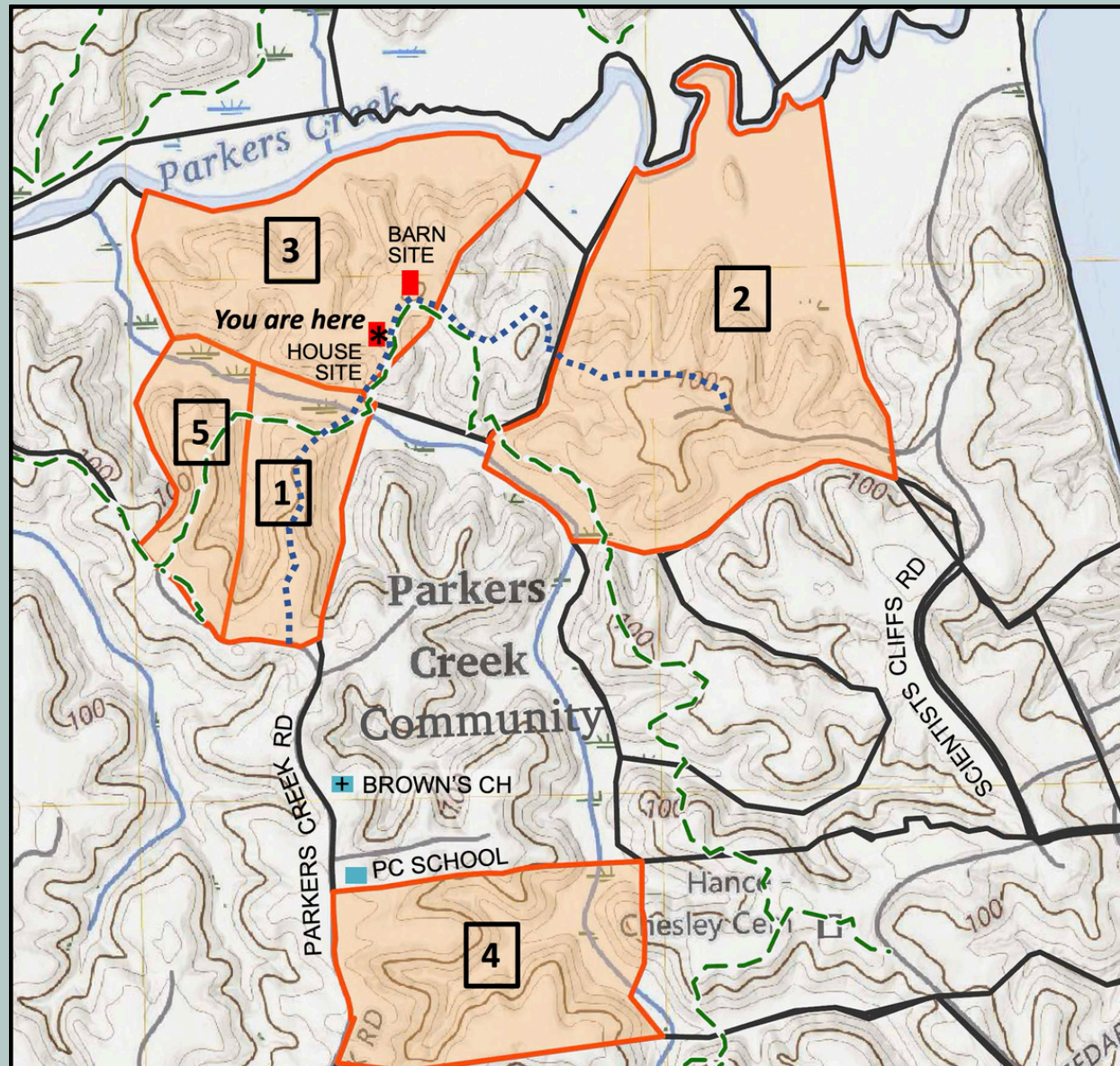


William H. and Suddie Commodore: A Parkers Creek Family

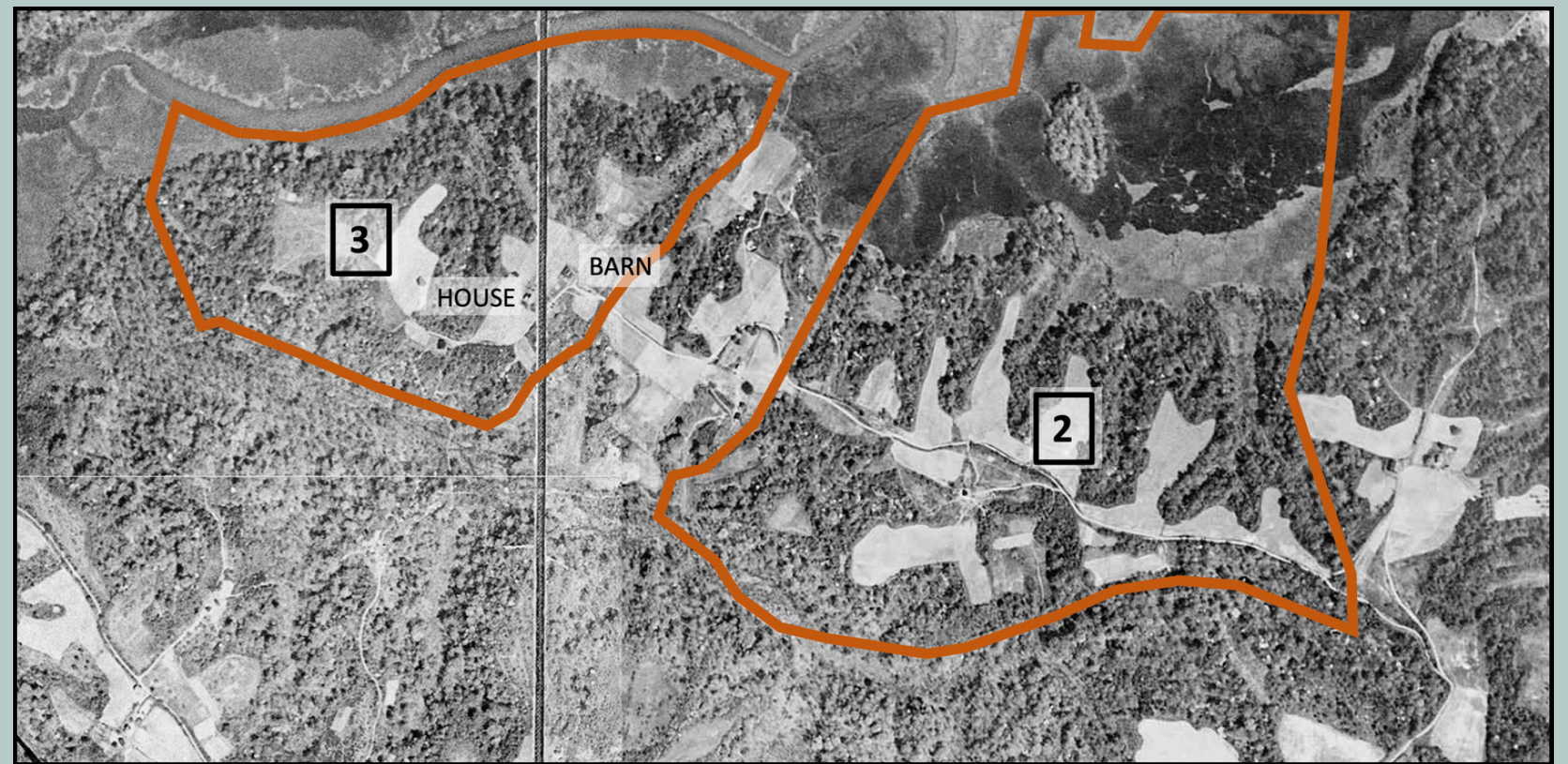
William H. Commodore (1860-1938) was an African American farmer, married to Suddie Commodore (1871-1951). The couple's eleven children were born between 1890 and 1912.

The Commodores owned five tracts of land totaling about 240 acres, purchased from 1894 (tract 1) to 1925 (tract 5). There were four family dwellings on tracts 3 and 2, occupied by the parents and three of their children. Red icons (and this sign) mark the location of William and Suddie's house and an adjacent tobacco barn. This house was destroyed by a fire in the 1950s and the barn fell in the years that followed.



The Commodore family homes were arrayed along a now-abandoned road, shown as a dotted blue line on the map. This road connected the family and their neighbors near the Bay to the Parkers Creek community to the west, defined by Brown's United Methodist Church and the one-room school that served Black students from 1869-1949. Green dashed lines on the map represent current-day ACLT hiking trails.

Land use: this 1938 aerial photograph was produced for the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, with markings added by the Parkers Creek Heritage Trail project. The photo documents a long ridge that flanks the south side of Parkers Creek. Like most terrain near Parkers Creek, this ridge consists of a mix of relatively flat ground suitable for tobacco and other crops, and steep wooded ravines where timber was cut for farm use and for the market. The irregularly shaped open fields of 1938 are now covered by the forest that has grown since the 1950s and 1960s. When this photograph was made, the property between Commodore tracts 3 and 2 was owned and farmed by William and Suddie's grandson, Woodrow Wallace.



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