



The  
Cultural Preservation  
Of  
Mitchelville

**The Native Islander Newsletter**  
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**Hilton Head Island**

**Cultural Preservation Concerns**

The story of Mitchelville is not only an important part of our community, but it's an important and valuable part of American History that's right here in our backyard. How the Mitchelville story is told is also important to preserving the legacy of Mitchelville. The history of this area is becoming a major focus for the lowcountry as well as the need to make cultural tourism more prominent on the island. NIBCCA and the Native Island Leaders believe that Mitchelville should be considered as an anchor for cultural tourism on the island because of its historical significance coupled with its being located at the heart of the Gullah / Geechee Corridor.

In order to move Mitchelville into a more prominent cultural focus, we believe that we need to establish the town as an equal and more active partner with the Mitchelville Preservation Project. As an equal partner, we feel that the town should always provide its full weight and support for Mitchelville's development. The town has made some strides in that direction. In the past few months, a search for an executive

director for the Mitchelville Project has begun, with a salary to be supported by funds allocated by the town and the Coastal Discovery Museum. The addition of an Executive Director will provide the project with the ability to increased visibility on a national level and greater fundraising opportunities.

The Park and Mitchelville's artifacts have the potential to be a stronger more solid economic driver of cultural heritage tourism for the island, the lowcountry, the state and country. In order to achieve these goals, however, we feel that there are a few issues that need to be addressed. Initially, a priority for the Mitchelville Preservation Project should be to create and implement a complete marketing plan that would include strategic growth and development options for the park for the next five and ten years. Secondly, based on the all of the historic entitles that are along Beach City Road, the entire length of the street needs to be established as a permanent historic designation and receive all of the recognition that that would provide. Thirdly, in an effort to limit confusion for cultural tourists, the name of the Mitchelville Park should be changed from Fish Haul Creek to Mitchelville Beach. All of these factors when put in place, would enable Mitchelville to be prepared for the recognition and exposure that we all know is not only coming, but is well deserved.

### **The Mitchelville Minute**

**Did you know that most native islanders can trace their family back to Mitchelville? At one point, Mitchelville was the home to freed slaves and if you weren't a resident, you needed a pass in order to enter the town?**

**NIBCCA plans to continue to provide you with ongoing details about this topic as information develops and will continue to release newsletters on a monthly basis. If you have questions about this topic or anything that we can help you with, please feel free to contact our offices.**

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