Create a Water Trail Map with Google Earth

❖ *Introduction*

Google Earth is a free software that enables users to visualize, edit, and create geographic information. Explore creating a map of your entire water trail using Google Earth. Google Earth enables you to draw the entire length of your trail and add placemarks and labels for access points or other important locations.

❖ *Software requirements*

Users must have the current version of Google Earth installed on their computers. This is a free download at: http://earth.google.com/download-earth.html.

- ➢ Click **Agree and Download**.
- ➢ If you do not see a pop-up window, click on the bar that appears at the top of your screen and click **Download File…**
- ➢ In the File Download pop-up window, click **Run**

Users must also have an internet connection with a network speed of at least 128 Kbits/sec. For detailed system requirements see:

http://earth.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?answer=20701&topic=17093.

❖ *Basic viewing instructions*

> ### Open Google Earth
> - ➢ Double-click the Google Earth icon 🌐 on your desktop to start the application.
> - ➢ When Google Earth opens it will show a Start-up tip (unless you have already disabled this option). Click **Close** to exit.

- ➢ There are three panels on the left side of your screen: **Search**, **Places**, and **Layers**. You will need to use the Search panel for this exercise.
- ➢ Navigation controls in Google Earth
  - ➢ There are a variety of ways to navigate within Google Earth. The program contains a set of controls on the upper right side of your screen that allow you to zoom, pan, and tilt the earth. You can also use your left mouse button to pan and the mouse wheel (if you have one) to zoom and tilt.
  - ➢ Please take some time to look at the detailed navigation instructions here: http://earth.google.com/userguide/v4/#navigating.

➢ Now take some time to familiarize yourself with these navigation tools in Google Earth.

➢ You are now ready to create a water trail map with Google Earth!

Create a Water Trail Map

➢ Use the **Fly To** tab in the **Search** panel to zoom to a known point of interest near your water trail. Major river names, towns, or numeric addresses work well.

➢ Once you are in the general location of your water trail use the navigation controls to zoom and pan so that you can view the entire length of the trail on your screen.

➢ On the top of your screen you will see a series of buttons. Click the **Add Path** button.

➢ In the **New Path** dialog box enter the name for your water trail.

➢ Click the **Style, Color** tab and choose a color that you would like to use for your trail and change the width to "3.0" (do not close the New Path dialog box).

➢ Using your mouse cursor begin drawing your trail by creating vertices with your left mouse button. If you make a mistake you can back up by right clicking on the misplaced vertex.

➢ If your trail contains more than one channel you will need to create a new path for each channel or spur.

➢ For more information on creating paths please visit the Drawing Paths and Polygons help page and watch the video.

➢ You can add labels or other points of interest such as access points by using the **Add Placemark** button. More information on placemarks can be found on the Creating a New Placemark help page.

➢ We suggest adding at least one placemark to label the name of your trail on the map. You can also remove the placemark icon by clicking the **No Icon** button in the icon selector box.

➢ Your resulting map should look something like this:

➢ To save your map as an image file click File (upper left corner of your screen) and choose Save, then Save Image…

❖ *Additional help resources*
➢ The Google Earth website contains a variety of help documentation: http://earth.google.com/support/?hl=en.