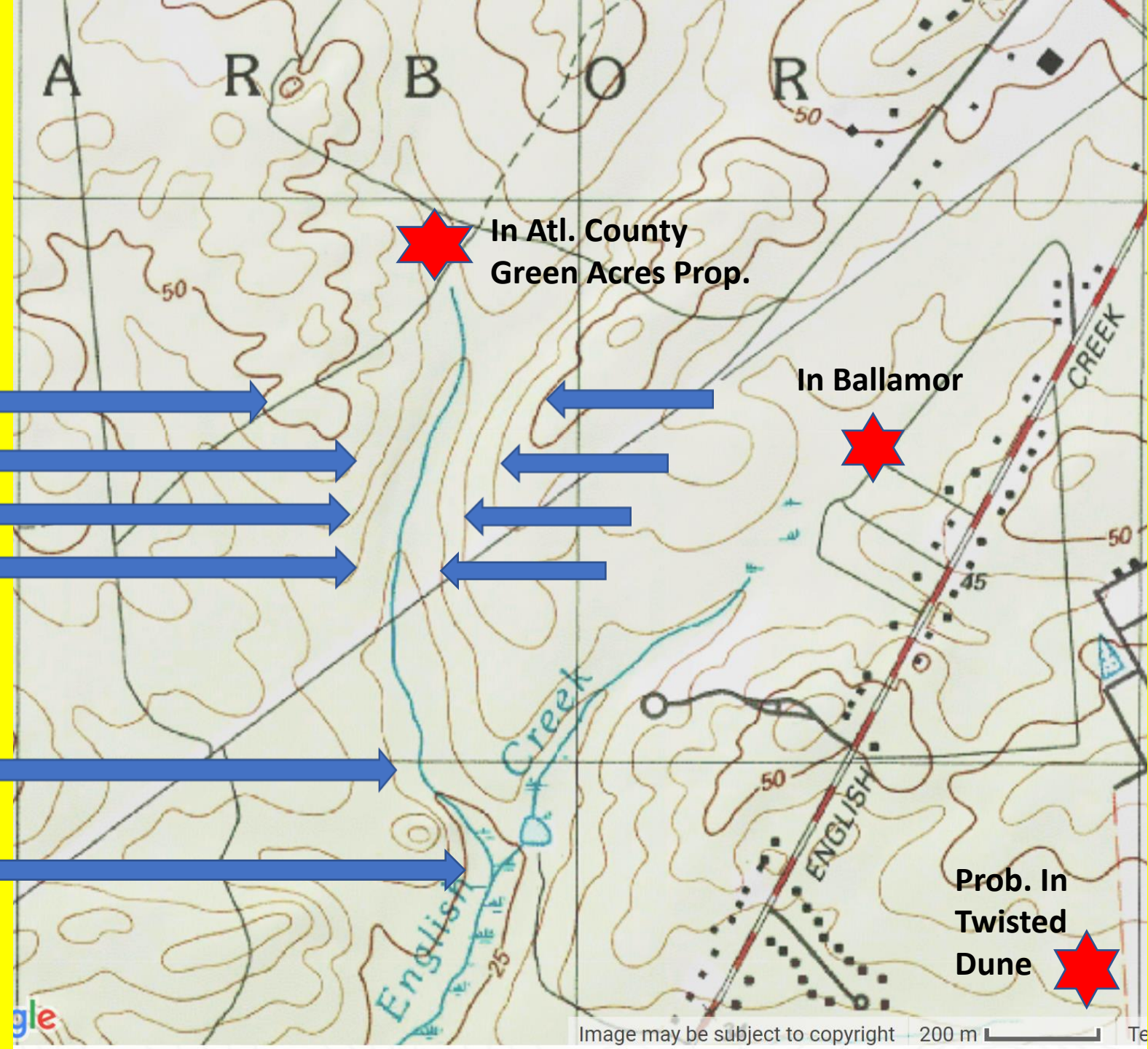
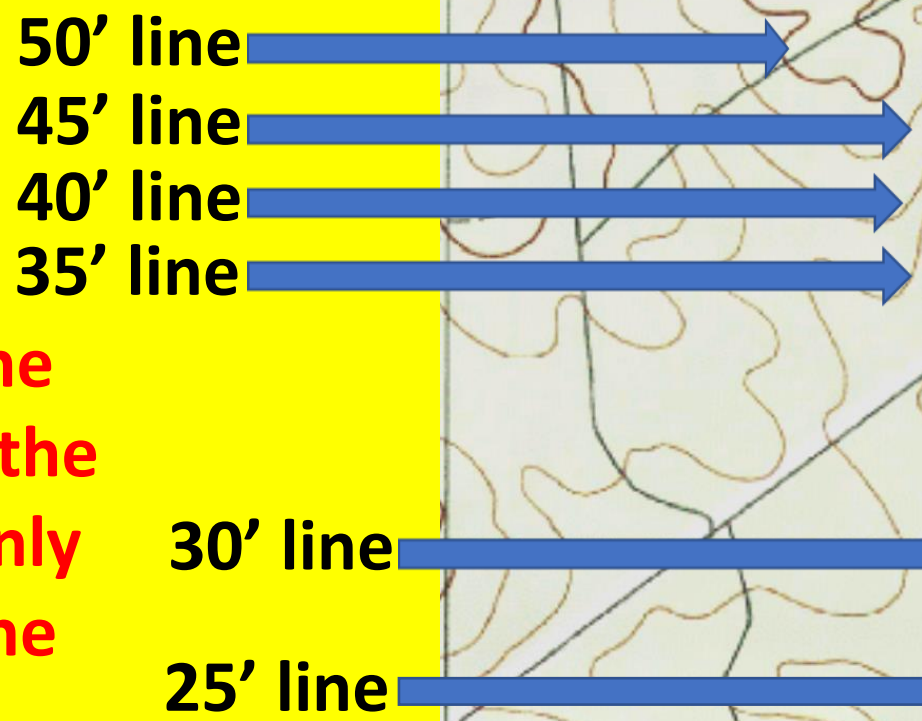


1828-1830 Thomas Gordon Map showing Aaron Somers' 2 mills and English's mill. This map shows the larger creek and river details plus "all" the mills in NJ by marking them with a circle with 8 rays.

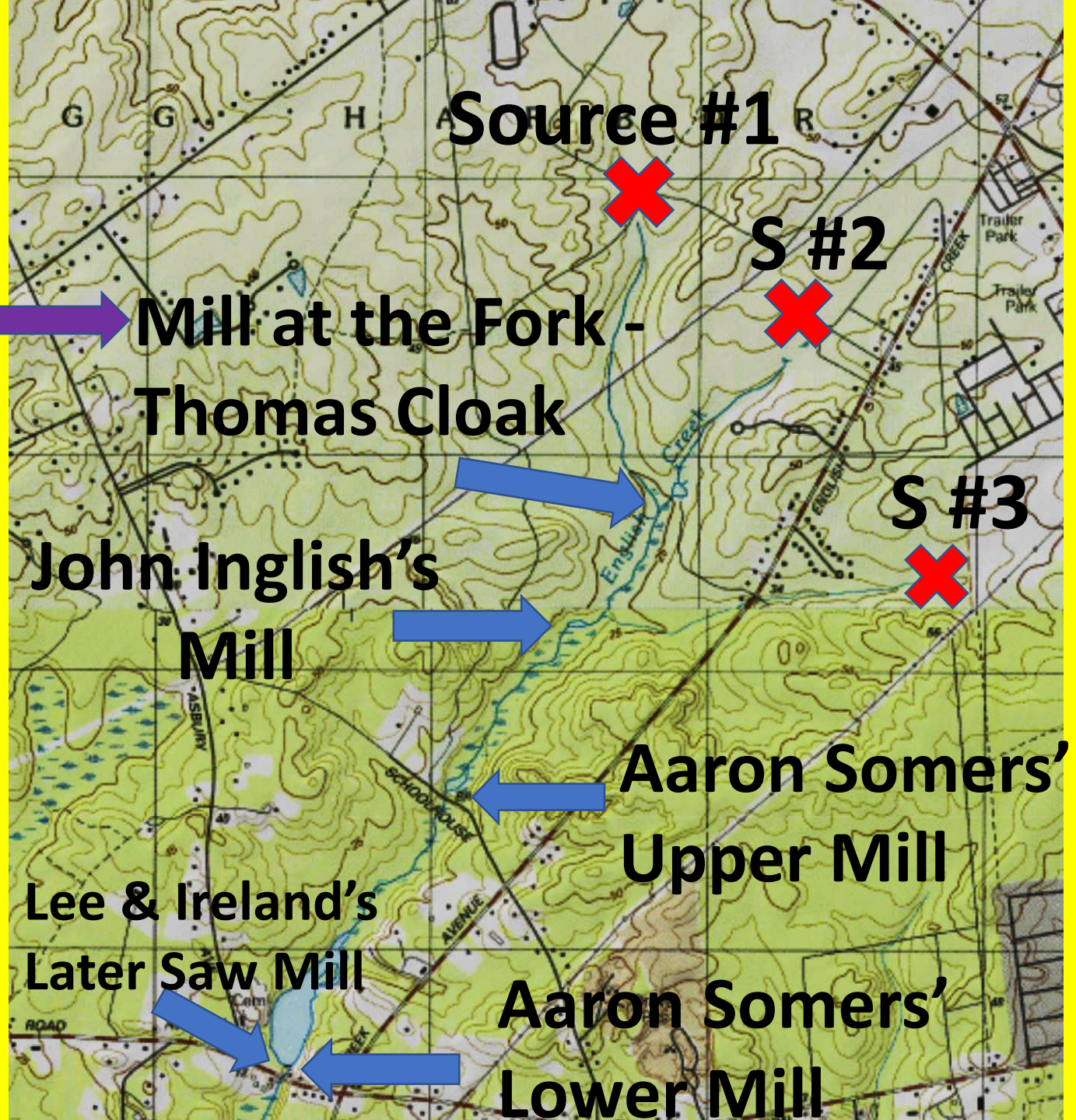
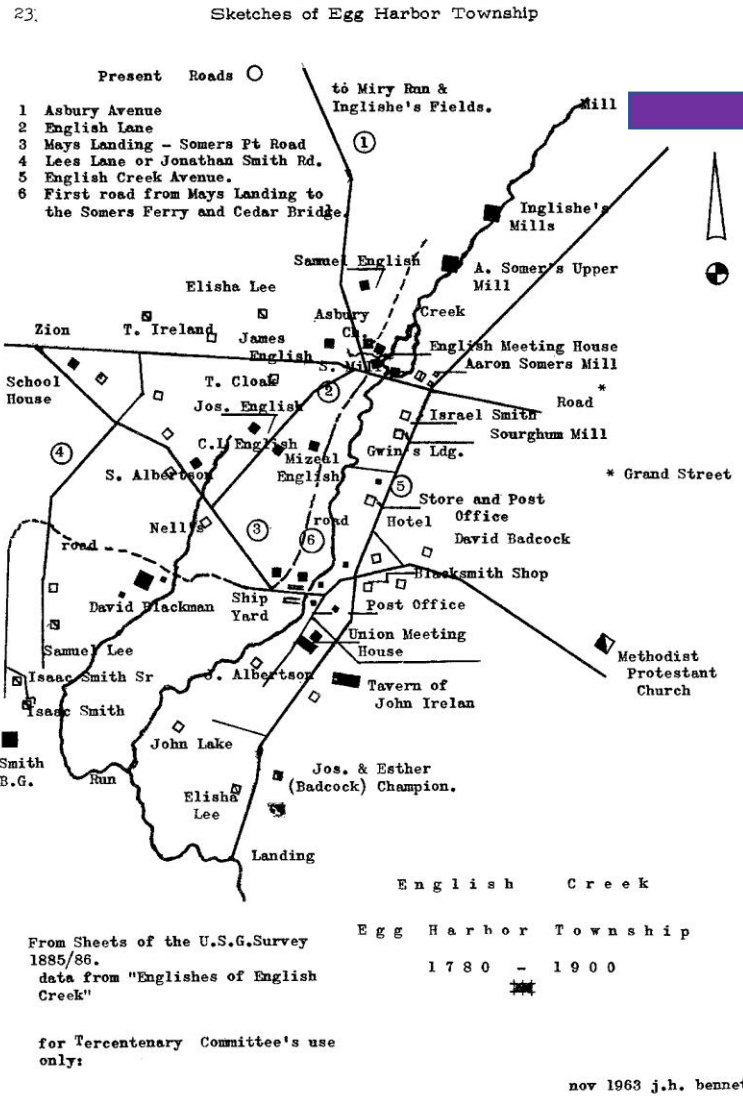
Source: www.westjerseyhistory.org
Also see Nova Ceasarea published by Princeton Univ. Press at ACHS or the Mays Landing Library Branch

Topographical map of three of English Creek's main sources (USGS)

★ Note that the sources occur in the 35' "channels" only 5' deeper than the surrounding 40' "canyon wall" terrain!



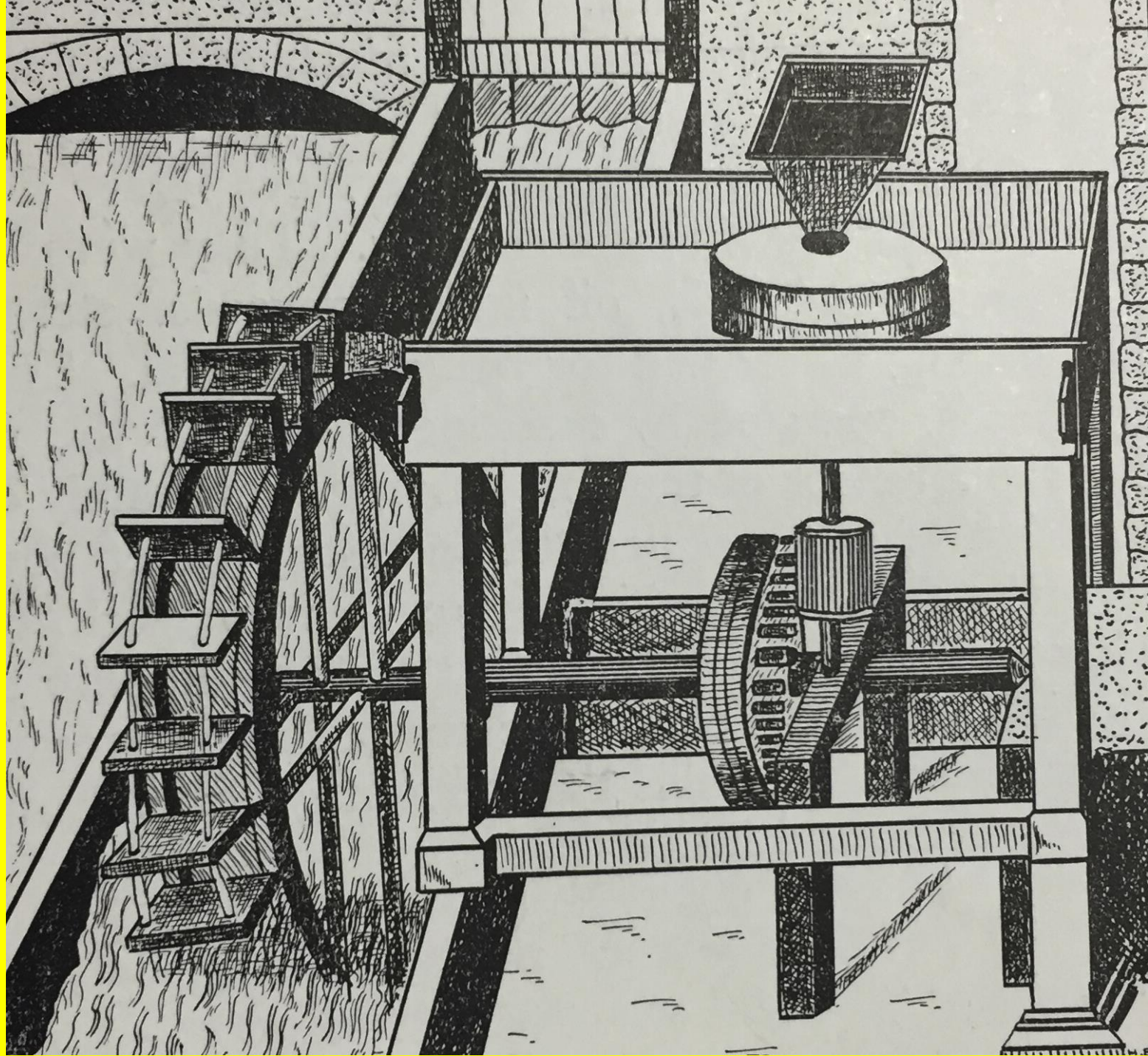
The Upper Creek: The Sources and 5 Mills

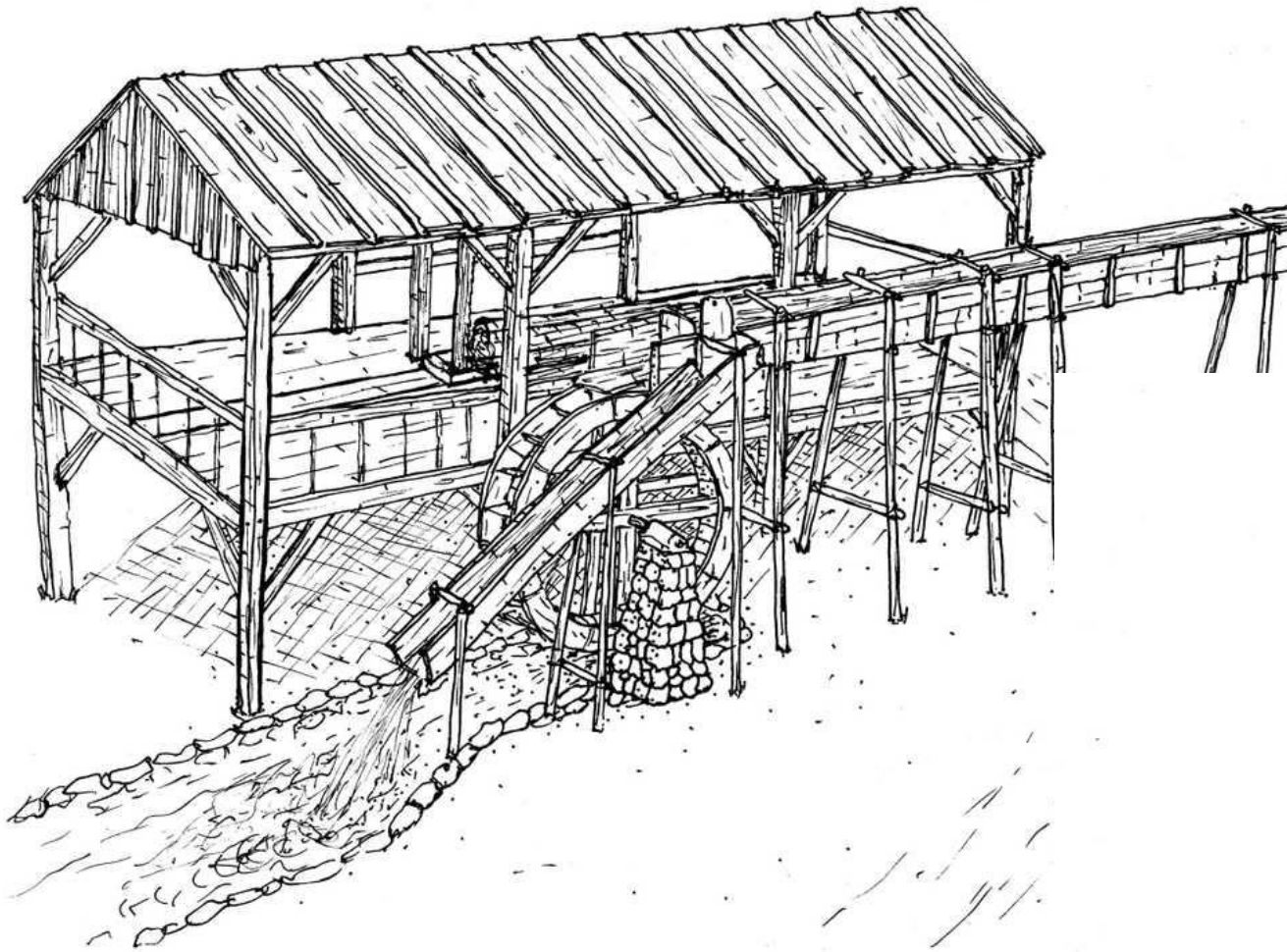


The Grist or Flouring Mill

**WHY Build a Run Next
to a Dam?**

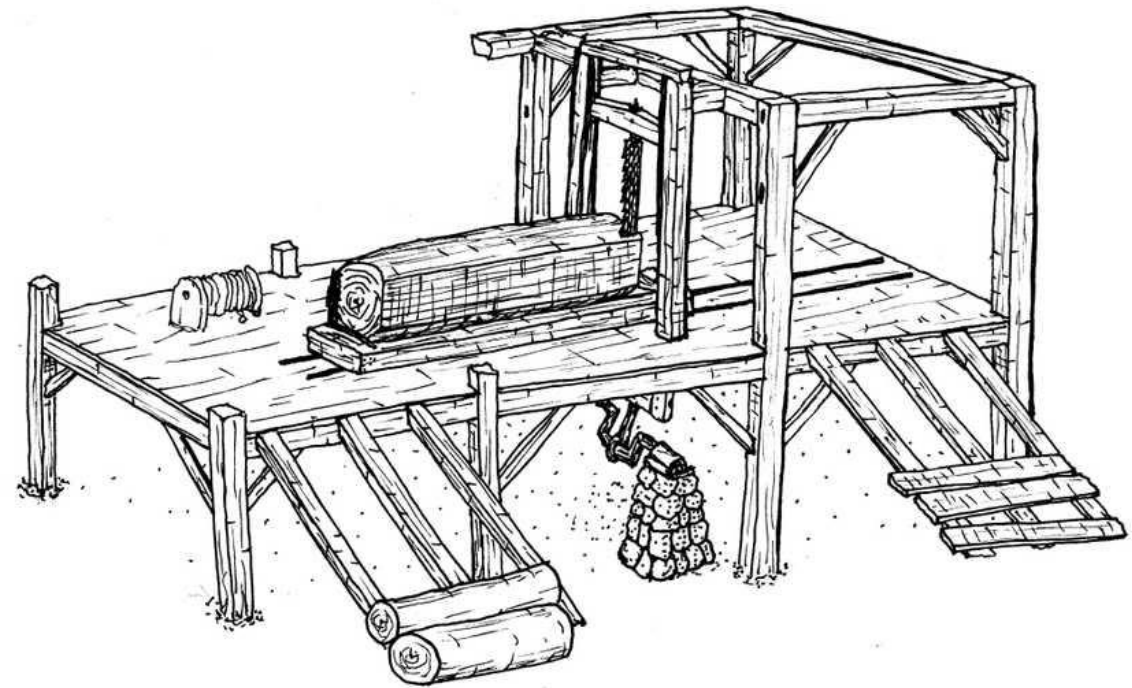
- Uses less water
- Water level in pond lasts longer
- Water moves faster
- Wheel turns faster



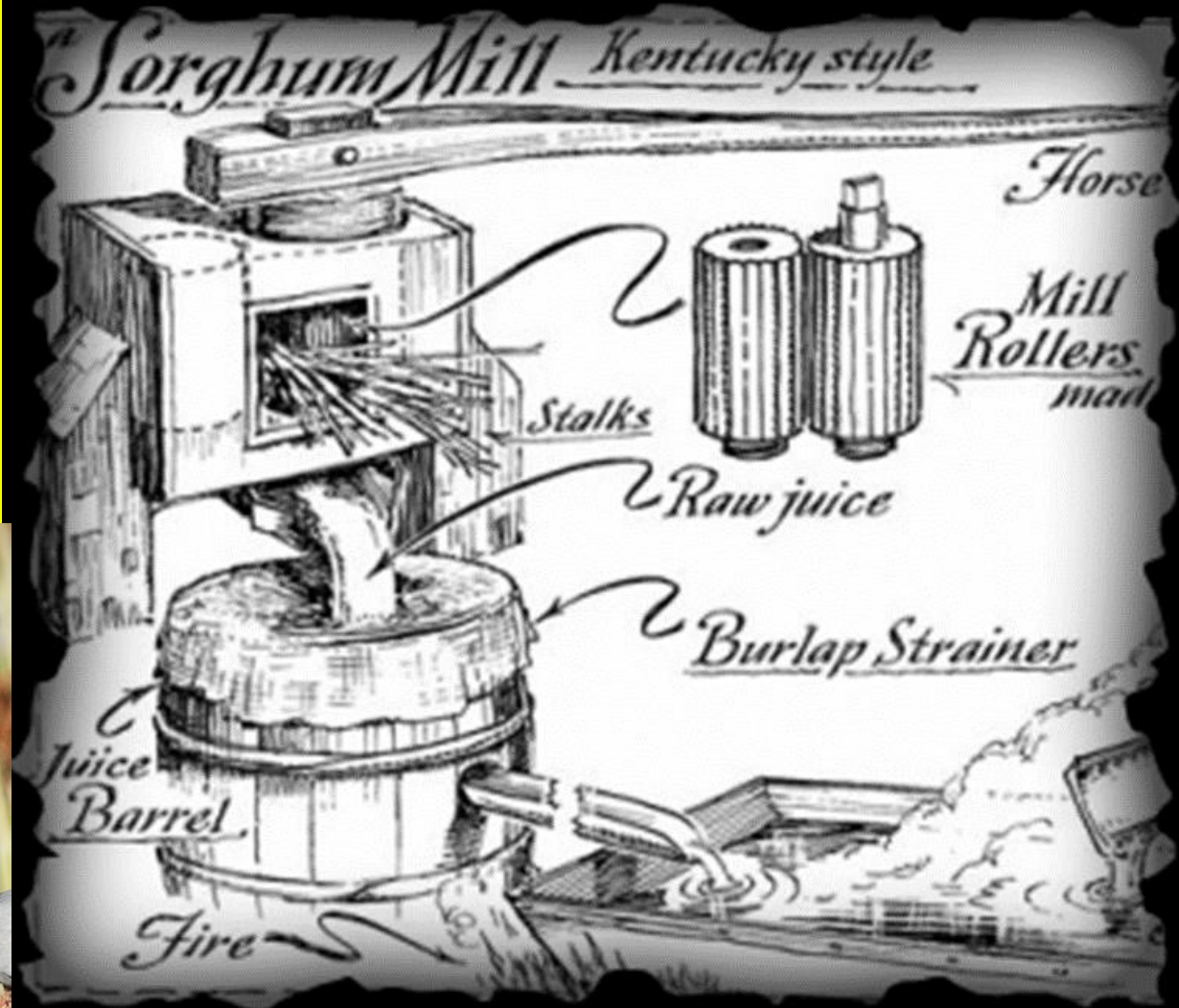


The Vertical Saw Mill

Circular saw mills came about in the 1850s



Sweet Sorghum Processing



Grain: ground for flour
Stalks: crushed for syrup and then used for livestock feed

LiDAR of far upper streams.
Possibly the location of the Thomas Cloak mill (not RWar vet) – note the faint dam berm.
If this is the 1950s Girl Scout's Pond, then they re-dug an old mill pond.



This is a cropped section of a 1947 aerial photo of the area of the cranberry bog berm at the relict of John English's mill

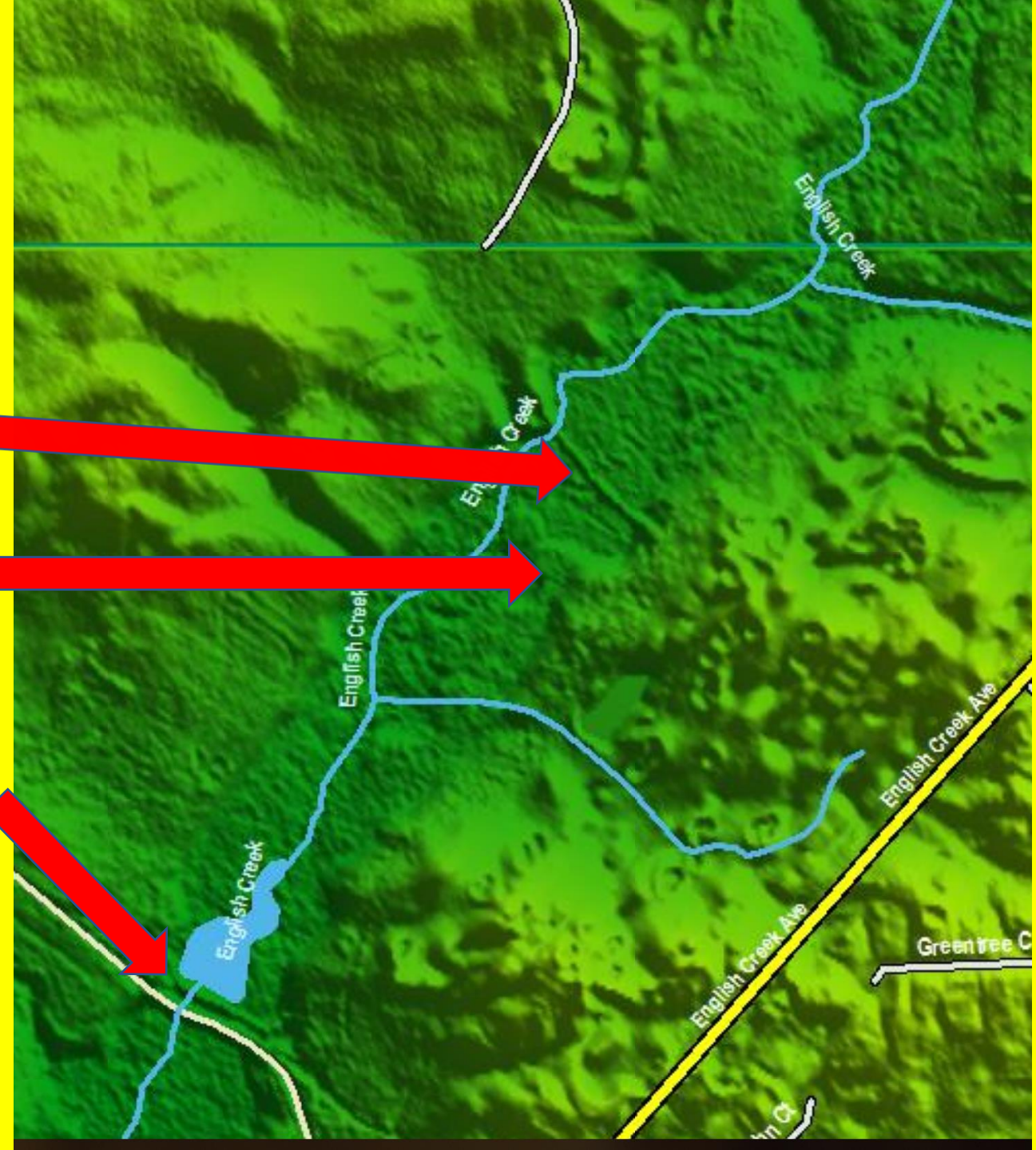
These aerials are an 800-photo set covering almost all of Atlantic County. They can be viewed at the ACHS in Somers Point.



Capt. James and then Aaron Somers' Upper Mill

Note rise and dam from cranberry bog use – probably English's new mill - no date for building.

Note old dam berm from saw mill pond at Aaron Somers' Upper Mill – Pvt. David Blackman's in a 1790 road return – owned by Aaron Somers' by 1814





**Aaron Somers' Upper Mill:
the pond has shrunk but the
berm still exists.
Formerly David Blackman's.**

**There are no visible remains
of the dam or the mill
building. This is on Private
Property.**

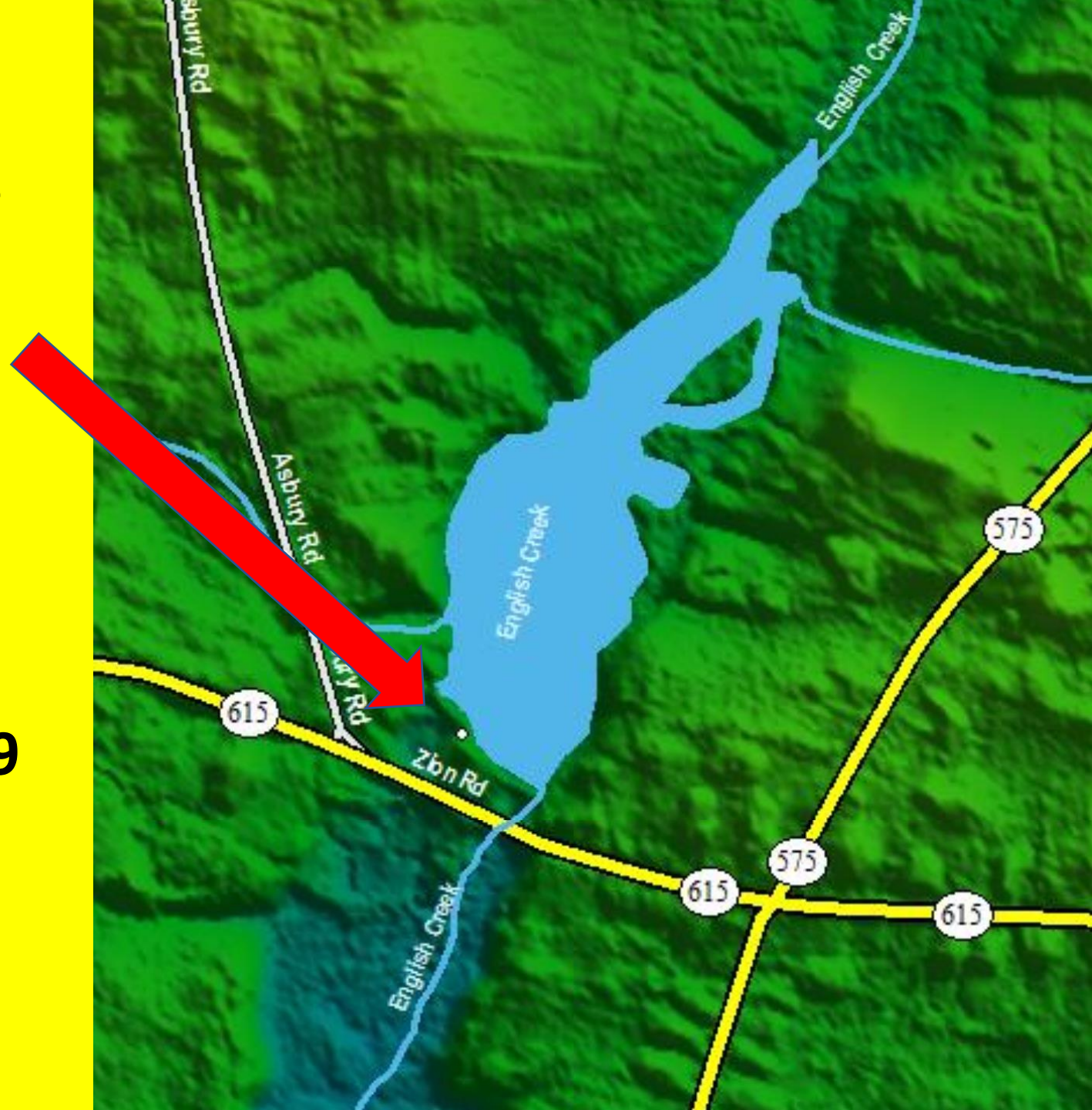


LiDAR of “Audrey’s Lair”

Note the old dam berm from before 1709 – a grist mill per 1790 road return.

Richard Bull (B4 1700) to
John English in 1709 to William
Allen in 1770 to Capt. James
Somers in 1777

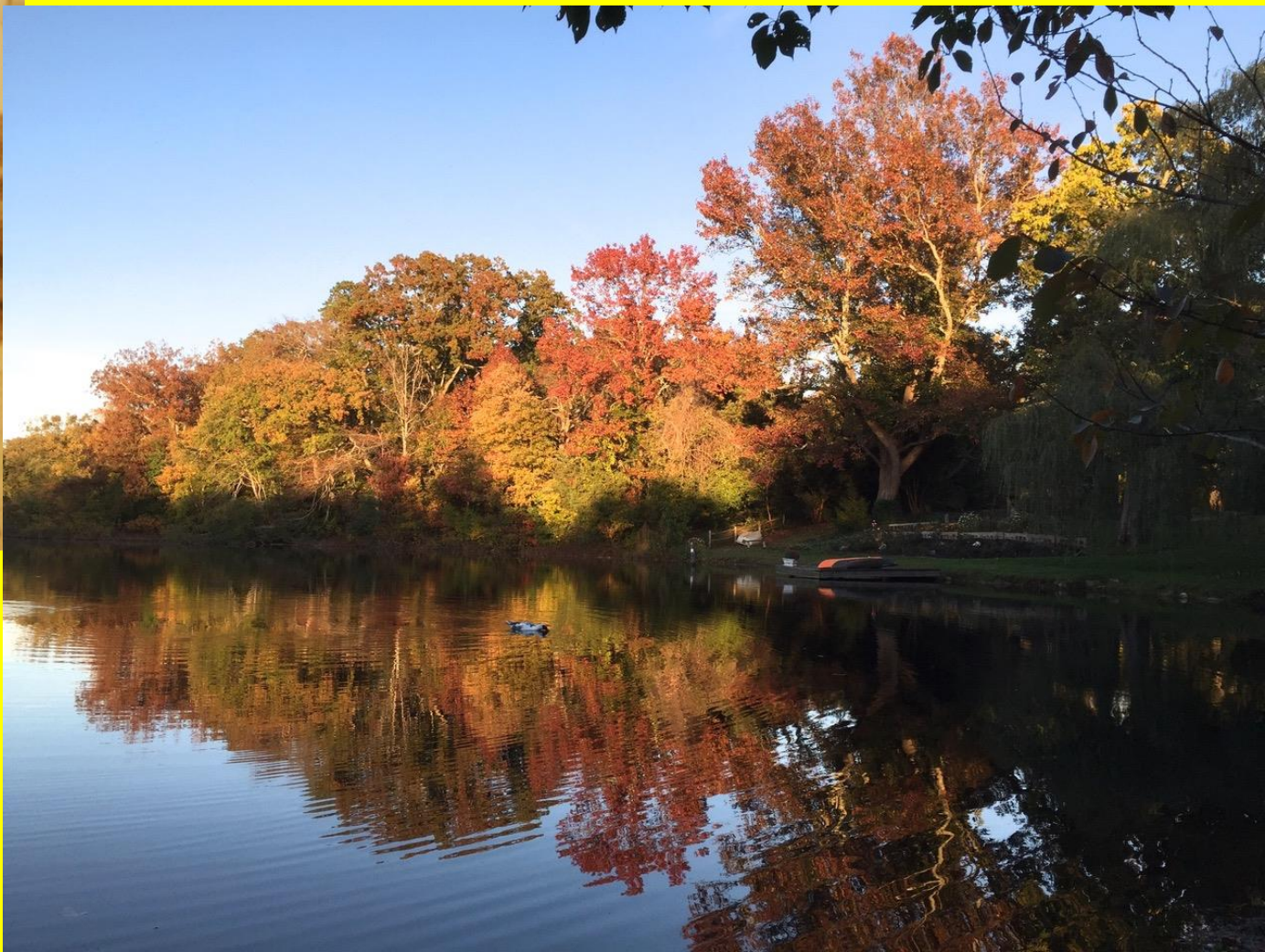
to his son Aaron Somers in 1779
to Lewis Smith in late 1800 to
Baker & Thompson in 1892 and
onward, with some minor
changes.



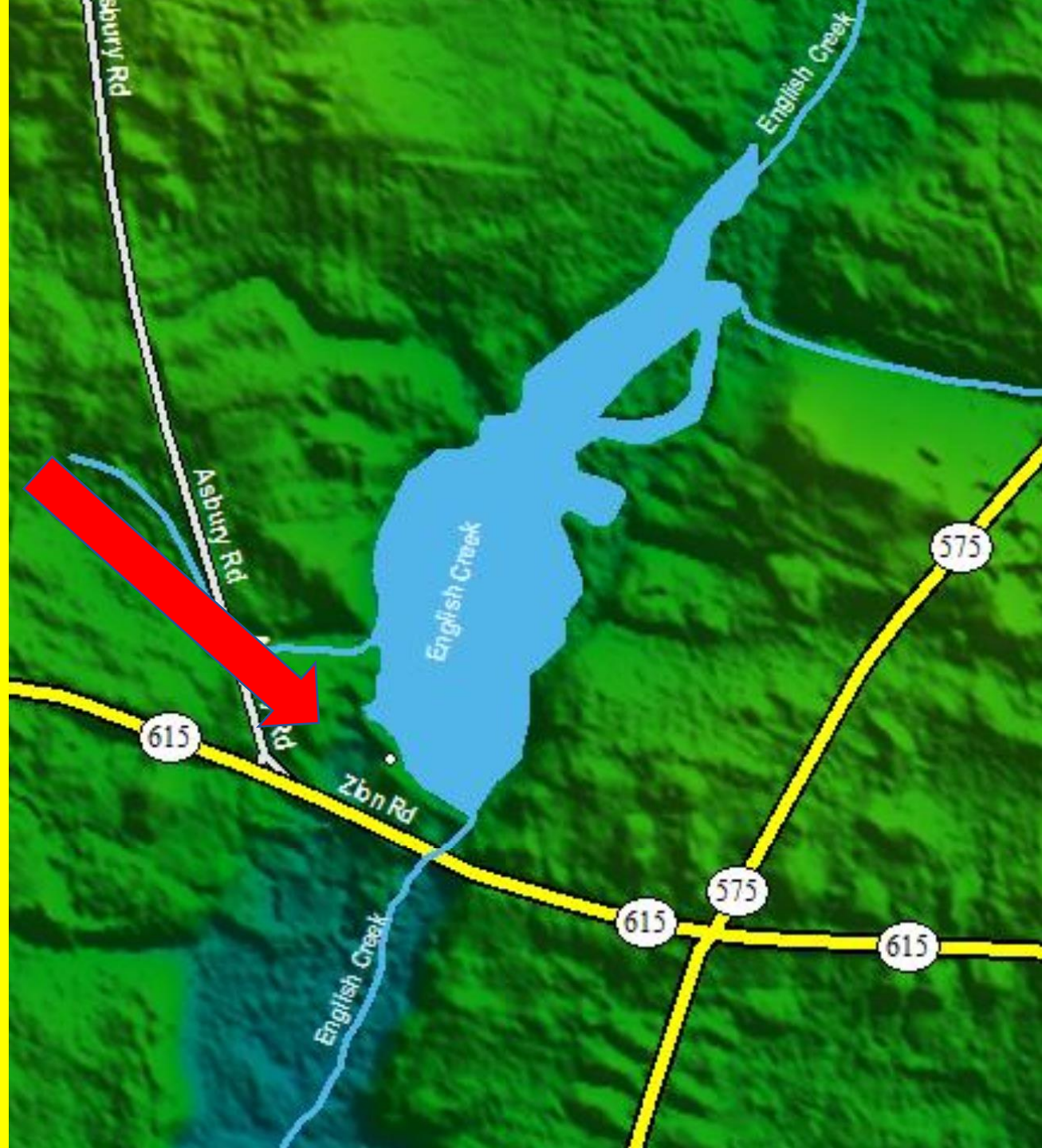


**At Audrey Foster & Frank Ferry's Home – Audrey is the “dam keeper.”
Hmmm...you can give that two very different meanings. 😊**

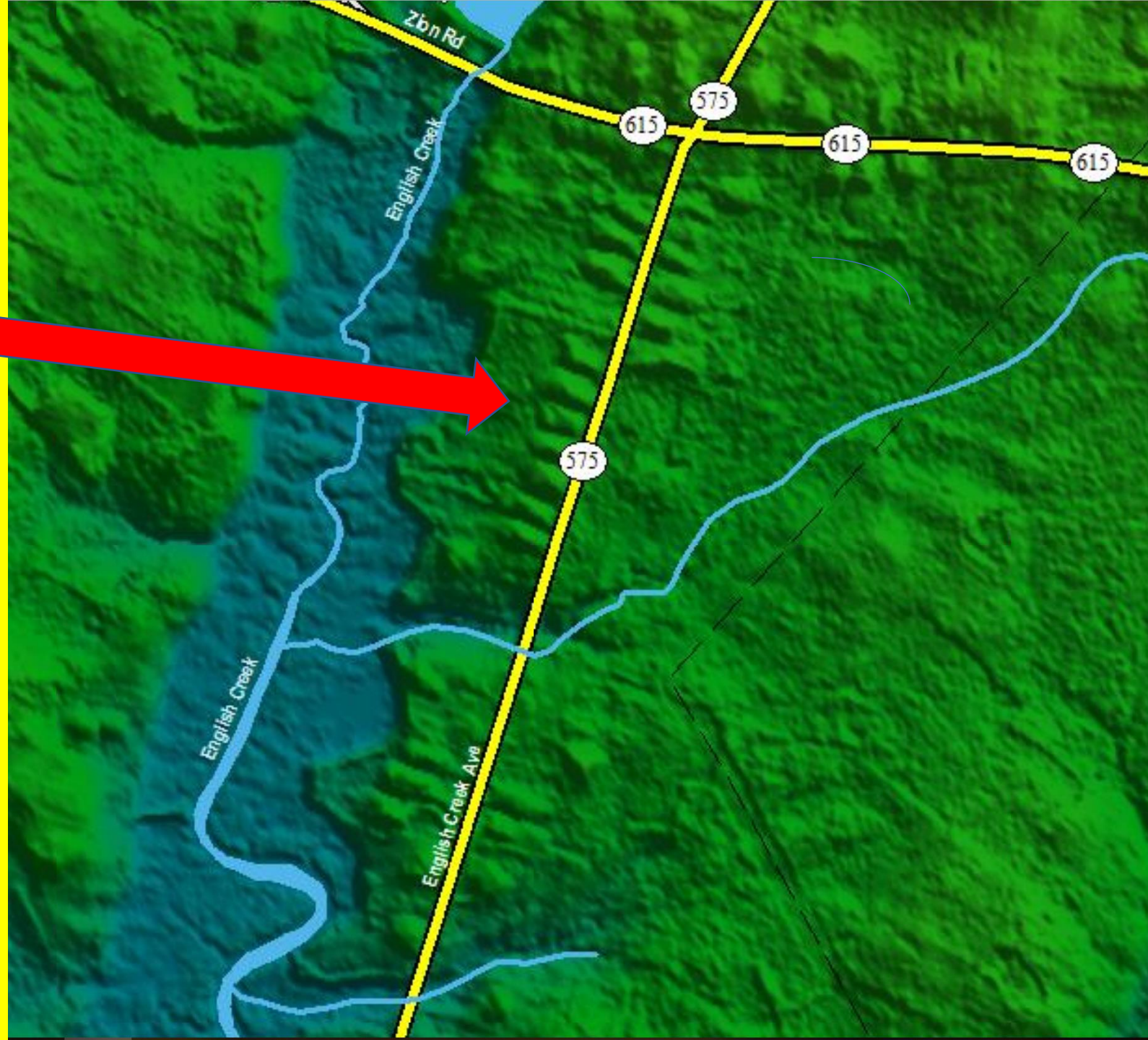




Lee & Ireland's Later Steam Saw Mill

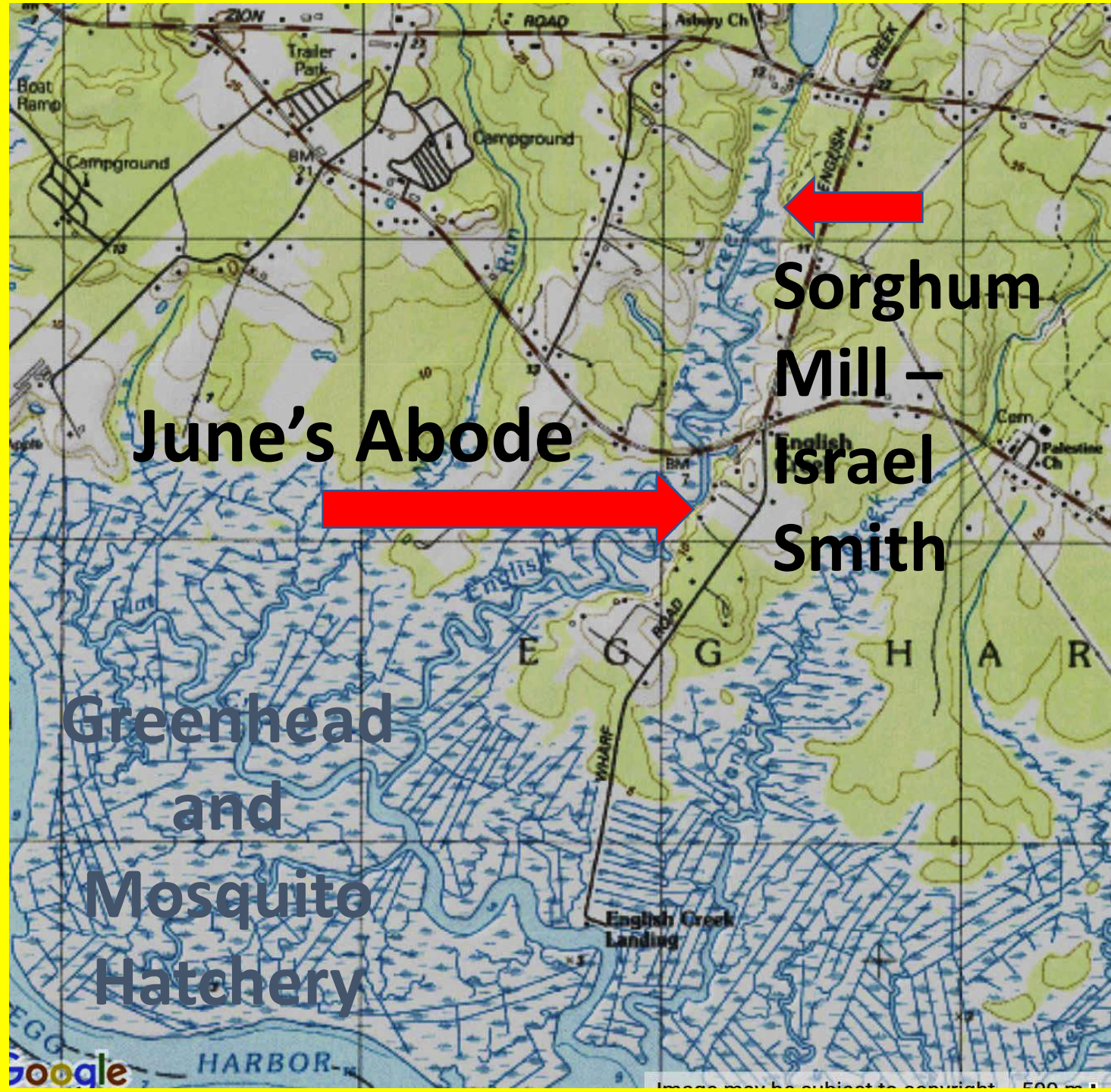


LiDAR of the Lower
Creek
in the probable
area of the Israel Smith
Sorghum Mill
(not water operated)



The Lower Area of the Creek

NJ Topographical Maps
Source:
<https://www.topozone.com>



Official approval came on 4 June 1793 from the General Assembly to build a lower tide-blocking dam poss. shown here (ACHS 94.113.32/Col. Bx. 22, file 4)



Lynn and I
Could Not
Find the
Remains of
This Dam
Berm After
the New
Bridge
Construction



LiDAR Source for NJ:
<https://maps.njpinebarrens.com>

English Creek: An Overview of a Unique Area with Six Old Mills

Thanks to June Sheridan, Jim
Mason, Paul Schopp and others
for digging out the dates and
names of the owners – and to
Lynn Wood for the photos.

Thank you to you
all for being a
great audience.

