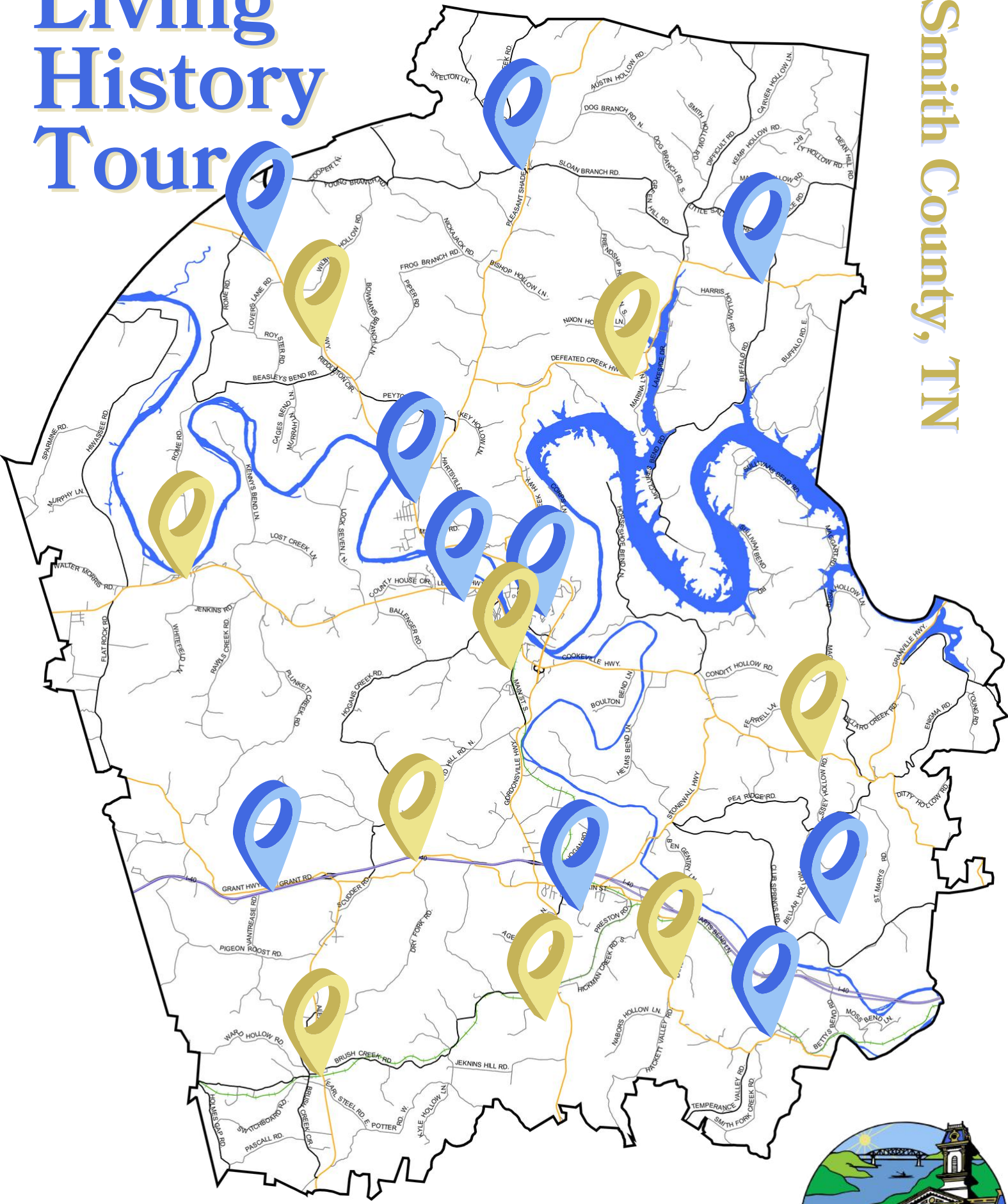


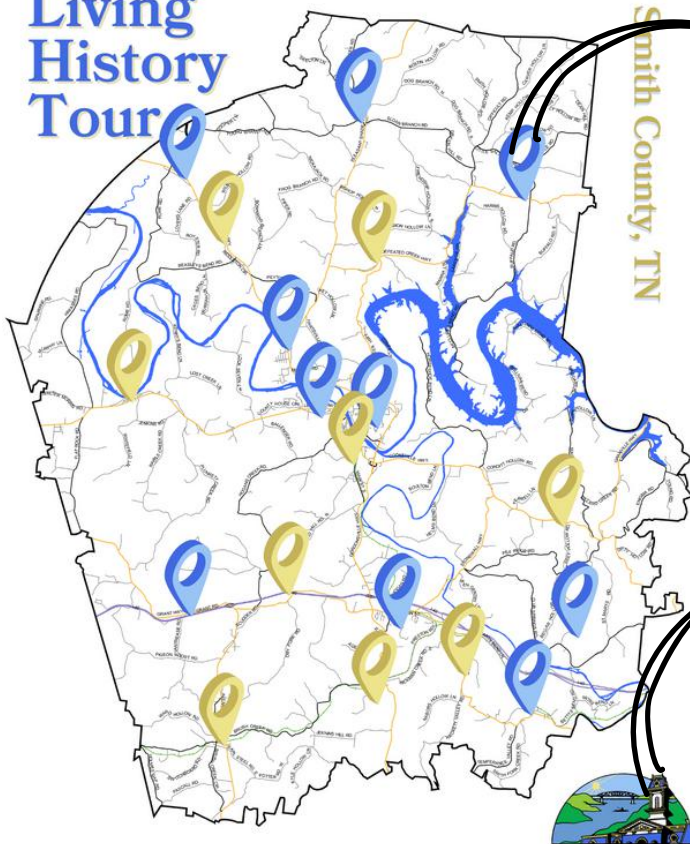
Living History Tour

Smith County, TN



How To Use

Living History Tour



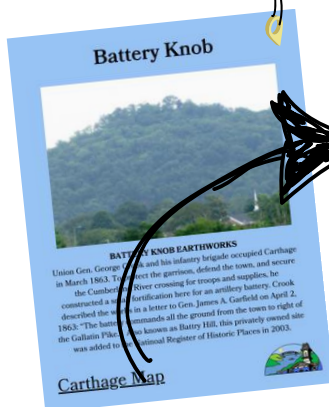
Smith County, TN

Click a location marker to be taken to the detailed aerial map

Click to be taken to main map at any time!

Click a location marker to be taken to Information on the specific historic location

Click for Map Directions



Click to return to aerial map from information section!



Carthage Map

The Map Direction Icon on each page will denote if it is:



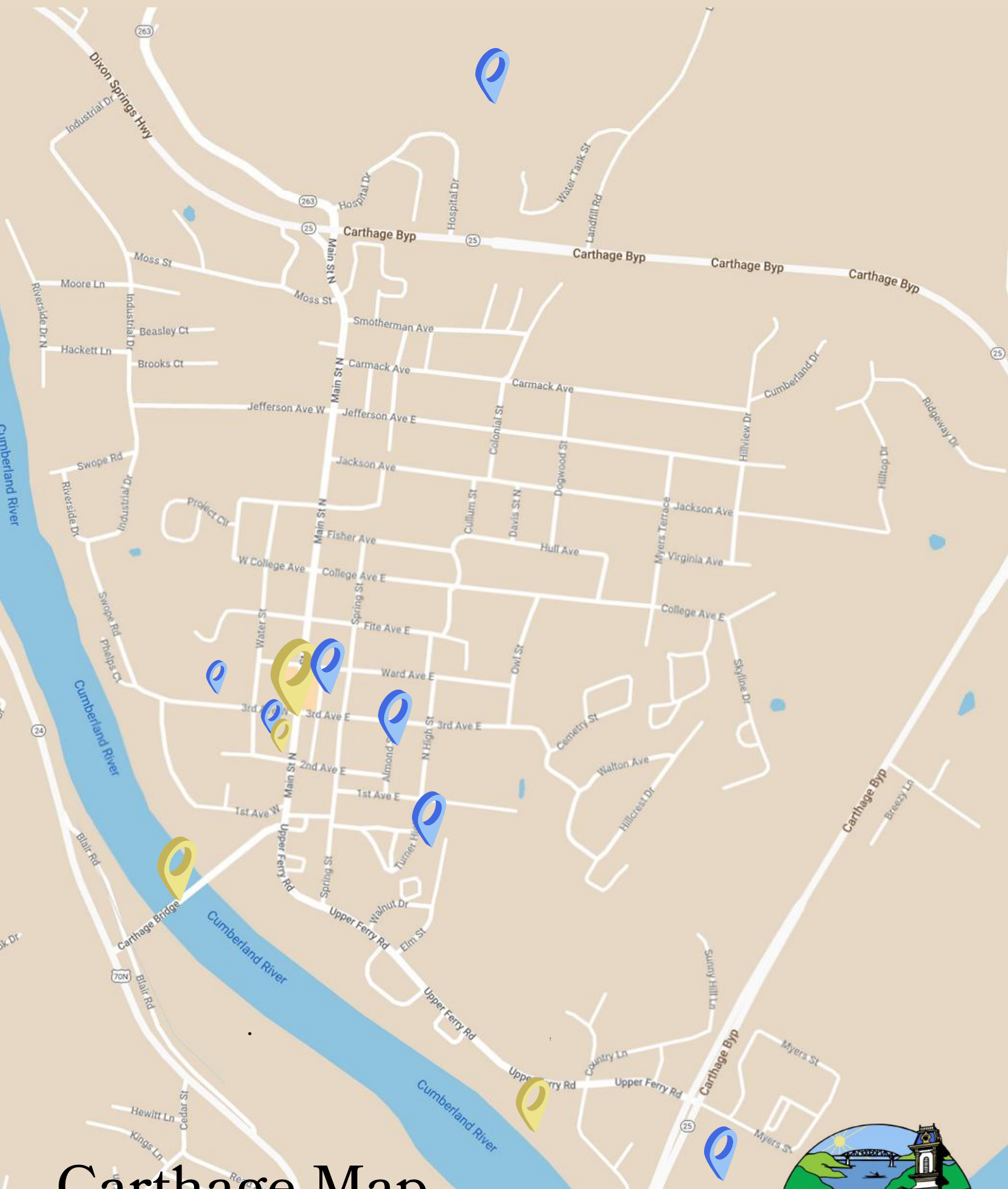
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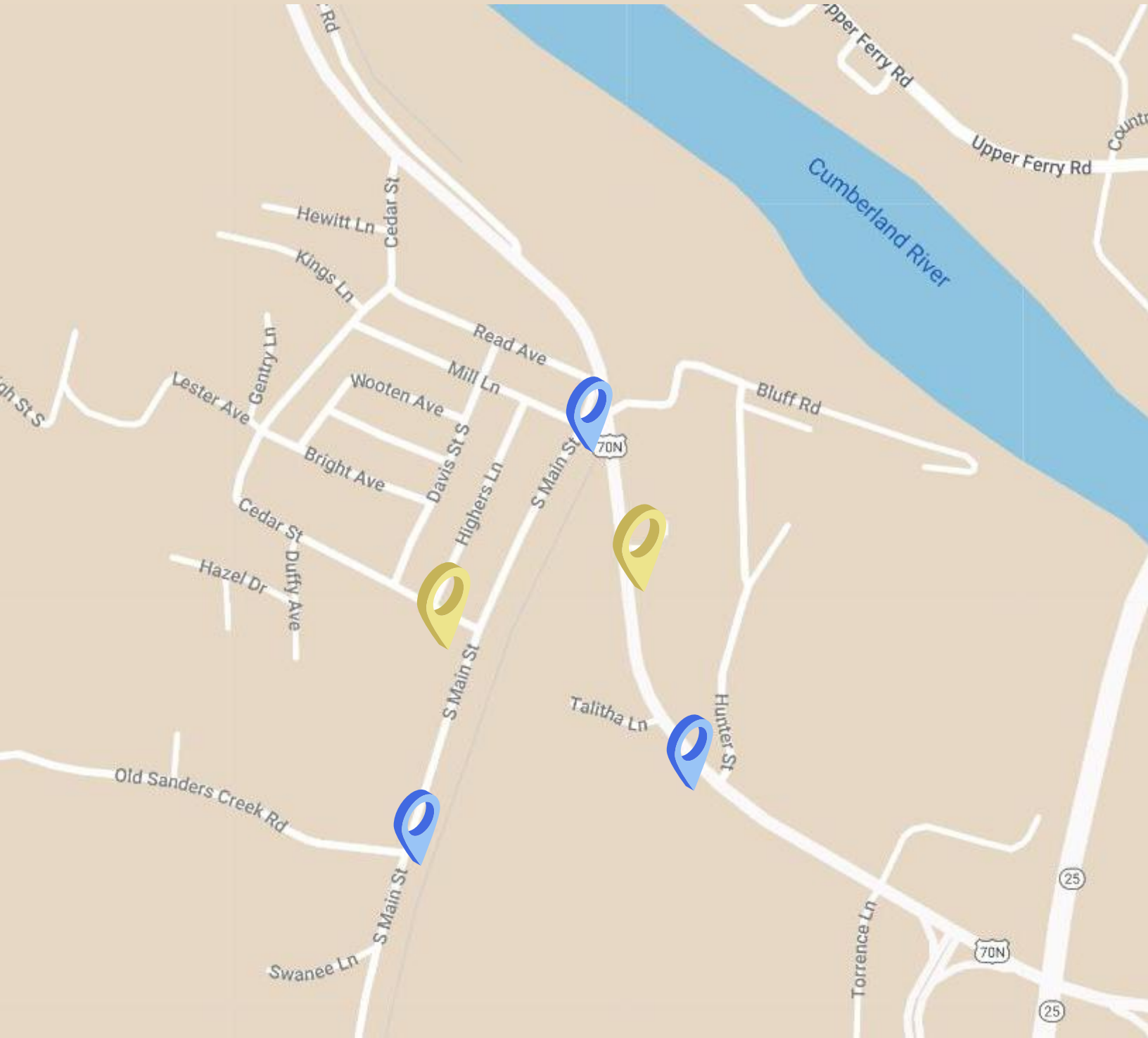


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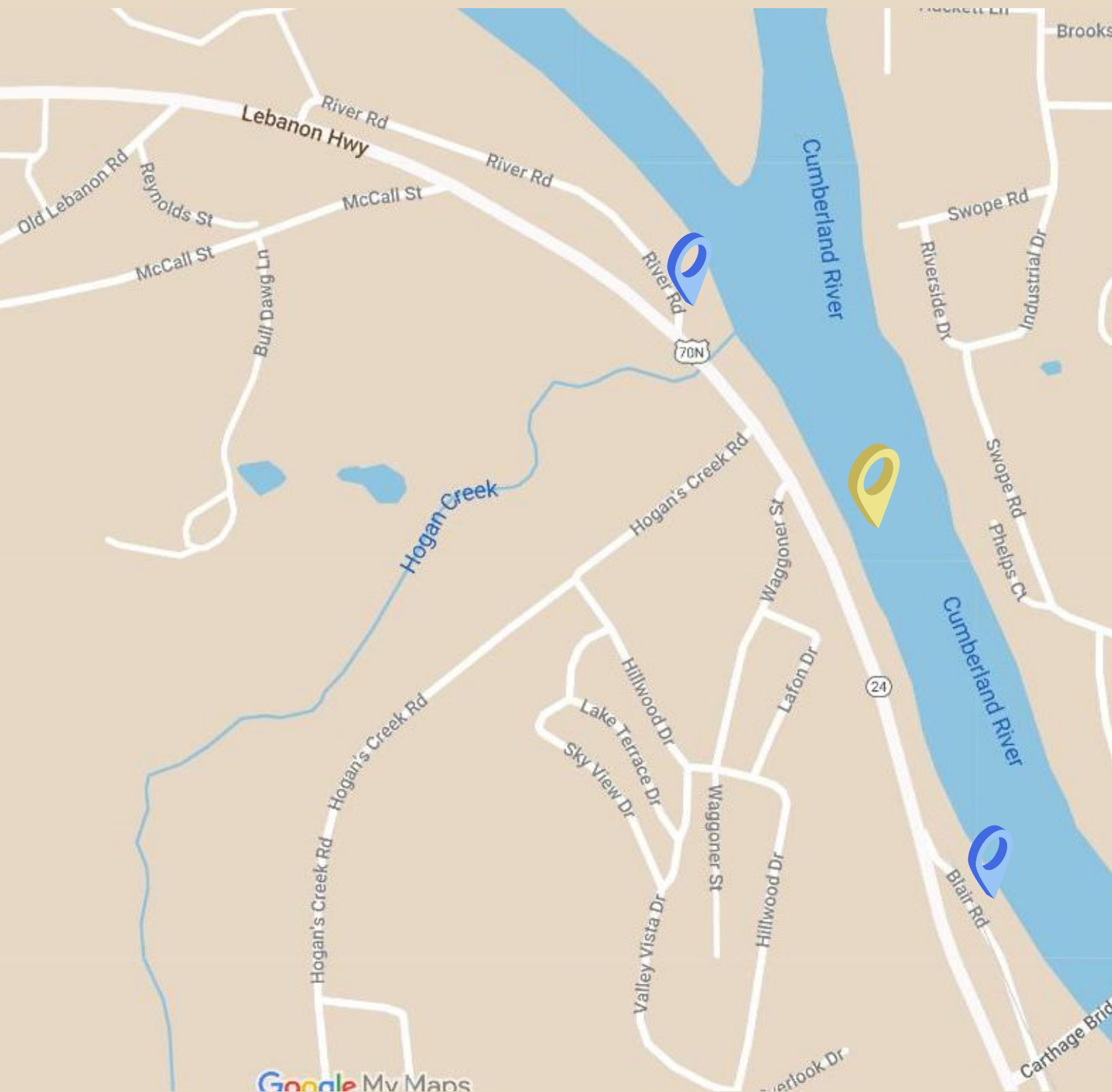
Carthage Map





South Carthage Map

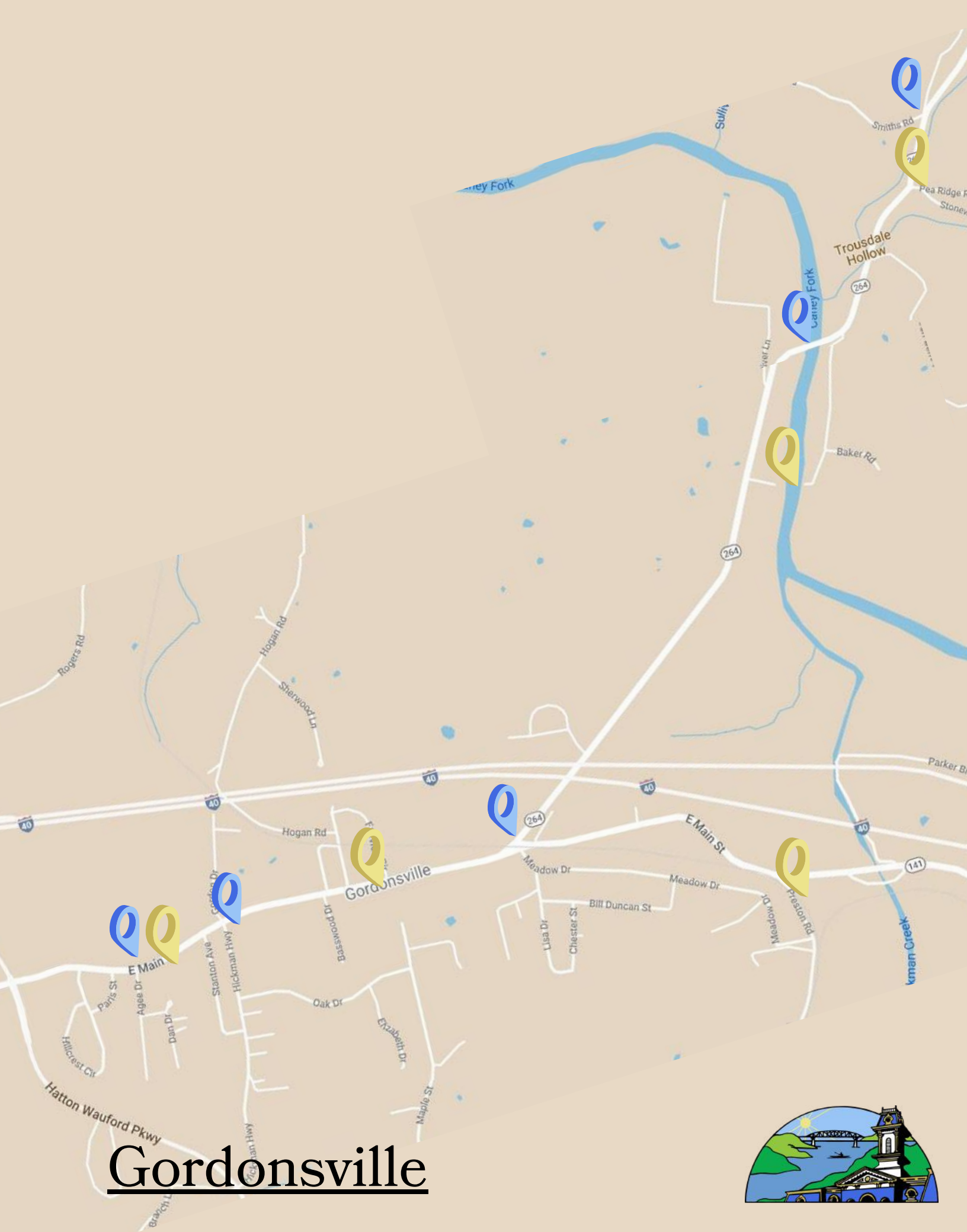




South Carthage Map

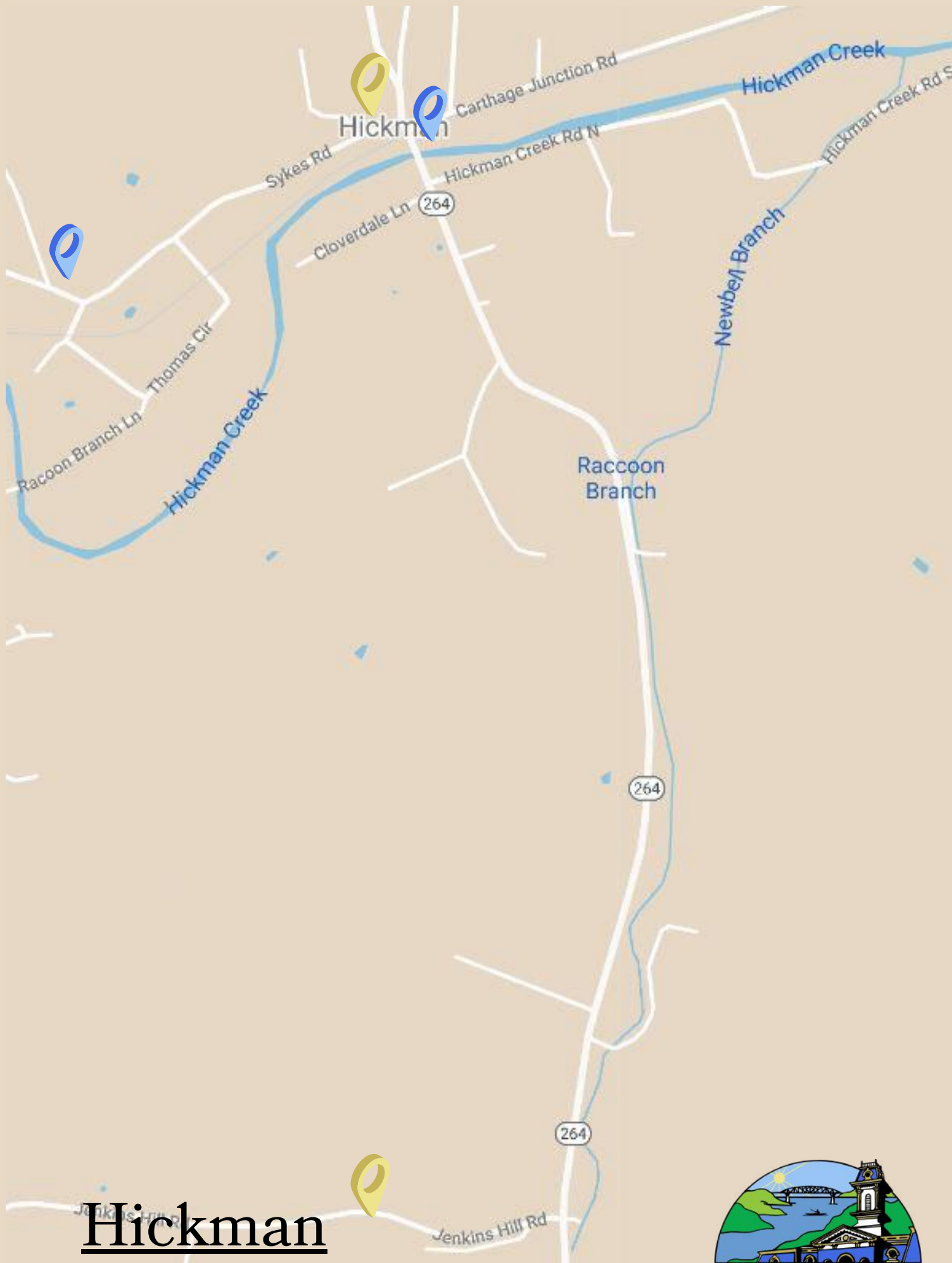
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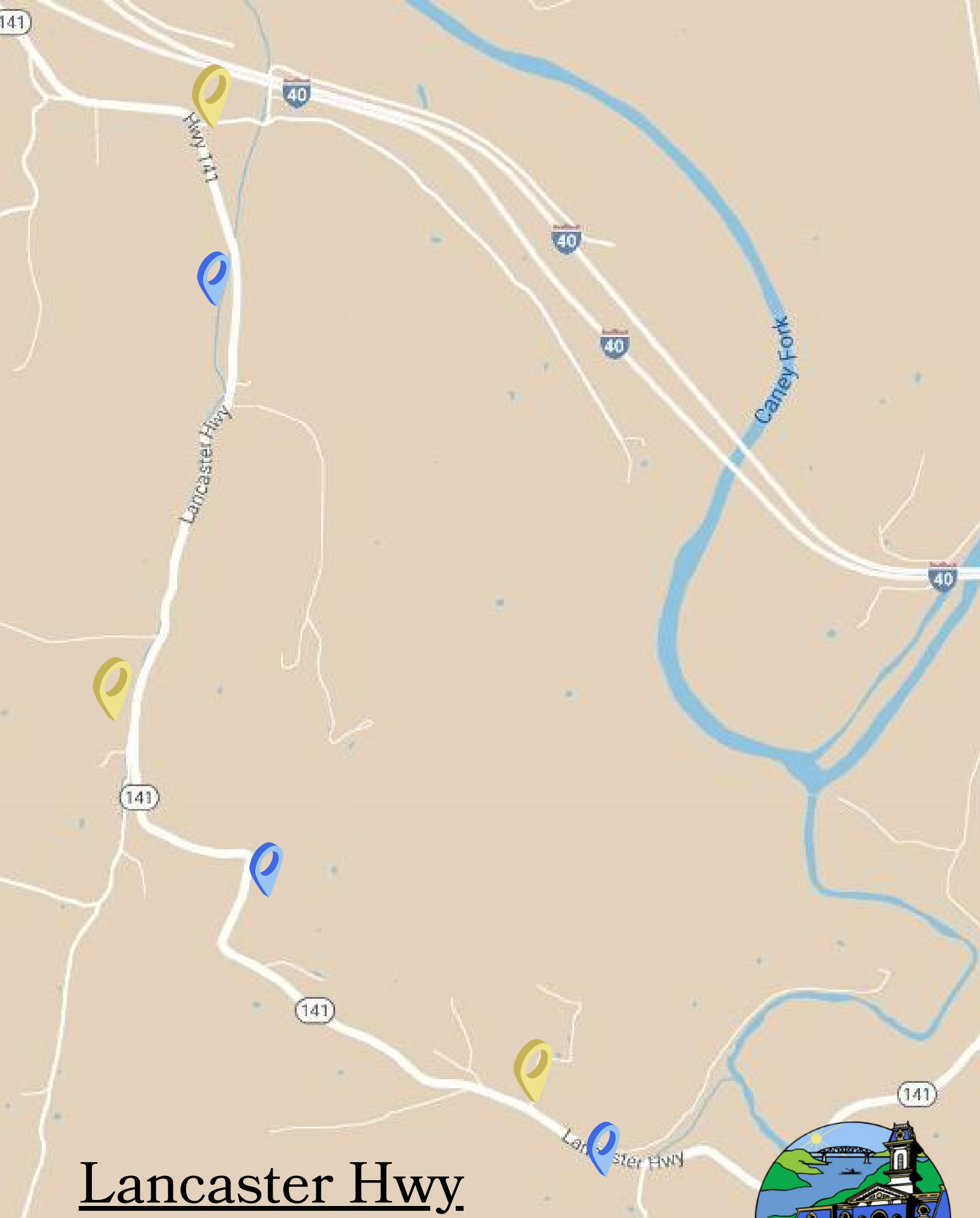




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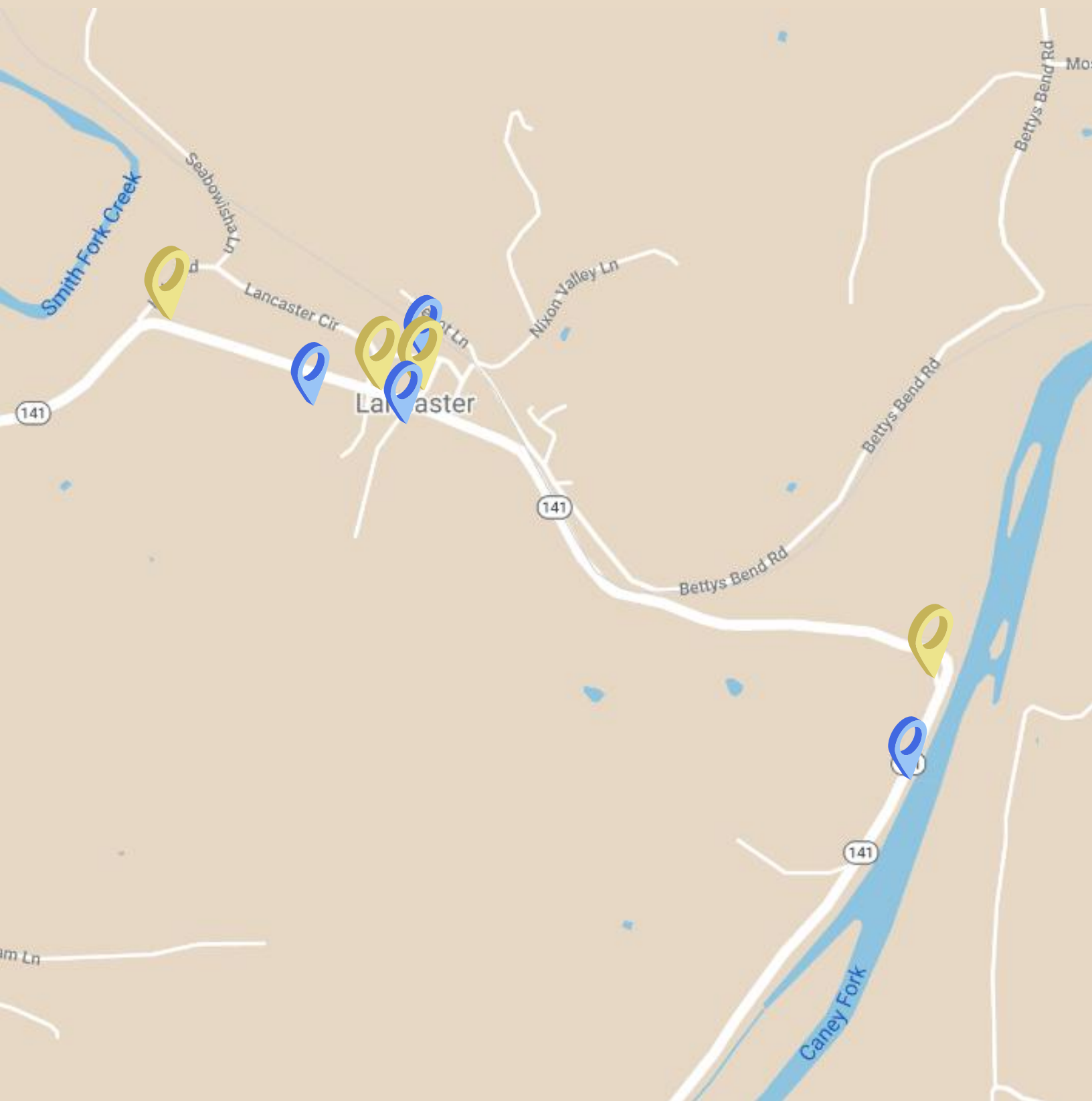






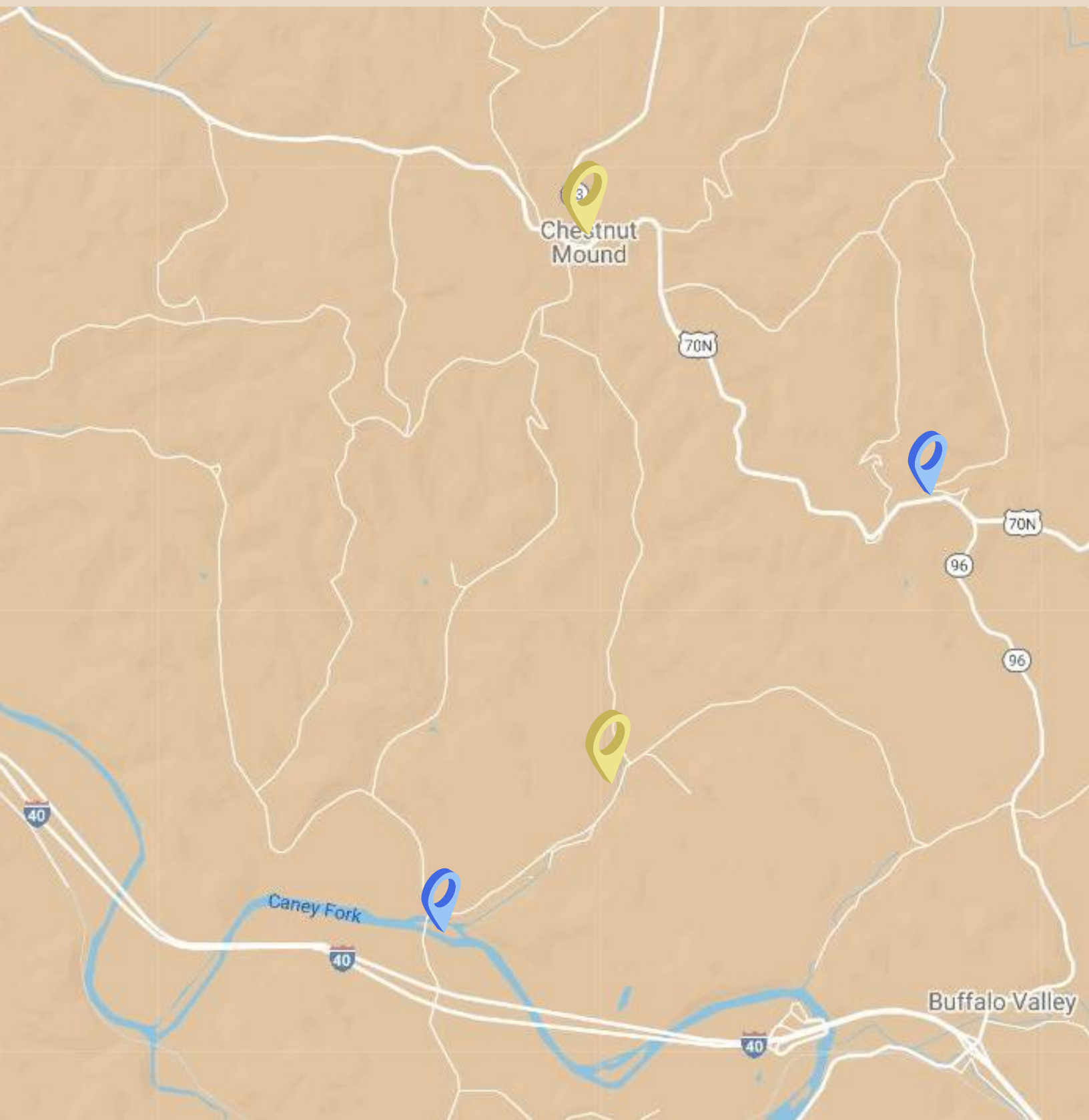
Lancaster Hwy





Lancaster





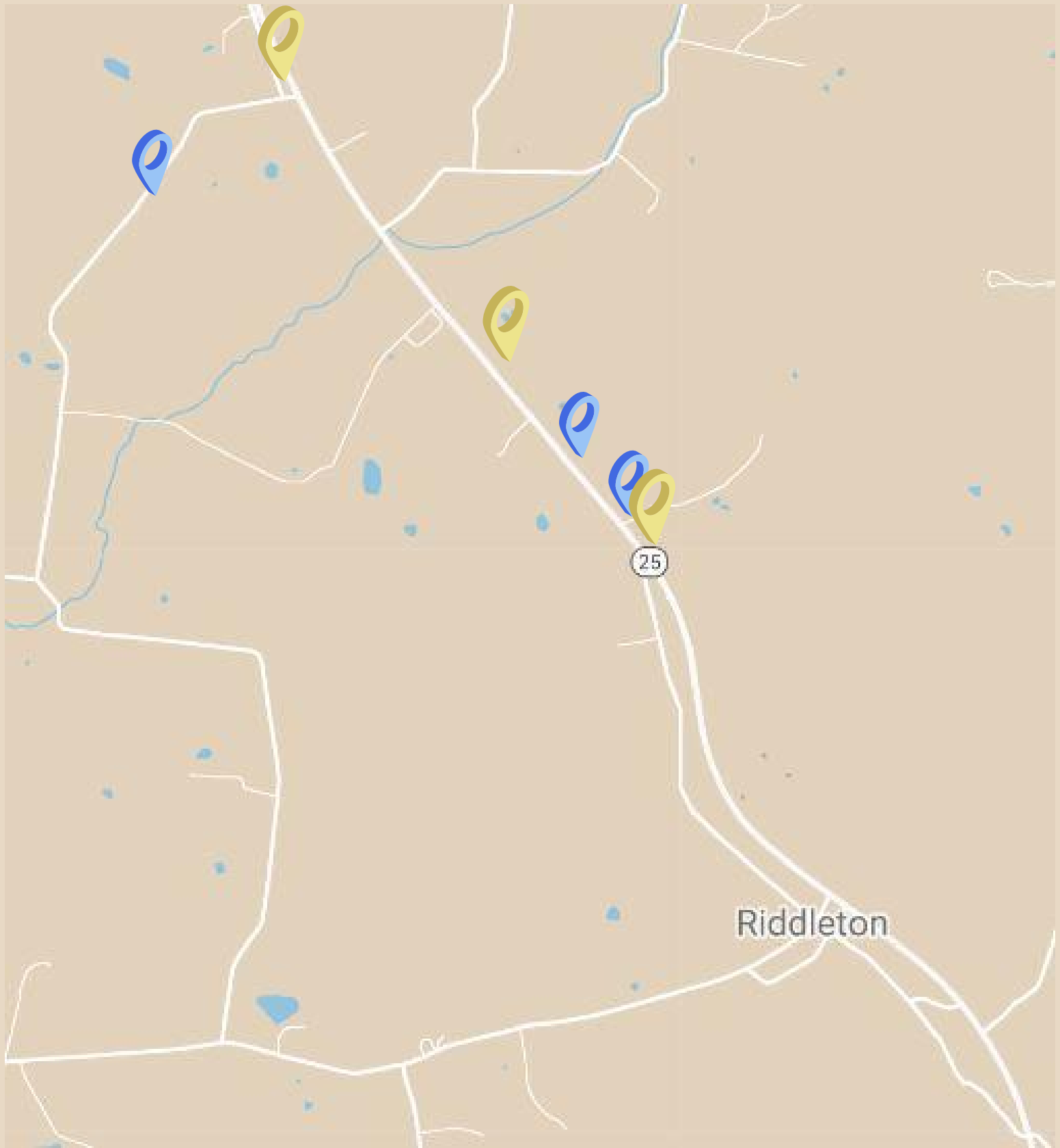
Chestnut Mound / Betty's Bend





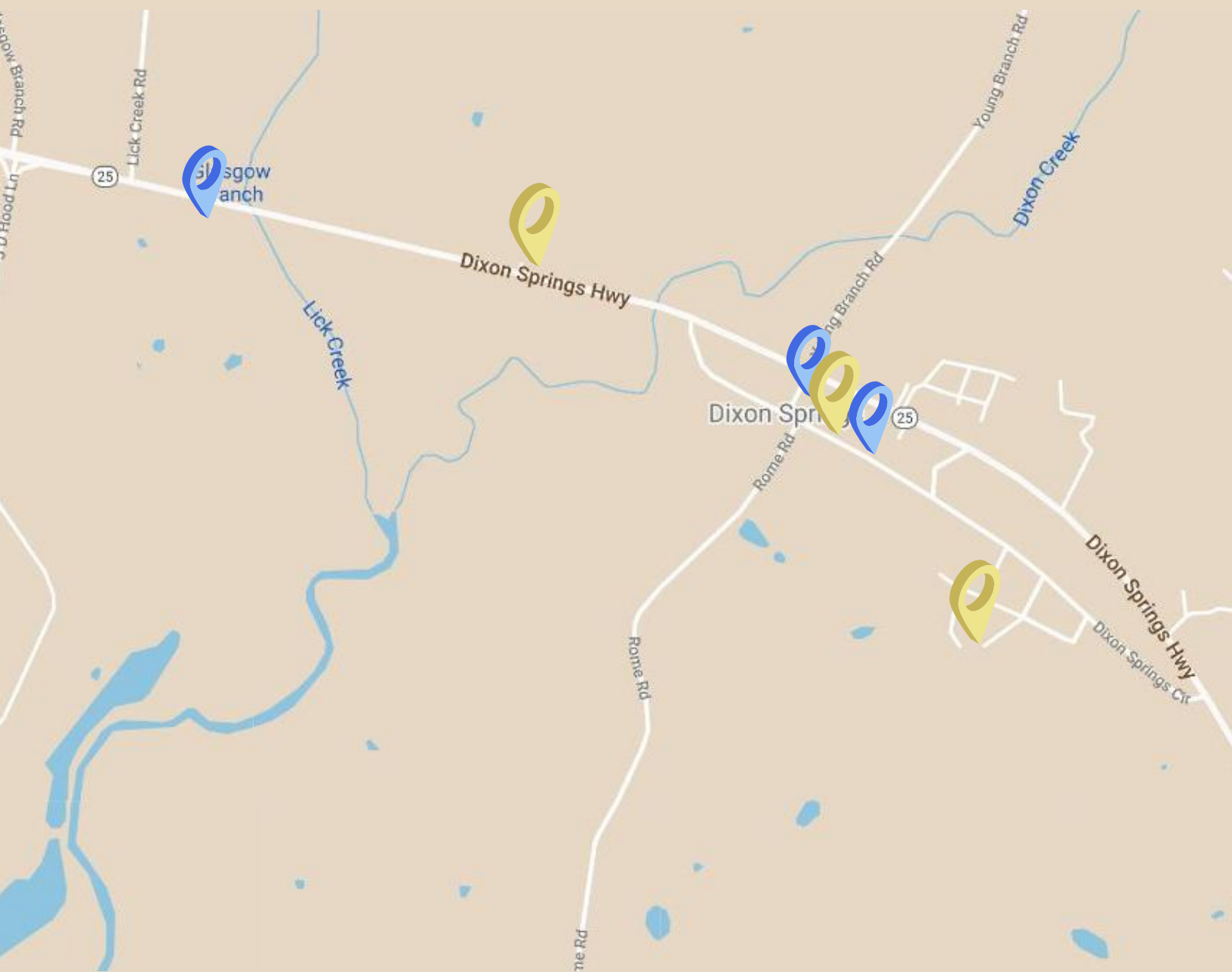
Tanglewood





Riddleton





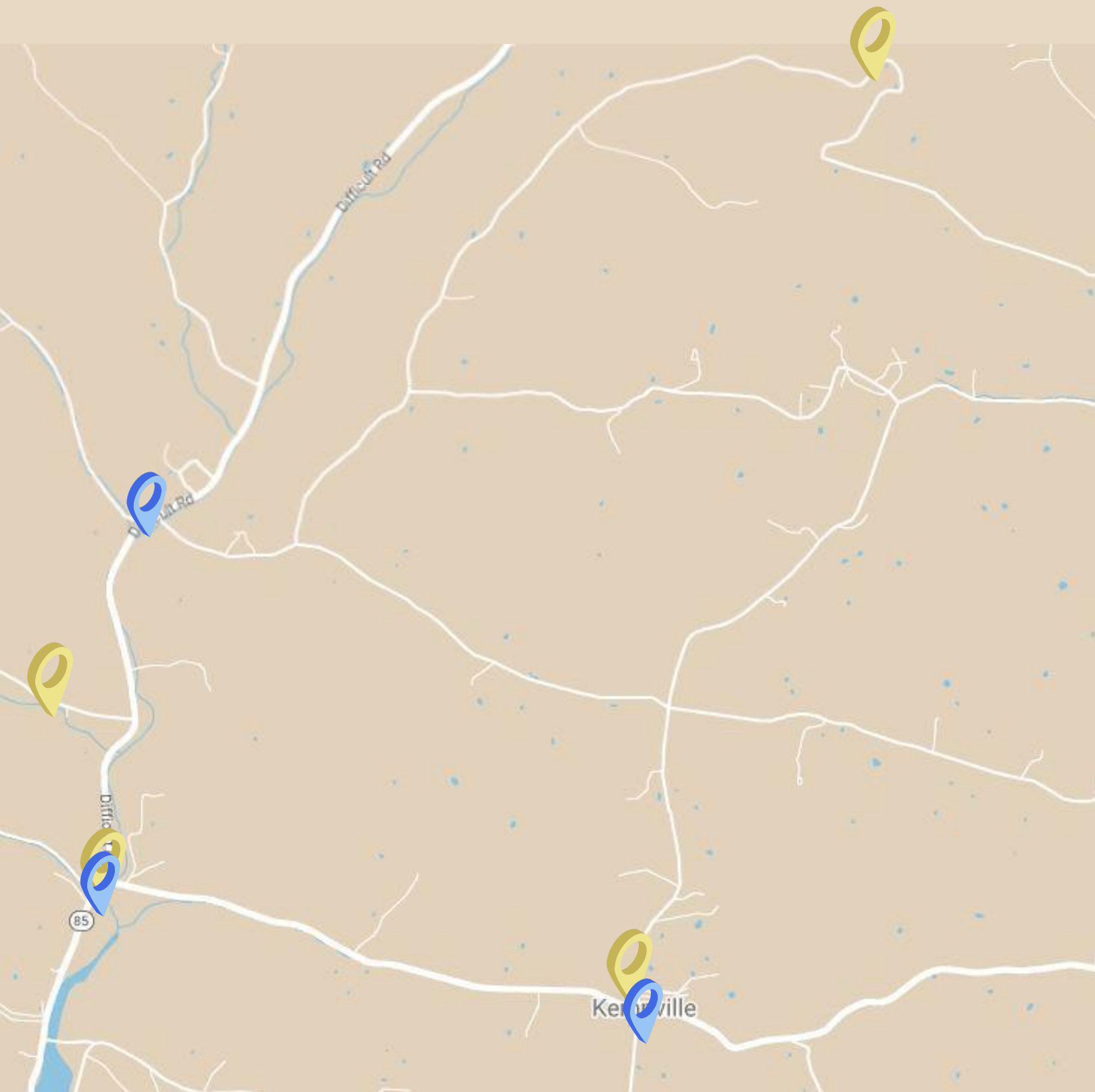
Dixon Springs





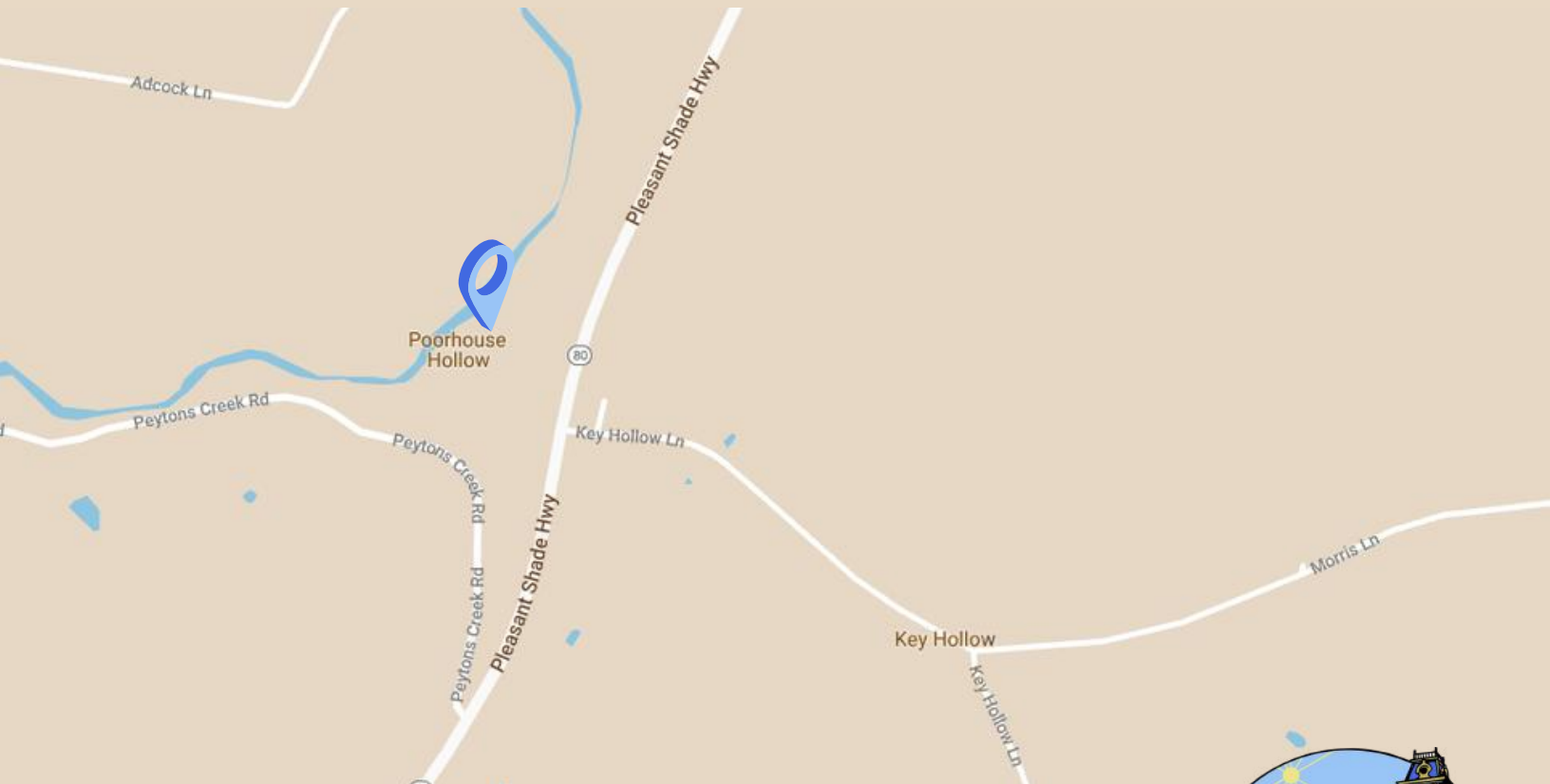
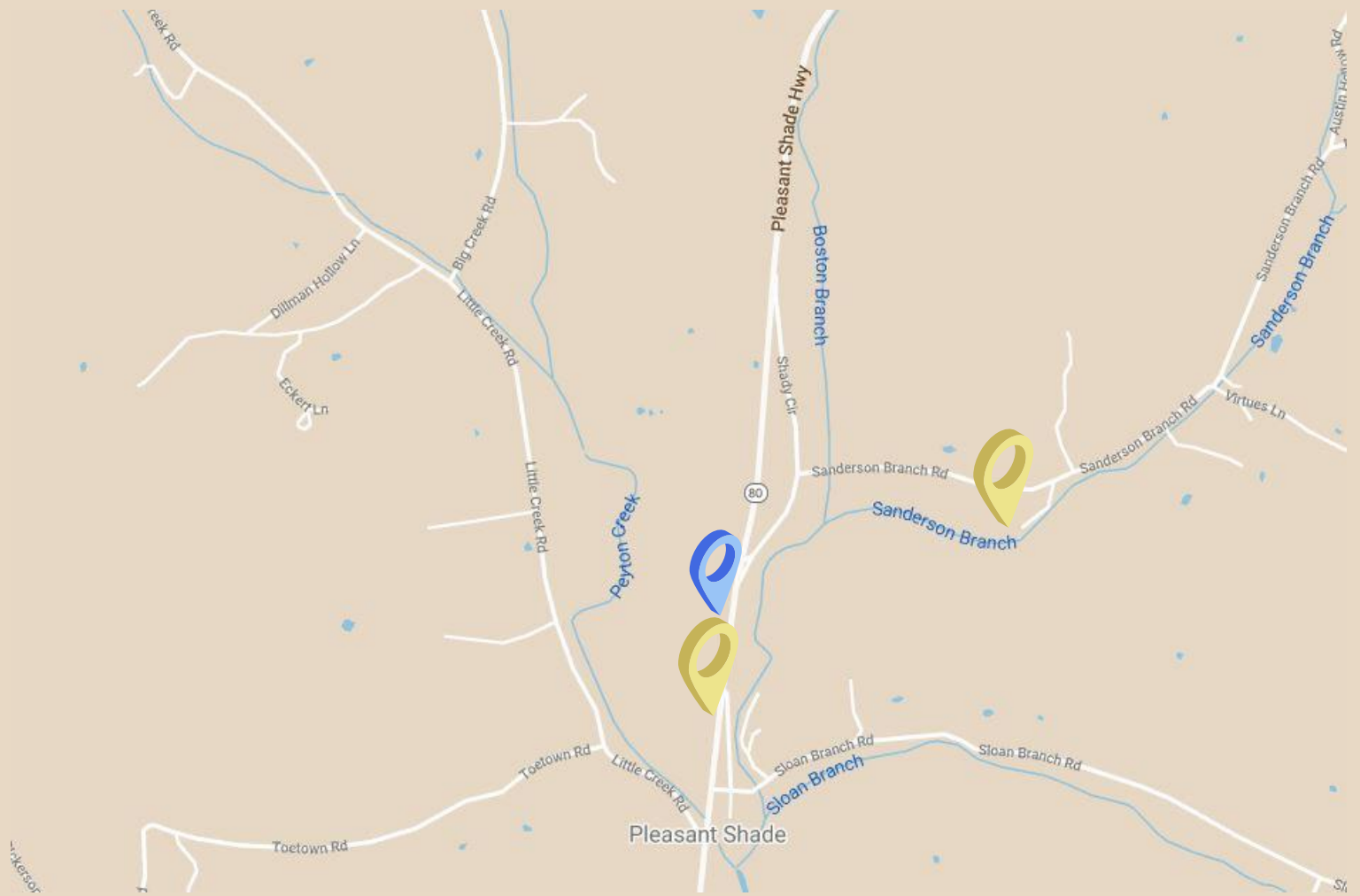
Defeated





Kempville

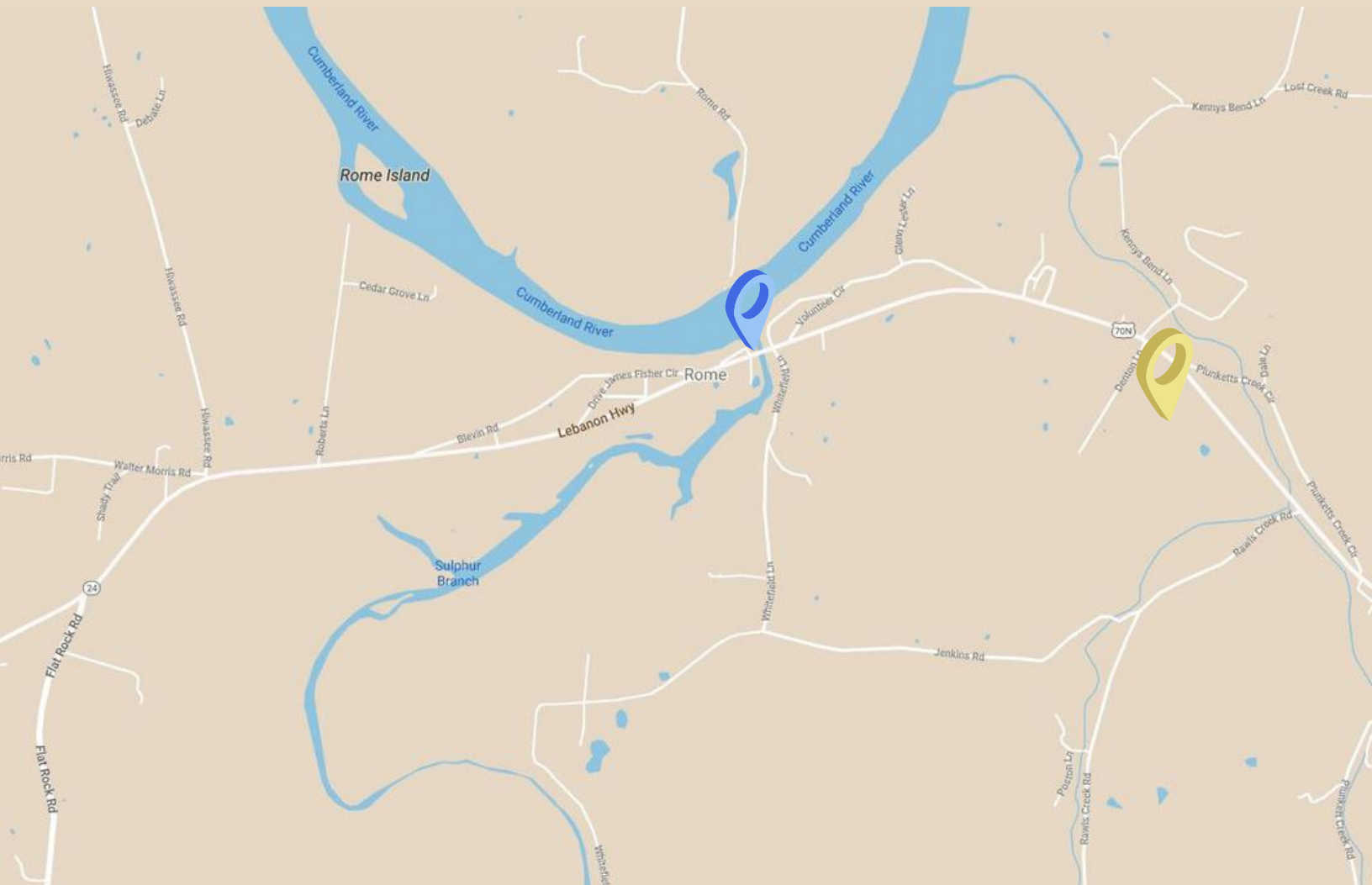




Pleasant Shade



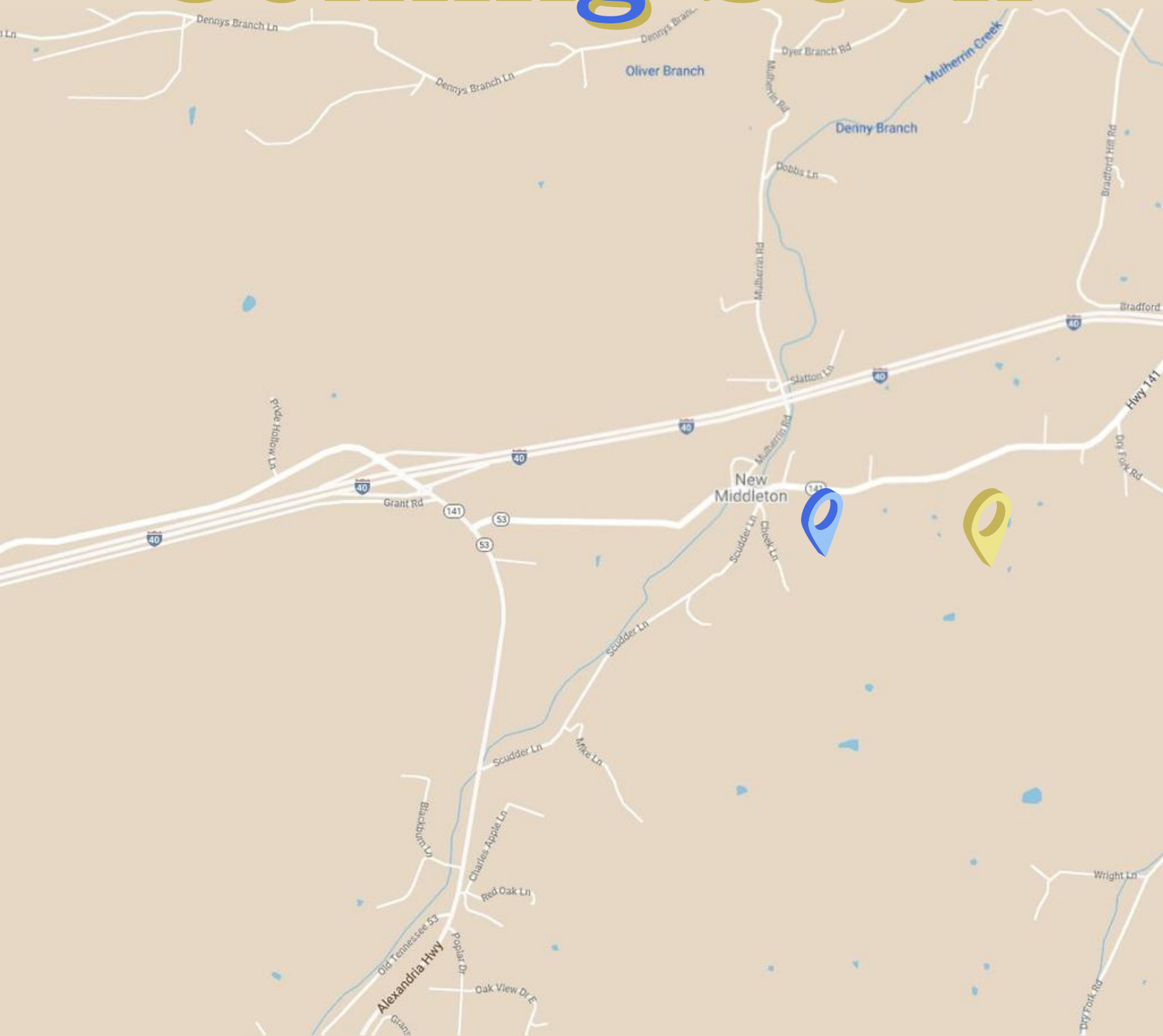
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Rome



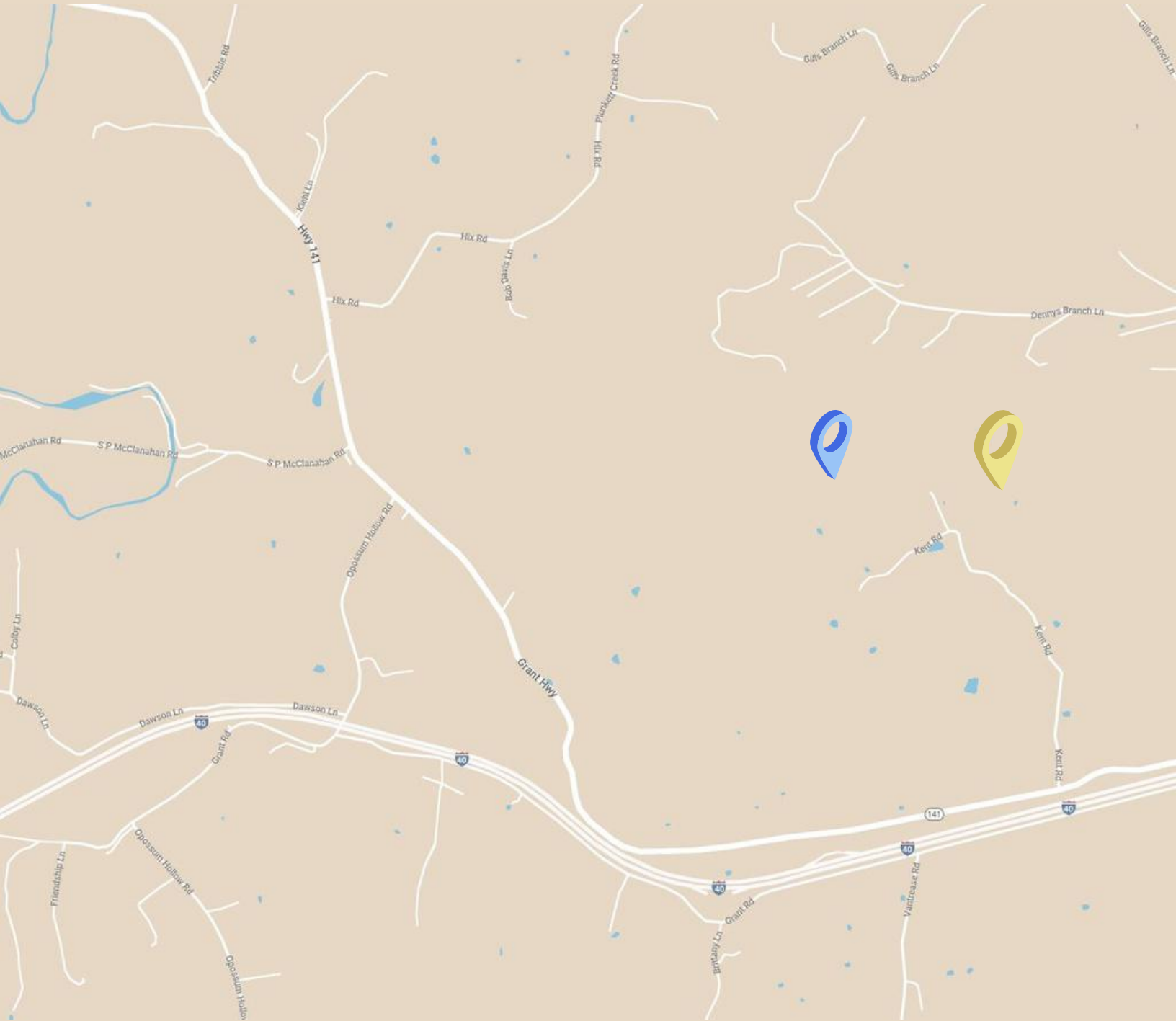
Coming Soon



New Middleton



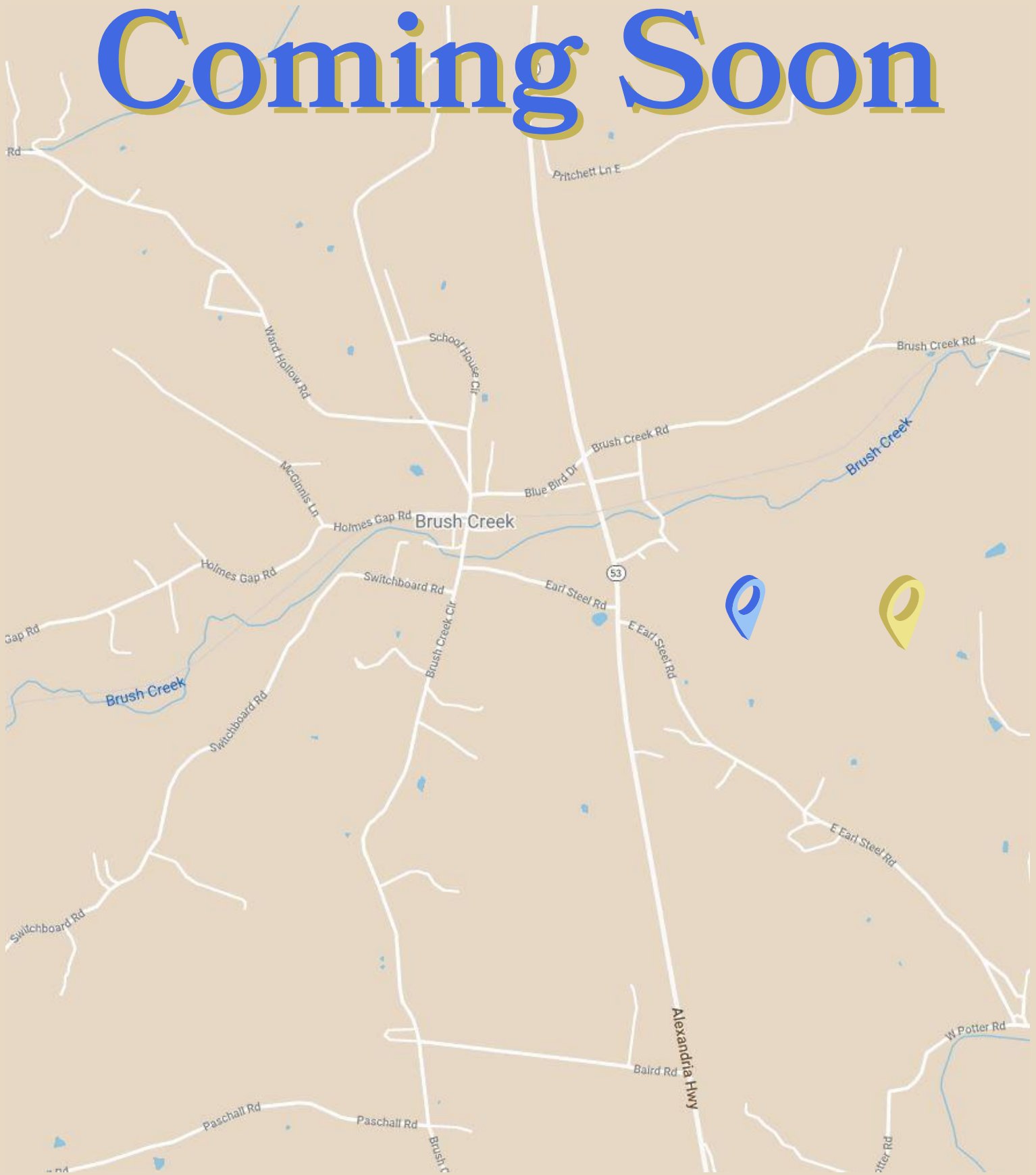
Coming Soon



Grant



Coming Soon



Brush Creek



Historic Smith County

Courthouse



The historic Smith County Courthouse is located right here in Carthage, Tennessee, overlooking the Cumberland River. It's one of the finest examples of the Second Empire architectural style in the state .

The courthouse was built between 1877 and 1879, replacing the original brick courthouse built in 1805 on the same site. The grandiose scale of the new courthouse was especially noteworthy since the town's population was only around 475 people at the time of construction.

The courthouse is attributed to architect William Reuben Gunn and features a slate-covered mansard roof, a central cupola clock tower, arched windows, and porthole dormers. During the Civil War, Federal forces occupied the courthouse square from 1862 to the end of the war and used the courthouse as a headquarters. Today, the courthouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Learn
More



Carthage Map



Historic Markers



BENTON MCMILLIN HISTORICAL MARKER

A native of Kentucky, Benton McMillin moved to Celina at an early age and later to Carthage. He was elected to the State Legislature in 1874 and Congress in 1879 for a twenty year tenure. Benton McMillin served two terms as Governor, 1899-1903, promoting the public school system. The “Democratic Warhorse of Tennessee” died in Nashville.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM WALTON *HISTORICAL MARKER

Born in Bertie County, North Carolina, Walton fought in the Revolution for that state. He settled in the Cumberland country in 1784. Walton served in the legislatures of North Carolina and Tennessee and as a Smith County magistrate. He built Walton's Road in 1801 and operated stands along its route. Countless settlers traveled this road en route to middle and West Tennessee.



BRAGG INVADES KENTUCKY

*HISTORICAL MARKER

Moving northwest from Sparta, Bragg, with Maj. Gen. Leonidas Polk's Right Wing, Army of Mississippi, composed of the divisions of Cheatham and Withers, passed through here. Forrest's Cavalry Brigade, covering the left flank of the advance, operated west of Murfreesboro and Lebanon and as far north as Munfordville, Ky., which was surrendered to Bragg on Sept. 14.

Carthage Map



William Walton



Walton Cemetery: A Founding Father's Resting Place

On the eastern outskirts of Carthage, Tennessee, nestled within a one-acre fenced area, lies the hallowed grounds of Walton Cemetery. This unassuming cemetery, dating back to the late 18th century, holds the remains of a man and woman who played a pivotal role in the founding of this charming town: Captain William Walton and his wife Sarah Jane.

Captain William Walton, born in Bertie County, North Carolina, in 1760, was not just any early American settler. He was a Revolutionary War hero, a landowner, a visionary, and, most notably, the founder of Carthage itself. The cemetery bears witness to his enduring legacy, alongside that of his wife.

Walton's final resting place, marked by a rectangular stone box, can be found toward the eastern end of the cemetery, with his wife's grave nearby. A Daughter's of the American Revolution marker adorns both Captain Walton's grave and Sarah, paying homage to their crucial role in American history.

Captain Walton's journey was one of valor and resilience. He served as a soldier during the American Revolutionary War, enduring capture, and imprisonment until the surrender of Savannah in 1780. His unwavering dedication led to his promotion to the rank of captain, where he was entrusted with leading a North Carolina unit. His wartime contributions were acknowledged with a land grant.

In 1783, Captain Walton married Sarah Jane, embarking on a new chapter in their lives together. Two years later, in 1785, they moved to the Cumberland country, known today as Carthage, along with Captain Walton's brother. There, they constructed a cabin near the confluence of the Cumberland and Caney Fork Rivers. This cabin served as both their home and the foundation of their future endeavors.

Captain Walton's entrepreneurial spirit led him to operate Walton's Ferry, a crucial crossing point located at the tip of a peninsula formed by the Caney Fork and Cumberland Rivers. In 1799, he initiated the construction of the Walton Road over the formidable Cumberland Mountain, linking communities and enabling commerce in the region.

William Walton's contributions extended beyond infrastructure and commerce. In 1804, he demonstrated his dedication to the community by donating 50 acres of land to the budding town of Carthage for the nominal sum of \$1. This generous act laid the foundation for the town's development and future city governance. It was an early example of the public/private partnership that makes both government and business successful event today.

Education was another realm in which Captain Walton made a significant impact. In 1813, he donated over two acres of his land in Carthage to the Geneva Academy, a Tennessee State government public education institute. This academy provided teachers to the local community, contingent on raising funds and offering a suitable land area and school building. In 1814, Captain Walton himself erected the first public school building in Carthage once again showing how government must work with individuals to make our future secure.

Carthage Mayor L. A. Ligon and the Carthage City Council of John Shaw, T. J. Fisher, F. B. McGinness, W. V. Lee, Frank Swope, and W. E. Myers, took charge of the Geneva Academy until the Smith County School System was established in 1914.

On April 3, 1997, the Town of Carthage Mayor and City Council paid tribute to William Walton, recognizing him as one of Tennessee's greatest citizens of the 18th and 19th centuries. His contributions to the founding of Carthage and the establishment of the Carthage public school system continue to resonate as enduring symbols of community progress.

Carthage Map



Carthage, the county seat of Smith County, Tennessee, is situated along the north bank of the Cumberland River, approximately one mile below the confluence of the Caney Fork River. Smith County, established in October 1799, was initially part of the Western District of North Carolina, set aside for military grants to Revolutionary War veterans. The county, named in honor of Revolutionary War Colonel Daniel Smith, became the fifth county created in Middle Tennessee. In 1789, William Walton, the county's first settler, chose a prime piece of land in redemption of his land grant and built his home on the north side of the Cumberland River, opposite the mouth of the Caney Fork River.

Smith County's historical roots are closely intertwined with Captain Walton's legacy. When the need for a county seat arose, Walton, through his influence, led to the selection of his property as the site for the county seat. He generously donated fifty acres for a courthouse and other public buildings, a pivotal moment in the birth of Carthage. By legislative decree, the new town was named Carthage, with a post office established in 1806.

In 1879, Carthage's iconic Second Empire-Style Courthouse, described as "the largest and most elegant brick courthouse within the state of Tennessee," was completed. Carthage had firmly established itself as an important commercial center along the Cumberland River by that time. The William Walton Harvest Festival, held each year on the last Saturday of September, celebrates Captain Walton's legacy at the historic courthouse.

The history of Smith County is one of constant change and development. As settlers streamed into the frontier region, counties were rapidly organized to provide essential government services. Residents in areas distant from the county seat often petitioned the General Assembly for new counties closer to their homes. Since its organization in 1799, Smith County has contributed land to the formation of seven other counties: Jackson (1801), White (1806), Warren (1807), Cannon (1836), Macon (1842), Putnam (1854), and Trousdale (1870). This carving of new counties out of the land continued from the 1780s to a century later.

The majestic Cumberland River, (once called the Shawnee River) which flows through the county, played a significant role in Smith County's growth. Initially, settlers sent their products to market by flatboat or keelboat. The advent of steamboats in the 1820s led to the rise of thriving towns along the river, including Carthage, Rome, and Dixon Springs. Carthage boasted three ferries, providing transportation across the Cumberland River, along with elegant hotels offering food and lodging for travelers. In 1906, a toll bridge replaced the ferries, and on May 3, 1936, the new Cordell Hull bridge, which stands today, opened to traffic. As the old toll bridge was ceremoniously toppled into the river, a new era in transportation for Smith County began.

Throughout its history, Smith County remained predominantly rural and agricultural, characterized by the traditional "hog and hominy" economy. Corn was the primary crop, serving as both livestock feed and a source of cash through whiskey production. The cultivation of tobacco was introduced early and continues to be a major cash crop in the county. Early industries in the county were closely tied to agriculture and forestry. Grist mills, distilleries, sawmills, and tanneries emerged as necessities for converting crops and goods into marketable products. Rich limestone caves yielded saltpeter for gunpowder production, while mussel beds in the rivers provided Cumberland River pearls, some of which found their way to prestigious buyers like Tiffany's in New York. Smith County products like "Split Silk" flour, "Natural Twist" tobacco twists, Bilberry-Welsh spokes, and hogsheads found their way to market in the 19th century. In later years a button factory operated in the town using the spent mussel shells for the production and occasionally you may see a shell with the holes evident. Also, a large #2 pencil factory resided here in the early years using local cedar as the wood stock for the manufacturing process. The county pays homage to our Veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country with a memorial monument on the courthouse lawn. Captain Walton would be proud of the legacy he began in 1799.

The William Walton Harvest Festival held each year on the last Saturday of September, celebrates Captain Walton's legacy at the Historic Smith County Courthouse located at 211 Main Street North, Carthage, Tn 37030. To learn more please open the QR or the link to our website or Facebook post on The William Walton Harvest Festival.

Carthage Map



Carthage Lighthouse



The Carthage, TN lighthouse is a bit of an enigma. Unlike traditional lighthouses, it wasn't built for navigational purposes. It was built around an old water pump as it's construction was cheaper than removing the pump.



Carthage Map



Turner School



A segregation error school that thankfully is no longer needed. It now houses government offices.

Carthage Map



Almond's Antiques



Carthage Map



Cordell Hull



Nobel Peace prize winner that called Smith County his home during much of his political career.

Cordell Hull Bridge

Named for Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Cordell Hull.

Carthage Map



Historic Downtown Carthage



Historic Downtown Carthage, TN boasts a rich history dating back to the early 1800s. Here's a glimpse into its past:

Early Days and Rise as a River Port:

Founded in 1803, Carthage was strategically located at the confluence of the Cumberland and Caney Fork Rivers. This prime spot made it a crucial shipping and steamboat port in the first half of the 19th century, earning it the nickname "River City." Many enterprising businessmen flocked to the town due to its economic potential.

Civil War Era:

The Civil War significantly impacted Carthage. Due to its position on the eastern Highland Rim, the town became a vital Union Army post controlling the Upper Cumberland River region. The town square itself served as a control center for the Federal base.

Railroad Boom and Beyond:

The late 19th century saw another turning point with the arrival of the railroad. The initial section of the Nashville & Knoxville Railroad, connecting Lebanon to Gordonsville, arrived in 1888. Shortly after, a branch line linked Carthage to Hickman Junction. This rail access further bolstered the town's economy.

By 1879, the impressive Second Empire style Smith County Courthouse, a landmark that graces the downtown square today, was built.

Today, Historic Downtown Carthage retains its charm, with many well-preserved buildings from its vibrant past. If you're visiting, you can explore these architectural gems, learn more about local history at the Smith County Heritage Museum, or take a walk along the scenic Cumberland River.

Carthage Map



Battery Knob



BATTERY KNOB EARTHWORKS

Union Gen. George Crook and his infantry brigade occupied Carthage in March 1863. To protect the garrison, defend the town, and secure the Cumberland River crossing for troops and supplies, he constructed a small fortification here for an artillery battery. Crook described the works in a letter to Gen. James A. Garfield on April 2, 1863: “The battery commands all the ground from the town to right of the Gallatin Pike.” Also known as Battry Hill, this privately owned site was added to the Natinoal Register of Historic Places in 2003.

Carthage Map



Carthage Historic Cemetery



Carthage Map



Heritage Museum



Home to a plethora of artifacts and historic pieces
from smith county!

Did you know Smith County is home to not one, but
TWO Nobel Piece Prize winners?



Carthage Map



Old Church



Churches have long been a cornerstone of small towns and communities. Smith County is home to many that have withstood centuries!

South Carthage Map



Eads Museum



The Eads Museum in South Carthage, TN actually had a relatively short run, though it housed a fascinating collection. Here's what we know:

Founders: Ora Wilbert Eads Jr. and his wife Eleanor Eads established the museum.

Location: It was located in a renovated tobacco warehouse on Old State Highway 53 in South Carthage [Smith County Chamber of Commerce].

Collection: The Eads Museum featured a diverse collection of artifacts including:

Documents and letters (spanning centuries and local ones)

Books

Tin pots

Tobacco memorabilia

Rocks and minerals

Antique furniture, art, and quilts ([Tennessee Tech University ArchivesSpace])

Focus: The museum seemed to have a focus on American and international history, with a mix of everyday objects and historical documents.

Closure and Legacy:

Closure Date: Sadly, the Eads Museum closed its doors in 2018 ([Tennessee Tech University News]).

Collection Fate:

A portion of the collection was donated to the Tennessee Tech Foundation [Tennessee Tech University News]. These items are now on display at the White Plains Historic Home in Algood, TN, and in the Tech University Archives. The remaining artifacts, along with the museum building and property, were sold with the intention of funding student scholarships [Tennessee Tech University News].

While the Eads Museum itself no longer exists, its collection continues to be enjoyed and studied in different locations.

South Carthage Map



South Carthage Train Depot



The former home of a train depot now marked by a
gazebo and a health fitness project known locally as
Rails to Trails!

South Carthage Map



South Carthage Shopping and Farmers District



South Carthage is one of 3 municipalities in Smith County. It sits just across the river from county seat Carthage. The necessity to be its own township comes from a time when boats were the only way across the river! You can find old ferry crossing locations on the map as well!

South Carthage Map



Tobacco Warehouse



Smith County is and has always been a community of farmers. Tobacco was a major crop here for many years.

South Carthage Map



Logging Company



Many years ago, this site was home to a logging company. The river was used to float logs to the site. It is said that after closing it burnt for 5 years straight.

South Carthage
HWY 70



Ferry Crossing



One of the former ferry crossings that allowed the
halves of the county to work together!

South Carthage
HWY 70



Cumberland River History



South Carthage
HWY 70



Ivy Agee



Ivy Agee was a prominent figure of the Gordonsville community. Ivy Agee park was named after him!

Gordonsville



Ivy Agee



Gordonsville



Historic Downtown Gordonsville



Gordonsville



Old Tavern



A reminder of the past, this tavern at road and rail
crossroads stands strong.

Gordonsville



Curved Bridge



This unique infrastructure is a rare sight. It is best
seen by Kayak!

Gordonsville



Old Stonewall Store



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Gordonsville



Old Stonewall Store 2



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Gordonsville



Carthage Junction Depot

Original Location

Carthage Junction Depot, now home to art gallery and shows, originally stood at this location in Gordonsville. It was moved to a second location near I-40 and than once more as a preservation effort to its current home.

Gordonsville
South Carthage



Dr. Thayer S Wilson Memorial Bridge



Gordonsville



Hickman Square



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Hickman



Quilt Barn



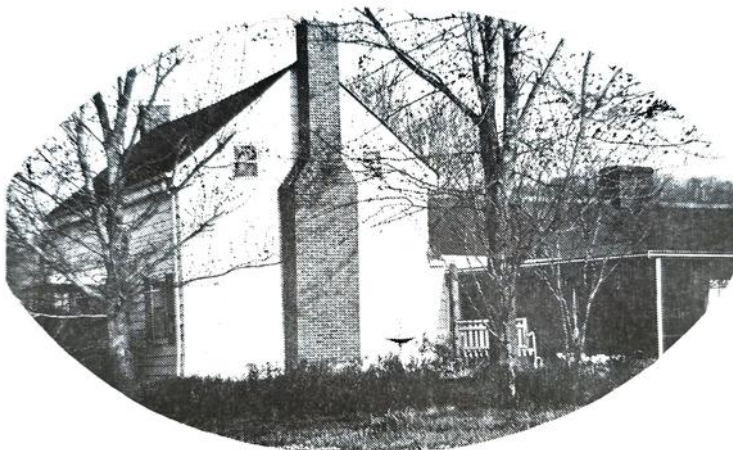
Hickman



Gwaltney House



John and Elizabeth Carroll Gwaltney moved from Virginia and settled in Smith County in the 1700's. The Gwaltraps built a home on what is known today as Jenkins Hill Road, where they raised fourteen children. The home was a log four room house, including an outside room with dirt floors for the kitchen. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, seven children went to join the north and seven stayed in the south. Today, the home still stands, and is a renovated and modernized enlargement of the original log cabin. It is still owned by Gwaltney descendants who have kept the rich heritage alive through the years.



"The Gwaltney Home"

Hickman



Baird Memorial Cemetery



Hickman



Train Wreck of 1949



A wreck that sent waves of pain through the Lancaster community. You can visit the site and read about what happened on the historic marker.

Lancaster Hwy.



Historic Pentecostal Church



Churches have long been a cornerstone of small towns and communities. Smith County is home to many that have withstood centuries!

Lancaster Hwy.



Neel Hunt Store



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Lancaster Hwy.



Lancaster Hill Spring



This one can be hard to spot. Best looked for as a passenger. Lancaster was once home to a system of springs that drew travelers from all over. Now, the last remnants of this is a pipe allowing draining from the side of a cliff above the road.

Lancaster Hwy.



Devil's Garden Road



This is a story best told by the locals:

Lancaster Hwy.



Wayne and Louvinia Store



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the
life of communities before modern travel.

Lancaster Hwy.



Tubb's Service Station



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Lancaster



Lancaster Methodist Church



Churches have long been a cornerstone of small towns and communities. Smith County is home to many that have withstood centuries!

Lancaster



Historic Lancaster Stores



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Lancaster



Original Lancaster Post Office



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Lancaster



Railroad Depot Storage Shed



Lancaster



Historic Baptist Church

Churches have long been a cornerstone of small towns and communities. Smith County is home to many that have withstood centuries!

Lancaster



Unique Infrastructure



Cars being used to hold hillside in place

Lancaster



Dick's Drive In Market



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Lancaster



Betty's Bend Island



Chestnut Mound
/ Betty's Bend



Club Springs Store



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Chestnut Mound
/ Betty's Bend



Stage Coach Robbery



While technically outside Smith County's current
boarder. This robbery was a major event in the
Chestnut Mound Community

Chestnut Mound
/ Betty's Bend



Historic Chestnut Mound



The blight that wiped out American chestnut trees in Chestnut Mound, Tennessee, and throughout the eastern United States, was chestnut blight.

Here's some information about the chestnut blight:

- Cause: It's caused by an invasive fungus called *Cryphonectria parasitica* (formerly *Endothia parasitica*).
- Origin: It accidentally arrived in the early 1900s from Asia, likely on imported Asian chestnut trees.
- Impact: The blight spread rapidly, killing billions of American chestnut trees by the 1950s. These trees were once a dominant species in eastern forests.

Chestnut Mound
/ Betty's Bend



Dixona



The home of Tilman Dixon. One of the first settlers in
Smith County.

Dixon Springs



Historic Home



When driving by this home you can see a stone in the front yard. Not many of these are left. They were used for mounting horses.

Dixon Springs



Original Dixon Springs Bank



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the
life of communities before modern travel.

Dixon Springs



Old Store and Hotel



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Dixon Springs



Historic Church



Churches have long been a cornerstone of small towns and communities. Smith County is home to many that have withstood centuries!

Dixon Springs



Harry Potter Vaughn



Dixon Springs



James Bradley House



Riddleton



Cox-Davis School



Riddleton



Country Club



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Riddleton



Pioneer Kitchen



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Riddleton



Riddleton Drive In



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Riddleton



Scenic Overlook



The Cumberland River has a rich history for much of
Middle, TN.

Tanglewood



Flooded Rock Quarry



It is said that there are fully extended cranes left standing at the bottom of this flooded quarry.

For safety, this area is not open to the public, but driving by the cliff you are closer than you would think! Check it out on google maps satellite view!

Tanglewood



Riverview Speedway



This speedway was once a lively race track. It stand a reminder of family memories for many who call Smith County home.

Tanglewood



Skating Rink



This Skating Rink was the only hangout for youth for many years. It now serves the community as an event center.

Tanglewood



Cordell Hull Reservoir History



Cordell Hull Reservoir, Tennessee and Kentucky

Map showing the length of the Cordell Hull Reservoir from Carthage to Celina. Inset map shows the reservoir location. County lines are shown and a legend explains highway markers, trails, and varying portions of...

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Defeated



Buildings Moved



Defeated



Martin's Grocery



A Legacy of Hospitality

Nestled in the heart of "downtown" Hoggstown, Tennessee, Martin's Grocery is more than a store – it's a family legacy spanning three generations. Founded in 1962 by D.J. "Mutt" Martin, the store has been a cornerstone of the Defeated Creek community for over six decades. The original location, across the road from the current one, is now covered by the waters of Cordell Hull Lake, a testament to the ever-changing landscape.

Nearly Lost, But Found Again

In 2014, the future of Martin's Grocery was uncertain. Jackie and Sandra Martin, the second-generation owners, contemplated selling. But Neely Oldham, their daughter felt the store was like family and became the third generation to serve the Defeated Creek Community in 2015.

Conveniently located near the entrance to Defeated Creek

A Step Back in Time with Modern Convenience

The name "grocery" does not fully represent all Martin's Grocery offers, it retains its historic roots and country charm. They have essentials milk, bread, and canned goods along with fishing supplies, live bait, and gasoline. However, the real draw is the delicious home-cooked food.

Fueling Your Adventures and Craving More?

Start your day right with a hearty breakfast of sausage, bacon, biscuits, and gravy, or fluffy pancakes. Feeling peckish for lunch? Choose from a classic comforting Southern staple, a build-your-own deli sandwich, or a juicy burger – a local favorite. Don't forget to save room for Neely's homemade desserts, like chocolate pie, banana pudding, or peach cobbler, the perfect ending to any meal. Pizza – yes they have it!

The Heart of the Community

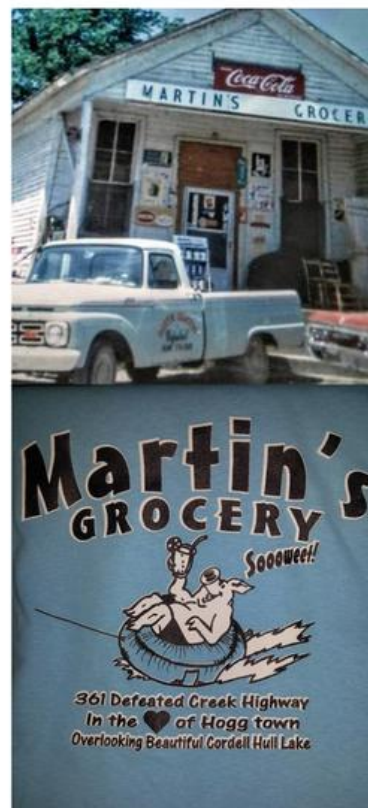
Beyond the delicious food, Martin's Grocery is a gathering place for the Defeated Creek community. Locals catch up over steaming cups of coffee, share stories, and welcome visitors with open arms. Pull up a chair, join the conversation, and experience the true essence of Southern hospitality.

A Destination for Travelers Too

Martin's Grocery isn't just for locals. Travelers venturing off the beaten path on I-40 often find themselves enjoying the warm welcome and delicious food. Whether you're a seasoned traveler or just passing through, Martin's Grocery offers a unique experience you won't find anywhere else.

Make Martin's Grocery Your Defeated Creek Destination

Come experience a taste of history, savor delicious food, soak up the local charm, and feel right at home in the heart of Defeated Creek. Call ahead and place your order!



Defeated



Friendship Primitive Baptist Church



Churches have long been a cornerstone of small towns and communities. Smith County is home to many that have withstood centuries!

Defeated



Dean Hill Plane Crash



Dean Hill tragedy averted

A pleasure excursion aboard a single engine airplane went wrong over the skies of Smith County Tuesday morning.

Carthage Courier / Jul 2, 2024

Kempville



Old Difficult Store



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Kempville



Green Hill Witch



A local legend told to many children in the
Difficult/Defeated area.

Kempville



Truck Buried in Creek Bed



On clear winter days, you can still spot an old truck
left in the creek bed.

Kempville



Old Car Dealer



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Kempville



Historic Home



Kempville



Old Kempville Store



Rural areas are speckled with old stores that were the life of communities before modern travel.

Kempville



Title



Brush Creek



Title



Grant



Title



New Middleton



Rome Ferry



The History from a local:

The earliest ferry connecting Rome with the community on the north side of the Cumberland is believed to date to the early 1800s and launched by Beasleys Bend resident R. H. Cato as a business. In those days, tolls were charged for crossing. Beasleys Bend farmer Comer Haley many years later bought the ferry from Dora Cato Rutland.

The early ferries not only had a ferryman to steer the craft, but a blind mule on board to propel it. The mule walked in a circle to power the paddlewheel in those days. It needed to be blind so it would not become dizzy.

In 1929, Haley “sold” the boat as well its landings on either side of the river to Smith County for \$1 and considerations. Those considerations consisted of an agreement by the county that it would operate the ferry to passengers free of charge as part of the road system until such time as a bridge was built joining Rome and Beasleys Bend.

In 1949, Smith County bought a steel barge to replace the wooden Rome Ferry, and the new craft was christened The Jere Mitchell in honor of a Beasleys Bend man killed during the Invasion of Normandy in World War II.

Ike Napier became ferryman in 1924, operating the boat for Dora Rutland for one half of the fares he took in. In the 1920s, tolls were 50 cents per car, 20 cents per horse and buggy, 10 cents for a horse and rider, and 5 cents for pedestrians. Napier was also afforded a ferryman’s house, which at the time was located at the landing on the north side.

Napier continued operating it for Haley and then Smith County until his 1972 retirement. Relatives of his, including his son, Joe Napier, carried on the service for another two decades or so, when the county shuttered the boat.

Haley granddaughter Bettye Talley Andrews Richardson worked to save the boat, an essential service especially to Beasleys Bend residents like herself. With the help of neighbors, she lobbied state and county officials to keep the ferry open. She and her nonprofit, Friends of the Rome Ferry, won several grants from the state Department of Transportation for the boat’s repair and upkeep.

While Friends of the Rome Ferry achieved some wins toward restoring the boat and its service, the Jere Mitchell was finally beached on the river’s south side. What remains is a heavily vandalized shell of the boat that Richardson had been promised by county officials would be retrofitted into a fishing pier/tourist attraction and not forgotten. That never occurred.

Rome



Hot Springs



Rome



Old School



This school became unused as the pleasant shade community grew in age. It is now used as a community and event center.

Pleasant Shade



Poor House



[https://sites.rootsweb.com/~tnsmit
h/scenes/smithco-poorhouse.htm](https://sites.rootsweb.com/~tnsmit
h/scenes/smithco-poorhouse.htm)

[https://sites.rootsweb.com/~tnsmit
h/cempics/smithpoorcem.htm](https://sites.rootsweb.com/~tnsmit
h/cempics/smithpoorcem.htm)

Pleasant Shade



Jane Reed's



Pleasant Shade



Sanderson Church



This church is in the middle of a field with no
driveway or parking lot!

Pleasant Shade

