Pamunkey soils formed in stream terrace sediments in the James River drainage basin of Virginia. These sediments were from every physiographic province in the Virginia Commonwealth. The farm where the Pamunkey soils were first identified is near Jamestown, Virginia. It is considered to be the oldest tilled farm in the United States. The Jamestown historic farm is now in a conservancy program for agricultural use by James City County.

It is very likely that the first settlers at Jamestown were able to survive because of the food they produced on these fertile soils. The Pamunkey Tribe and other Indian Tribes were the first people to recognize the natural ability of this soil to produce food. In recent years these soils have produced record yields of corn and wheat.