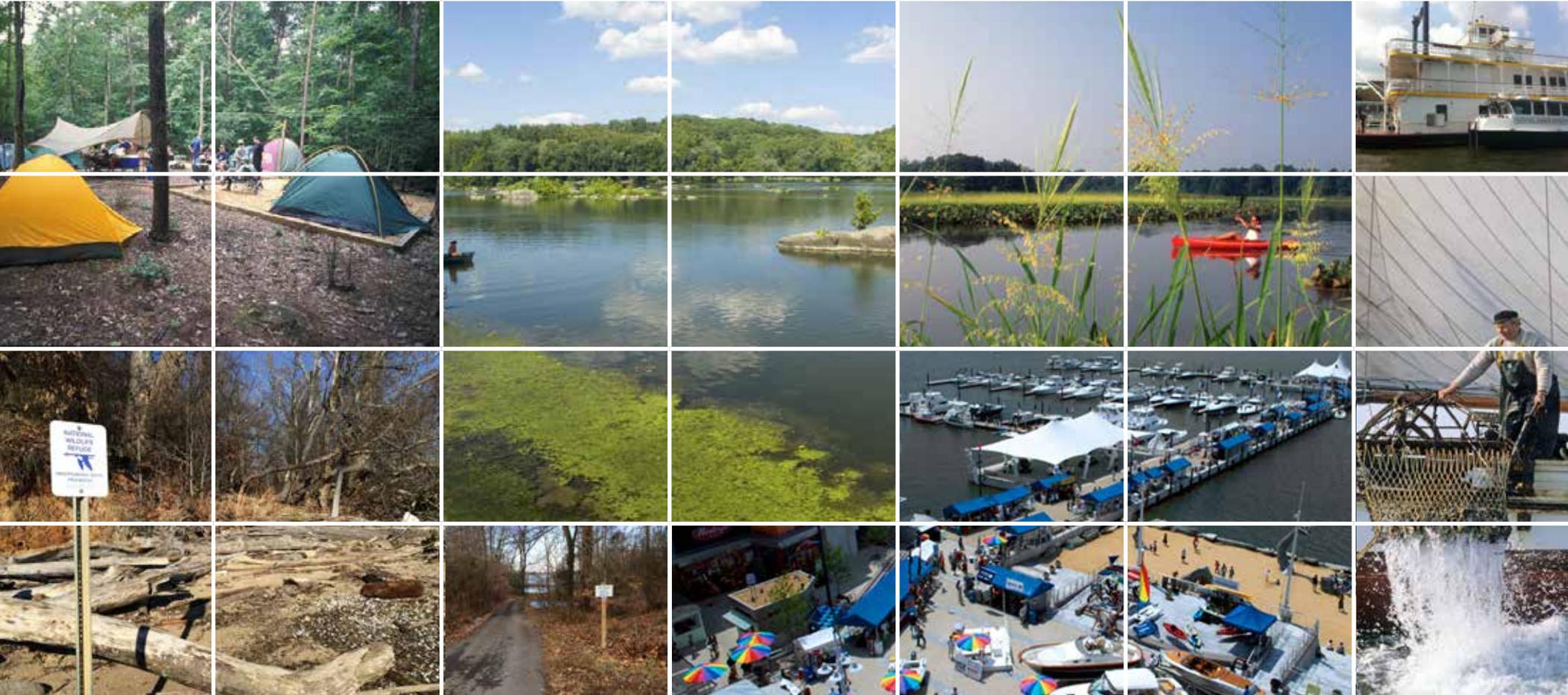




National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



A Partnership for Enhancing the National Trails along the Tidal Potomac River

Potomac River Segment Plan

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The Commonwealth of Virginia, State of Maryland,
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Cover Photos:

Top left: Tent camping (photo credit: NPS archive)

Top left mid: Riverbend Regional Park (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Top right mid: Kayaking along the Chesapeake (photo credit: NPS archive)

Top right: Cherry Blossom of the Potomac Riverboat Company (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Bottom right: Waterman (photo credit: NPS archive)

Bottom right mid: National Harbor (photo credit: NPS archive)

Bottom left mid: Mason Neck State Park (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Bottom left: Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge ((photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

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Digital Copy of the Potomac Segment Plan

An online version of this plan is available for download at <http://www.nps.gov/cajo/getinvolved/potomac-river-segment-plan.htm>

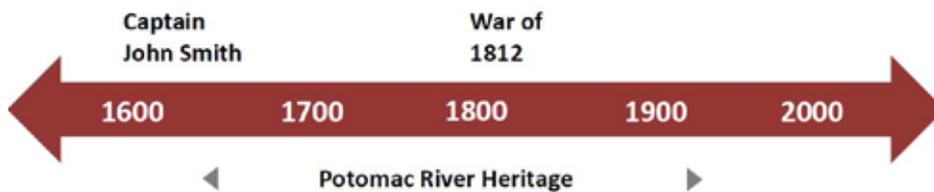
*Note that the document prints in the intended booklet layout if you select "print on both sides" and "flip on short edge".

Executive Summary

Potomac River and the National Trails

The Potomac River perhaps captures more of the American experience than any other river in the country. In many respects, the river, particularly its tidal portion from Great Falls down to the Chesapeake Bay, traces the evolution of the people, land and events of the United States. It is, therefore, not surprising that three congressionally designated national trails, which focus on important events and developments in the region, overlap along this 140 mile stretch of the tidal Potomac River.

They are the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail. While each trail was legislated with respect to specific themes and time periods, they all serve to direct attention to historic moments, cultures, and key resources that played a role in the country's development.



How to Interpret Trail Resources at Partner Sites

Within this stretch of river, more than 100 public sites provide people with access to the waterfront. These sites, which include wildlife management areas, parks, recreation areas, historic sites, museums, and waterfront entertainment districts are managed by a variety of agencies, states, counties and municipal jurisdictions. Not only do these places provide access to the Potomac River and its resources but many also offer high quality visitor experiences. While some of these sites recognize the three national trail routes that occur along or in close proximity to their shorelines, many do not. By virtue of the national trail designations, many of these sites are recognized as trail partners. But in some cases these trail partners may be unsure of how to effectively interpret the significance of national trail resources or best collaborate with other partner sites along the trails when common interpretive, recreational and conservation goals exist.

This page: Undated historic photograph of visitors recreating at Great Falls Park. (photocredit: NPS archive)

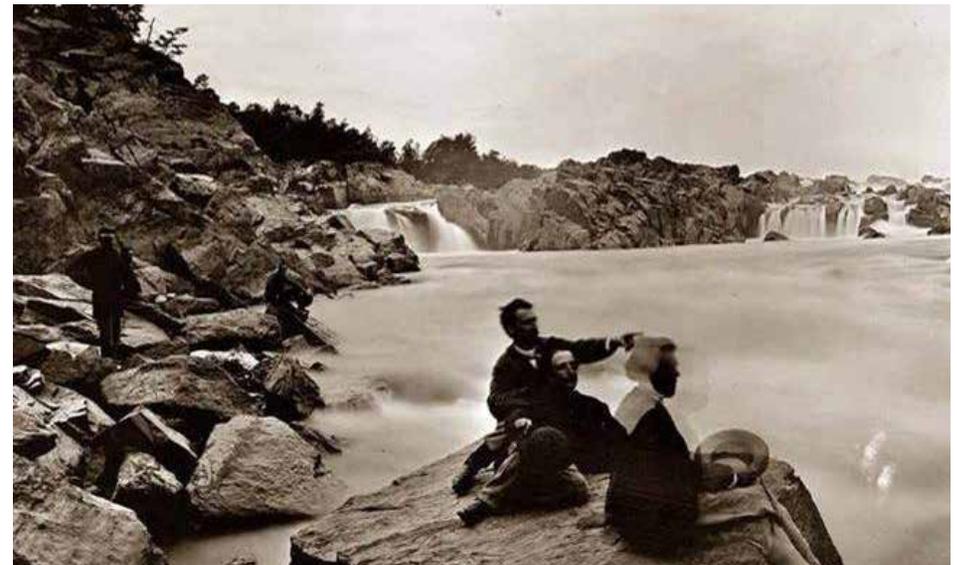
Opposite page: Visitors continue to be drawn to marvel at Great Falls Park. (photocredit: NPS archive)

Common Foundation to Work Towards a Shared Goal

It is clear that these local, regional and nationally significant sites – as well as the river as a whole – could benefit from an alignment of individual site planning and management priorities to identify mutually beneficial opportunities to help advance partner missions in concert with the national trails. It is also clear that national trail managers can aid partner sites by providing better communication on how to best interpret the national significance of trail resources. A strategic plan focusing on the preservation, interpretation, enhancement and enjoyment of the resources along the Potomac River could provide a common foundation for trail managers and trail partners to work towards a shared goal.

Intent of the Plan

It is the intent of the Potomac Segment Plan to provide that foundation— aspiring to enhance the presence of three national trails at partner sites along the tidal Potomac. The Potomac Segment Plan is a collaborative planning effort led by members of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the Chesapeake Conservancy, the Potomac Conservancy and the National Park Service. This core group of planning team members believes that the three national trails can act as the connecting fiber between partner sites, aligning multiple site management goals within a single plan to ensure individual actions are maximized throughout the tidal Potomac River region to benefit as many partners as possible. By utilizing the water- and land-based national trail routes, the natural, historic and cultural resources of individual sites can be connected throughout the region.



Planning Process

The planning process, initiated in early 2013, has engaged hundreds of stakeholders including trail partners, public land managers, private developers, conservation groups and many other affiliations interested in the history, health, prosperity and recreational enjoyment of the tidal Potomac River. Multiple focus group meetings, stakeholder workshops and individual interviews were held over the course of two years to learn what people are doing, what they would like to be doing and what could be done to enhance trail visitor experiences. Information was also gathered on any planned actions that would help address the identified needs and opportunities. This outreach resulted in:

- Buy-in and support from local site managers and Potomac-based organizations throughout the study area;
- Strengthened and new partnerships between multiple federal, state, local agencies and non-government organizations;
- Verification of the inventory of national trail resources that currently exist at partner sites along the Potomac; and
- Partner-driven suggestions on significant trail-related resources and how national trail recognition can best serve trail partners and Potomac region visitors..

Partner-driven Opportunities

This plan reflects the priorities and needs expressed by the site managers and stakeholders along the tidal Potomac. Stakeholders believe that the national trails can act as a tool to complement their existing programs and create new opportunities for potential site enhancements. All partners agreed that cross-site promotion and consistent storytelling of interpretive trail themes could help strengthen the connection between sites and enhance the existing network of trail partners. Using the information gained through this process, the plan offers strategies and recommendations to “make the trails more real” along the Potomac through:

- Identification of near-term opportunities, referred to as “action items”, including both cross-cutting (applicable at trail-related sites region-wide) and site-specific, that will promote the national trails at partner sites by protecting resources, enhancing interpretation or creating new public access;
- Creation of immersive trail experiences for visitors that connect individual sites to multiple partner sites along the routes of three national trails; and
- Leveraging partnerships to better serve visitor needs, discovery of new funding sources and engagement of the next generation of environmental stewards by helping to link individual site planning efforts.

Living Document

The Potomac Segment Plan is intended to be a “living document” that will be updated periodically to reflect new opportunities and actions for partnership collaboration and enhancement of the national trails. Progress on action items and updates on plan implementation will be reported to stakeholders on a regular basis.

There are hundreds of opportunities outlined in this plan. Some await funding, others a project sponsor, and many are “shovel-ready”. While implementation will require the work and support of all the partners and stakeholders, the results of these efforts could be truly amazing. The three national trails will become “real” and an attraction for visitors, natural and cultural resources important to trail integrity will be protected, local economies will be enhanced, and people will be better able to connect with the stories, places and events which have labeled the Potomac as the “Nations River”.





Introduction

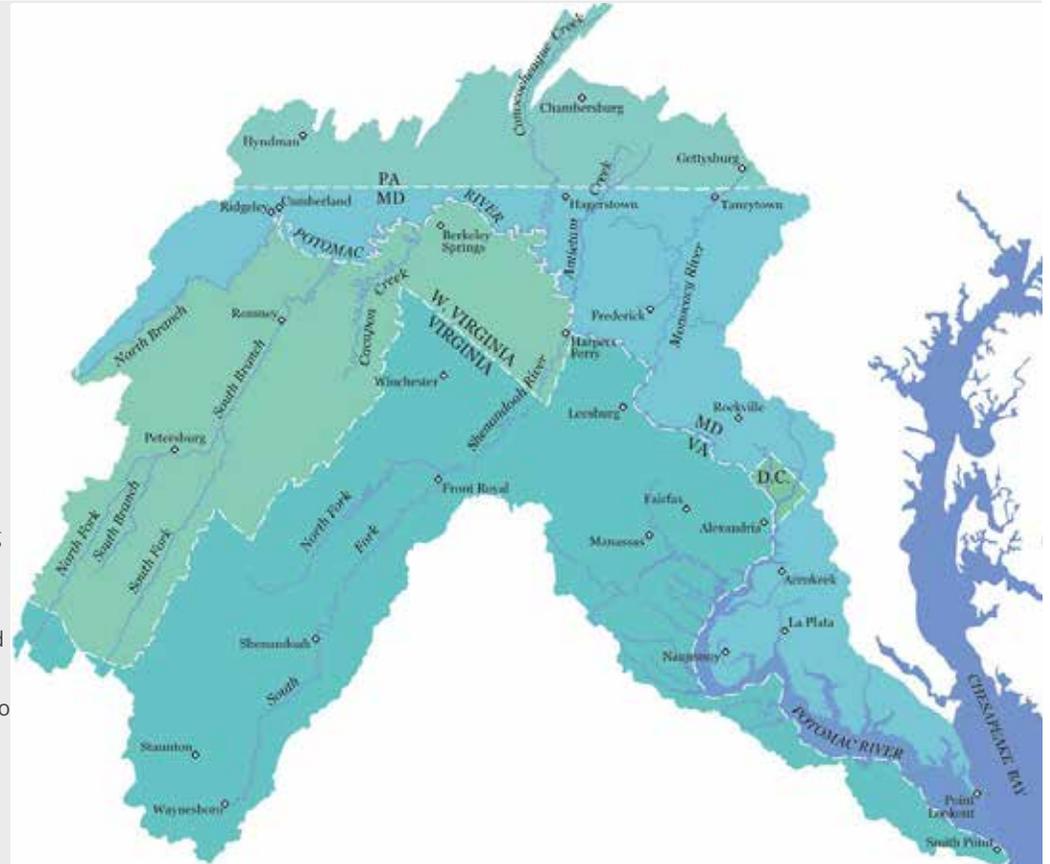
Purpose of the Potomac Segment Plan

The Potomac Segment Plan outlines how three national trails could be enhanced along the Potomac River over the next several years. Based on feedback from site managers, community advocates and other stakeholders along the river, the plan identifies specific opportunities at partner sites along the tidal Potomac River that would make the trails more visible and meaningful for visitors, and would seamlessly interpret diverse trail-related stories and resources. New or enhanced public access, linking routes between partner sites and compelling hands-on experiences, referred to as "Action Items", are highlighted as opportunities to advance the trails as educational, recreational, preservation and tourism assets for the region.

The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in North America and one of the most productive in the world. The Bay supports more than 3,600 species of plants and animals, including fish and shellfish, migratory waterfowl and an array of mammals.

The Potomac is the only river in the U.S. with three national trails running nearly the entire length of its tidal corridor: the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. The national trails serve as tools to provide new and enhanced ways for residents and visitors to experience the tidal Potomac. Recreational, educational and conservation opportunities enable people to imagine lands and waters as they might have been long ago, embrace an important part of our collective heritage, embark on personal journeys of exploration and discovery, cultivate a stewardship ethic and provide a positive impact to local economies along the route.

While there are comprehensive management plans (CMP) for the individual national trails in this region, the strategies herein focus on the entire length of the trails (collectively over 4,000 miles) and do not get into great detail at the local level of planning. This document focuses on an approximately 140 mile stretch of the Potomac River, from Great Falls to the mouth of the river at the Chesapeake Bay, where the three national trails overlap to explore shared organizational priorities and resource-leveraging opportunities that will best serve the communities within the Potomac corridor and fulfill the intent of the National Trail System Act.



The plan describes this approach in depth, providing the following:

- A description of the various trails and a foundation for trails development (Chapter 1);
- A discussion of over arching strategies for supporting and linking the trails (Chapter 2);
- A description of seven trail sections and specific actions for enhancing the trail experiences and connecting sites within individual focus areas (Chapter 3); and
- A framework for coordination and implementation strategies to build partnerships, leverage funding and stimulate implementation (Chapter 4).

Opposite page: Satellite view of the Chesapeake Bay centered on the tidal Potomac River

This page: Graphic indicating the Potomac River Watershed area

The Region and the River

The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in North America and one of the most productive in the world. The Bay supports more than 3,600 species of plants and animals, including fish and shellfish, migratory waterfowl and an array of mammals. Habitats within the 64,000-square mile Chesapeake Bay watershed range from the Piedmont Plateau and upland forests to tidal marshes and swamps. The Chesapeake provides many important economic, recreational and educational resources for those who live, work and travel here.

The Potomac River, second largest tributary to the Chesapeake Bay, is steeped in history and scenic beauty. In 1608, Captain John Smith became the first European explorer known to navigate the river. He saw a waterway teeming with fish, crabs and oysters, and a forested shoreline thick with wildlife. For thousands of years prior to exploration, American Indians inhabited the region in temporal communities that became relatively permanent with the advent of agriculture.

The tidal Potomac River corridor—central to the Nation's political evolution—bears a rich cultural history and is endowed with numerous historic sites, natural areas and communities. The river has witnessed the growth and development of the United States; from European contact with American Indians in the early 17th century to the American Revolution; from the War of 1812 to the Civil War; from slave ships supporting tobacco plantations to steamboats supporting the Industrial Revolution. The lives and accomplishments of George Washington, Robert E. Lee and other famous Americans are woven into the Potomac's intricate history. Before railroads and roadways dominated the landscape, the river served as a major highway transporting trade goods and travelers to the Chesapeake and beyond. As the United States continues to evolve, the ability of the Potomac to meet the demands of a grateful Nation remains constant.

Today, travelers along the Potomac can enjoy stretches of undeveloped landscapes evocative of John Smith's time. Many of the most important historical sites in the nation are located along its shores. Havens of protected lands offer glimpses of bald eagles, osprey and other wildlife. The Potomac is a microcosm of the vividly scenic and culturally rich Chesapeake Bay region and continues to support a variety of industrial, civic, military and public recreational opportunities for millions of area residents and visitors.

Health of the Potomac River

The current health of the Potomac River is questionable at best. American Rivers named the Potomac River the nation's most endangered river on its 2012 list of the top ten most threatened rivers in America. Although the Potomac is cleaner than it once was, the river is threatened by many factors, including population growth, storm-water runoff, combined sewer overflows, suburban sprawl, pharmaceutical pollutants, lawn fertilizers, loss of healthy forests, erosion, industrial waste and pollution.

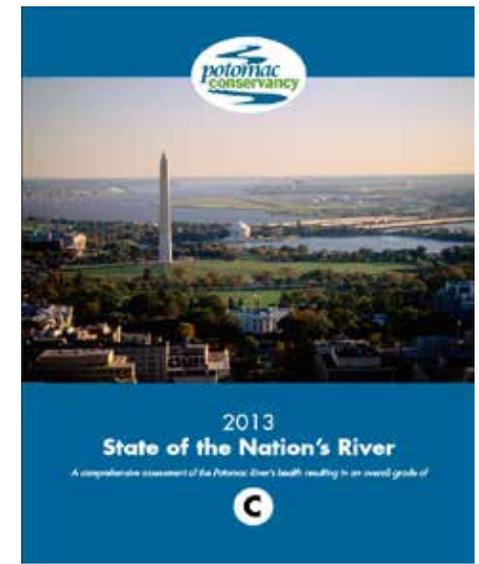
The water quality of the Potomac received a "C" grade in the Potomac Conservancy's 2013 State of the Nation's River report (an improvement from 2011's D grade). Nearly seven million people live within the Potomac Watershed, and the Potomac River provides 486 million gallons of drinking water to over 4.5 million people in the Washington DC metro area every day. However, many communities warn against the consumption of fish caught from the river and restrict swimming access due to pollutants, contaminants and potential irritants in the water. The majority of recreational use on the Potomac is boating; personal paddle craft, sail and power boats.

There are many other planning documents which outline strategies for evaluating and improving the health of the river, including scientific analysis, zoning and development restrictions and construction best management practices. This document aims to improve the health of the river by building stewardship among the residents and visitors to the area through enhanced opportunities for recreational, historic, natural and cultural resources experiences along the tidal Potomac.



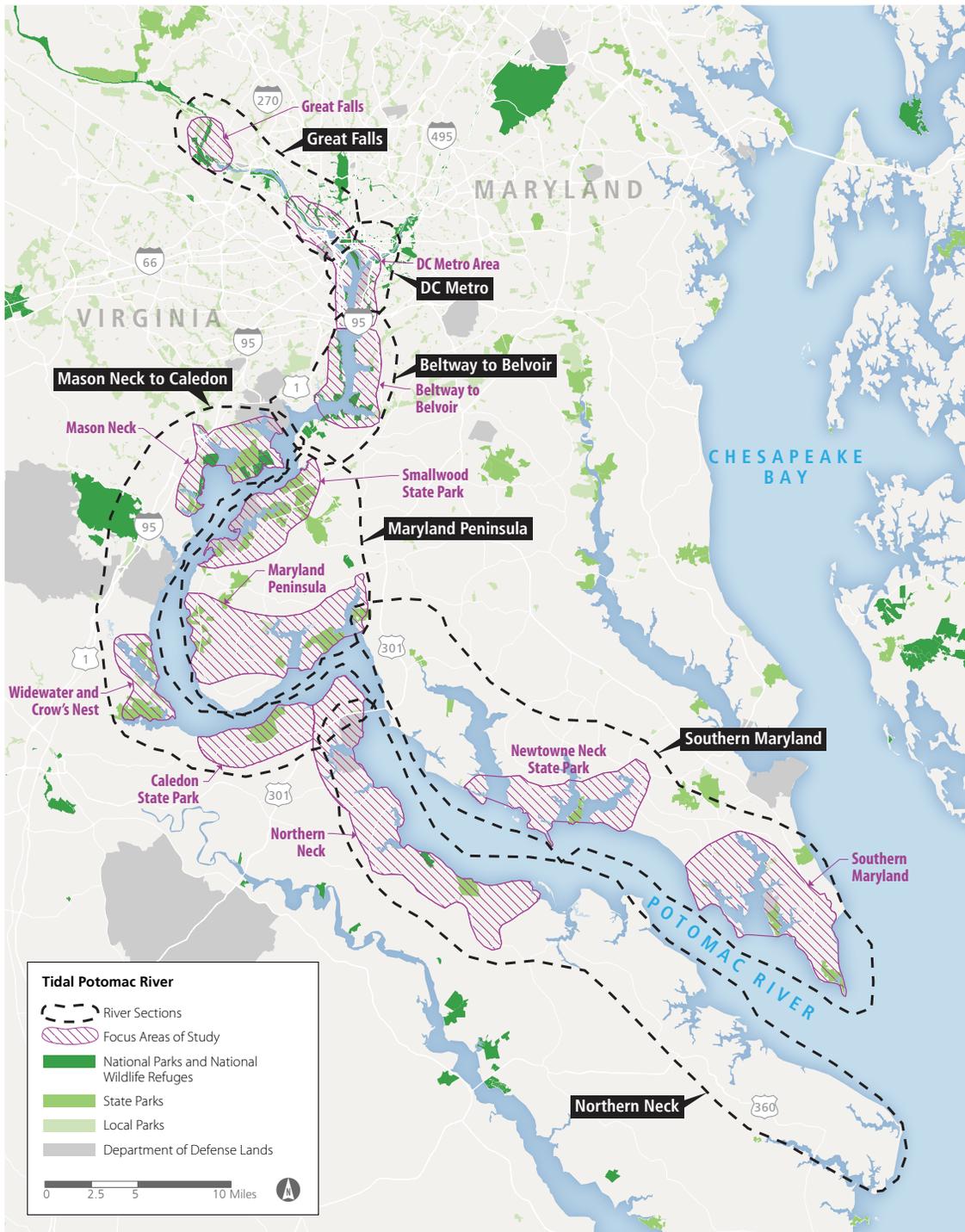
“We look for people to stand up, show up and speak up to local decision makers about the importance of clean water to the community; the importance of green spaces that contribute so much to the quality of life in the region.”

-Hedrick Belin, President, Potomac Conservancy



<http://potomac.org/river-friendly-growth>

This page: Mason Neck State Park (photo credit: Christopher A. Koberg)



A series of meetings and interviews with a variety of stakeholders provided key insights regarding ways to further develop the trails along the Potomac. Interviewees included tourism officials; local, state and federal government representatives; American Indians; site managers; private sector tour operators; and non-governmental entities.

Interviewees concluded that to make the trails more viable and “real”, several conditions and activities are necessary:

- Cultivate the areas with significant trail-related resources which already have visitor services and operational capacity.
- Connect people to trail-related places, stories and themes through technology, integrated signage and interactive and immersive experiences.
- Use multiple media, events and other promotional tools to raise the trails’ visibility and encourage visitors to experience the resources associated with each trail.
- Conserve lands to link and buffer existing sites and to preserve natural and cultural features or landscapes.
- Complete and market early project successes to build momentum and to help generate funding for additional phases of trail development.

An assessment of resources within the river corridor, along with numerous site visits, suggests a number of distinct “focus areas” with high-quality trail-related resources, enriched existing or potential trail experiences and existing capacity to provide visitor services.

Based on this assessment, the following core approach was developed to enhance the trails along the Potomac in the near-term:

- Identify river sections with distinct characteristics, demographics and jurisdictional boundaries;
- Within each section, define one or more focus areas targeted for relatively rapid trail-related enhancement;
- Outline a set of strategies for enhancing these focus areas and connecting, promoting, interpreting, protecting and further developing the trails;
- Address additional areas for trail-related enhancement; and
- Recognize associated locations that can provide support services.



Top: Riverbend Regional Park (photo credit: NPS archive)

Chapter 1

Foundation for Trail Development

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**National Historic and National Scenic Trails
within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed**

- Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail
- Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail
- Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and Scenic Byway

Chapter 1

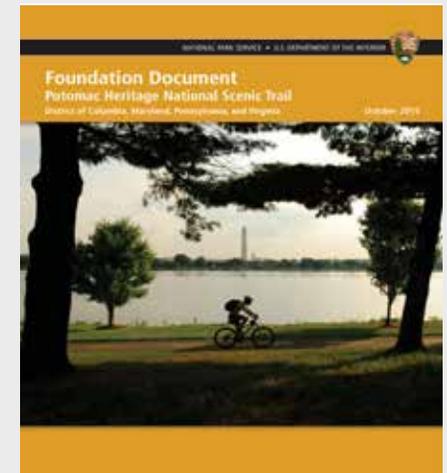
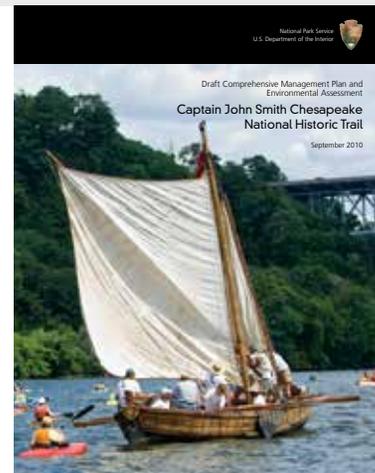
Foundation for Trail Development

Executive Order 13508

In May 2009, President Obama issued Executive Order 13508 on Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration. In the Executive Order, President Obama declared the Chesapeake Bay a “national treasure” and ushered in a new era of federal leadership, action and accountability. The purpose of the Executive Order is “to protect and restore the health, heritage, natural resources, and social and economic value of the nation’s largest estuarine ecosystem and the natural sustainability of its watershed.” The Executive Order contains goals to create new public access to the waters of the Chesapeake and to conserve landscapes to maintain water quality, habitat, sustainable working forests, farms, maritime communities and cultural, community and indigenous values. Specifically, a commitment was made to add 300 new public access sites and protect an additional 2 million additional acres of lands identified as high conservation priorities at the federal, state or local level by 2025 including 695,000 acres of forest land of highest value for maintaining water quality.

The development potential of these trails is fundamentally affected by 1) the specific objectives defined for the individual trails in their enabling legislation and comprehensive management plans, and 2) the resources and existing conditions upon which development objectives and trail enhancements are predicated.

While there are some federally owned properties along the trail routes, the majority of the public lands along the trails are owned by state park or local government agencies in Virginia and Maryland. Coordination with these agencies' management, development and conservation strategies to identify partnership opportunities for mutually beneficial projects is critical to the goal of promoting the national trails along the Potomac River.



Supporting Legislation and Plans

The National Trails System Act

The National Trails System Act of 1968 (the Act) [82 Stat. 919, Public Law 90-543], as amended, creates a national system of trails to provide for the outdoor recreational needs of an expanding population and to promote the preservation of and access to the outdoor areas and historic resources of the Nation. The Act declares that trails should be established primarily near the urban areas of the Nation and secondarily within scenic areas and along historic travel routes. The purpose of the Act is to provide the means for attaining these objectives by instituting a national system of recreation, scenic and historic trails, and by prescribing the methods and standards by which additional components may be added to the system.

Supporting Planning Documents

Comprehensive Management Plans (CMPs) for both the *Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail* (CAJO) and the *Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail* (STSP) provide the guidance needed by the National Park Service (NPS) and partners to achieve the legislative mandates and visions for the trails (and the Star-Spangled Scenic Byway). The Foundation Document: *Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail*, complemented by local and regional plans and by statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plans, provides guidance for NPS staff, trail segment management partners and volunteers in development and management of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. Interpretive plans have been completed for all three national trails.



Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail

The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (CAJO) commemorates the explorations of Captain John Smith on

the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries from 1607 to 1609, tracing approximately 3,000 miles of his voyage routes. Established in 2006, it is the first water-based national historic trail. The promise of the trail is to help millions of people in the region and elsewhere experience, envision, come to understand and care to protect present-day resources that are reminiscent of what explorers and native inhabitants of the region may have experienced over 400 years ago. The trail is significant as: Smith's explorations of the Chesapeake Bay region, and his subsequent writings and maps, encouraged English settlement of Virginia, the Bay area and the eastern seaboard; the Chesapeake Bay region of 1608 was home to complex societies of thousands of native people; and the Bay's rich natural resources helped attract English settlement.

Purposes of the trail are to:

- Commemorate the exploratory voyages of Captain John Smith on the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries in 1607-1609;
- Share knowledge about the American Indian societies and cultures of the seventeenth century;
- Interpret the (historic and contemporary) natural history of the Bay; and
- Provide recreational land and water experiences on the trail.



"...Heaven and earth have never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation, were it fully manured and inhabited by industrious people. Here are mountains, hills, plaines, valleyes, rivers, and brookes, all running into a faire Bay, compassed but for the mouth, with fruitful and delightsome land. "

-Captain John Smith, Excerpt from publication referencing his maps and observations while exploring the Chesapeake Bay, 1607-1609

Key interpretive themes:

- Captain John Smith's voyages on the Chesapeake, and his subsequent maps and writings, profoundly impacted world politics and the evolution of our nation by spurring European settlement of the Bay region and the eastern seaboard, influencing colonial affairs for more than a century, disrupting the native peoples' lifeways in the mid-Atlantic, and increasing human influences on the Bay environment.
- Substantial and sophisticated societies of native peoples existed in the Chesapeake region centuries before Smith arrived and although their communities were disrupted and some were ultimately displaced by European colonization, many descendant tribes sustain their identities and cultural values in the region today.
- During the 17th century, Captain John Smith encountered a verdant and varied ecosystem in the Chesapeake Bay region and though much has changed during the intervening centuries, there are still places where such beauty and diversity endure, and efforts are underway to conserve and restore aspects of the Bay's integrity.

Left: Map of Virginia and Chesapeake Bay inspired by explorations of Captain John Smith in the early 1600s



Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail

The Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail (STSP) was established in 2008 to commemorate the people, places and events that led to the birth of the

National Anthem during the War of 1812. The trail, coupled with the Maryland- Designated Star-Spangled Banner Scenic Byway, traverses approximately 560 miles of land and water routes in Virginia, the District of Columbia and Maryland along which British forces and American defenders travelled and fought. It traces the Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac, Patuxent and Patapsco rivers, along with land routes stretching from Solomons to North Point. The trail commemorates an historic travel route of significance to the entire Nation; is recognized for its potential to provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of America's expanding population; and its land and water routes offer outstanding recreational opportunities along the historic roads and scenic waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Purposes of the trail are to:

- Protect the sites, landscapes and routes significant to understanding the people, events and ideals associated with the War of 1812 in the Chesapeake region and the story of the Star-Spangled Banner;
- Provide educational and interpretive opportunities related to the War of 1812 and its relevance to modern society; and
- Foster improved opportunities for land- and water-based recreation and heritage tourism.

Key interpretive themes:

- Almost thirty years after gaining independence, Americans resisted a land and water invasion by Great Britain
- Military events in the Chesapeake Bay region became central to the outcomes of a broader three-year struggle that established a foundation for the United States' economic independence and military strength.
- During the War of 1812, individuals in the Chesapeake Bay region endured great political, economic and emotional upheaval and faced personal choices that profoundly impacted domestic life, influenced the evolution of U.S. government and commerce and had ramifications far beyond the battlefield.



- In the early 1800s, the Chesapeake Bay region – due to its central location on the eastern seaboard, network of navigable waterways, robust natural resources and fertile agricultural lands – served as a hub for trade, industry and government, making it a prime target for the British.
- The United States flag and “The Star-Spangled Banner” anthem – symbolizing the resilience of the new nation and the American character – inspired a renewed sense of nationalism in U.S. citizens after the War of 1812. These endure today as potent international icons of the United States of America.



Top: Cannons and Flag at Fort McHenry (photo credit: NPS archive)



Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail

The Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (POHE) is a developing network of trails between the mouth of the Potomac River and the Allegheny Highlands in western

Pennsylvania. Authorized in 1983, POHE was also recognized administratively in 1985 as a “unit” of the National Park System. At present, the POHE network includes approximately 710 miles of existing and planned trails and routes, recognized through “memoranda of understanding” between the NPS and various POHE segment management partners in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia. As articulated in the Foundation Document:

The Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail designation provides a means to establish an inter-connected trail network between the mouth of the Potomac River and the Allegheny Highlands and offers—through partnerships with and among agencies and citizen groups—exceptional hiking and other non-motorized recreational and educational experiences rich with geographic, ecological, historical, and social diversity. With the Potomac River as the namesake and a primary resource, the POHE corridor and evolving network are significant in a national context.

Purposes of the trail are to:

- Provide coordination among citizen groups; local, regional and state agencies; and federal land managers in the development and management of a braided network of trails for hiking and other non-motorized forms of travel within a corridor between the mouth of the Potomac River and the Laurel Highlands of western Pennsylvania;
- Serve as a national meeting ground of ideas and practices, reflecting a desire for the conservation of lands and waters, for educational opportunities combined with outdoor recreation, and for a celebration of regional diversity and distinctiveness;
- Increase environmental awareness for cleaner rivers and streams in the trail corridor; and
- Provide technical assistance and financial support to citizen groups; local, regional and state agencies; and federal land managers in support of the above.



Key Interpretive Themes:

- Between the Chesapeake Bay and the Allegheny Highlands, the trail corridor includes portions of five distinct physiographic regions. Each region, in different ways, has inspired and shaped hundreds of human generations with beauty, abundance and utility.
- The corridor designated for the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail expresses George Washington’s vision of a “great avenue into the Western Country.” The first president’s association with the Potomac River strengthened his life-long goal of “the practicability of an easy and short communication between the Waters of the Ohio and Potomac.”
- The great national conflict of the Civil War is reflected in microcosm within the trail corridor, with the Potomac River often acting as a boundary between North and South.
- The Potomac River is recognized nationally as a model of successful restoration and serves as an ongoing challenge for sustained ecological health.

- As a boundary between north and south and an east to west route into the North American interior, the Potomac River has been a crossroads of opportunity, diversity and conflict.
- Routes connecting the Potomac River with the Forks of the Ohio provided an essential context for the development of the United States Republic.

Top: Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail marker on fence post (photo credit: Donald E. Briggs)



“Recreational opportunities are premised on reasonable water quality.”

-Don Owen, Potomac River Watershed Circuit Rider, Land Trust Alliance

Top Left: The Cherry Blossom of the Potomac Riverboat Company fleet (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Bottom Left: Canoe trailer (photo credit: Sultana Education Foundation Instagram feed)

Top Right: Mount Vernon Trail along the Potomac River (photo credit: NPS archive)

Recreational Opportunities and Visitor Experiences

The Potomac River offers a broad spectrum of visitor opportunities. As the fourth largest river on the Atlantic Coast, the river can vary from Class V rapids to a stream-like route, and from a bustling urban waterway to wide open “big water.” Users can find remote areas with hidden rivers and creeks, as well as busy port towns with ample amenities.

Visitors travel to historic sites, parks and wildlife refuges to reconnect with the outdoors and their heritage. These places and the recreational opportunities they provide are a significant source of the rich quality of life in the Chesapeake region. The existing and developing trails within the Potomac River corridor encompass diverse land and water routes, and connect with an array of public recreation and historic sites. The routes vary from the 18-mile

Mount Vernon Trail, to hiking trails within Douglas Point State Resource Management Area and the Northern Neck Heritage Trail Bicycling Route, to the 40-mile Occoquan Water Trail and the Point Lookout Water Trail. Driving routes include the George Washington Memorial Parkway and numerous scenic byways. Sites range from the popular Great Falls Park, with an annual visitation of nearly 500,000 visitors, to the remote Friendship Farm Park in southern Maryland.

Recreational and educational experiences offer a forum for visitors to explore the major interpretive themes of each trail. Through the use of recreational facilities and interpretive media and programming, residents and visitors can understand and appreciate Smith’s 17th century explorations on the Bay, American Indian cultures past and present, the ramifications of the War of 1812 in the Chesapeake region, and the lasting legacies of America’s colonial period.



“For over 20 years, Atlantic Kayak has been leading paddling tours to significant sites along the Potomac, which pre-dates two of the three national trails represented in this area. Experiences include paddling the bird-rich region of Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve near Alexandria; getting a water-based history tour of Georgetown; and visiting the tribal grounds of the Piscataway Indian Nation along Piscataway Creek. Strengthening the connections to trail resources on these tours with NPS interpretive stories would add to the experience.”

-Judy Lathrop, Owner, Atlantic Kayak Company

Important visitor-related resources include:

- Developed water trails throughout the Bay region
- Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System
- Existing public access sites, including those providing boat launches, beaches, swimming, fishing, camping and wildlife viewing
- Hiking trails and bicycling routes
- Scenic byways and auto tour routes
- Heritage tourism historical and cultural sites
- Federal, state and local parks/protected areas
- Visitor centers and contact stations
- Visitor support services including lodging, food service, rental equipment, etc.

Between Great Falls and Point Lookout, the Potomac River, its tributaries and the sites along their shores offer a wide variety of educational and recreational trail-related visitor experiences. There are a multitude of visitor support facilities, particularly between Great Falls and Mason Neck. The D.C. metropolitan area abounds with visitor attractions and associated amenities. Southern Maryland and Virginia’s Northern Neck boast myriad historic sites and quaint waterfront communities. Interpretive and educational opportunities are available at key sites throughout the Potomac corridor, including the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, the City of Alexandria, National Harbor, Mount Vernon, Piscataway Park and Westmoreland State Park. The three trail designations can serve to support existing and new partnerships necessary to enhance the robust menu of visitor opportunities and connect key sites along the Potomac River.

Top: Paddling along the Occoquan River (photo credit: Chris Spielman)

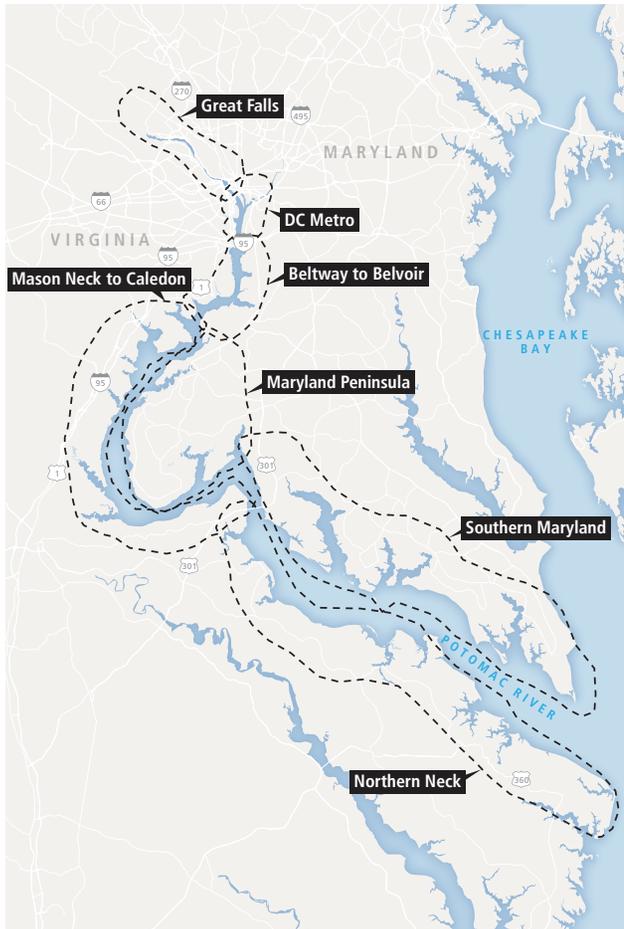


Top: Boat ramp at Point Lookout State Park (photo credit: Sarah Rogers)

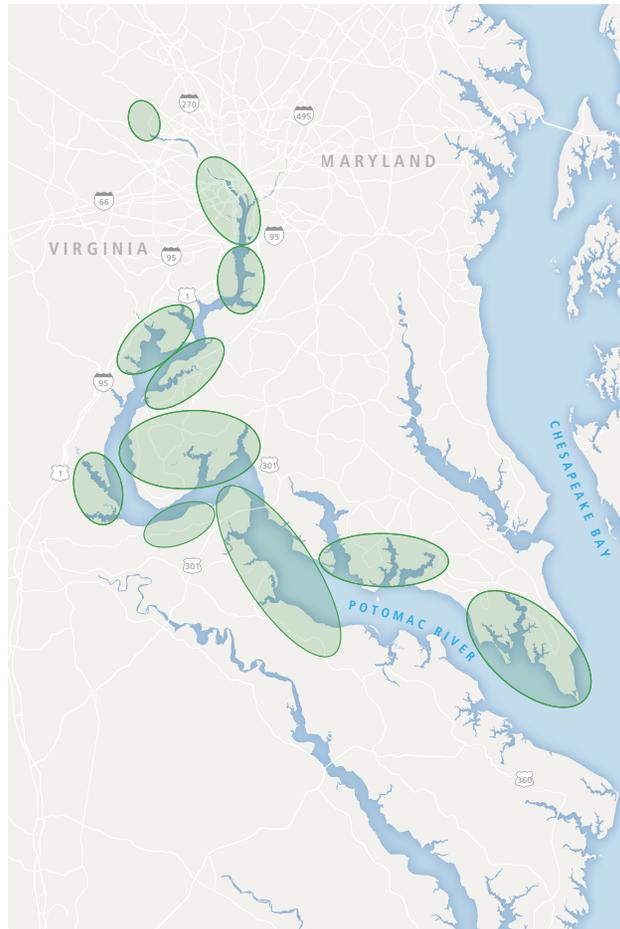
Chapter 2

Developing the Trails Along the Potomac

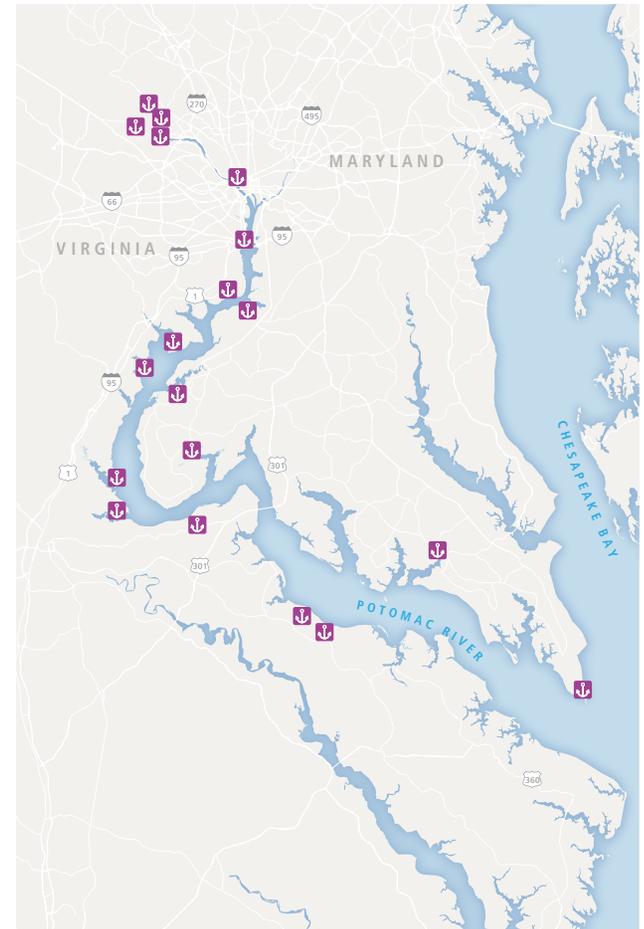
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For planning purposes, the tidal Potomac River was divided into 7 River Sections based on shared geography, population densities, clustering of public land units, visitor usage patterns jurisdictional boundaries, and transportation infrastructure.



Within each of the river sections, a resource inventory analysis identified Focus Areas that contain resources and stories associated with the national trails and currently provide a variety of immersive visitor experience opportunities.



Within the Focus Areas, Anchor Sites were identified to serve as primary locations for orienting visitors to the stories and resources associated with the national trails and for directing visitors to resources and opportunities along the river.

Developing the Trails Along the Potomac

"All three national trails, Captain John Smith Chesapeake, Star-Spangled Banner, and the Potomac Heritage, are important for interpreting the history and archeology of Prince George's County, Maryland."

-Donald Creveling, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Planning Approach

The study area of this plan is the tidal Potomac, generally between Great Falls (located just north of the Potomac River Gorge and Washington, D.C.) and the mouth of the river (Point Lookout, MD and Smith Point, VA). For planning purposes, the river was divided into seven distinct "**River Sections**" (based on shared geography, population densities, clustering of public land units, visitor usage patterns, jurisdictional boundaries and existing transportation infrastructure):

1. Great Falls (VA/MD) [Riverbend Park to Francis Scott Key Memorial Bridge]
2. DC Metro [Francis Scott Key Memorial Bridge to Woodrow Wilson Bridge]
3. Beltway to Belvoir (VA/MD) [Woodrow Wilson Bridge to Fort Belvoir (VA)/Piscataway Park (MD)]
4. Mason Neck to Caledon (VA) [Mason Neck peninsula to Caledon State Park]
5. Maryland Peninsula (MD) [Pomomkey Creek to Port Tobacco River]
6. Southern Maryland (MD) [Zekiah Swamp Natural Environmental Area to Point Lookout State Park]
7. Northern Neck (VA) [Governor Harry W. Nice Bridge (Route 301) to Smith Point near Reedville, VA]

Each River Section contains one or more **Focus Areas**, targeted for near-term trail enhancements (within three to five years). Focus Areas contain resources and stories associated with the trail routes and (where resource conditions are favorable) significant, trail-evocative landscapes. Each Focus Area provides a variety of "immersive" visitor experience opportunities — occasions for people to fully engage in the environment and/or an activity.

Within the Focus Areas, **Anchor Sites** serve as primary locations for orienting visitors to the stories and resources associated with the national trails and for directing visitors to resources and opportunities along the river. These sites are staffed and provide

public (water) access and key visitor amenities, receive high visitation and have the potential to offer trail-related experiences via existing and/or expanded programming and development.

Additional trail components provide comprehensive visitor opportunities:

- **Trail Destinations** offer public access, basic visitor amenities and have the potential for significantly contributing to trail-related experiences via existing or expanded programming and development.
- **Linking routes** – on both land and water – currently or potentially connect visitors to resources and experiences along the trails.
- **Support services** include commercial services and supplies (mass transit operations, private marinas, boat ramps, restaurants, grocery stores, hotels, etc.) and may currently or potentially offer public access, immersive visitor experiences and/or information pertaining to local destinations.

The plan provides an overview of each River Section and identifies Focus Areas, Anchor Sites and other Trail Components. The plan prescribes a series of actions that will enable residents and visitors to learn about the national trails, explore the values and key stories associated with each trail and enjoy a broadened array of trail-related opportunities.



Bottom right: Jonathan Doherty, NPS Chesapeake Bay Office moderates a Focus Group Meeting in the DC Metro Region for the Potomac Segment Plan aboard the Cherry Blossom. Potomac Riverboats donated the meeting venue free of charge. (photo credit: Emily Myron)

Orientation and Interpretation

Orientation

Orienting people to trail-related opportunities is a critical first step in engagement. Interpretive services and products further involve visitors in the stories, resources and experiences associated with the trails.

Orientation information serves travelers prior to and during their trail visits. Orientation tools include everything from websites and brochures to on-site maps and directional signage. Websites (such as www.findyourchesapeake.com) and apps (such as the Chesapeake Explorer app) provide basic site information, directions, maps, visitor opportunities and pertinent regulations. Publications, printed maps,

orientation kiosks and unstaffed contact stations provide overviews of visitor facilities, services, programs and safety information. Staffed visitor centers offer similar information, along with personalized assistance, and orientation programs, films and exhibits. Wayfinding devices include trail identifier signs along roadways and directional signs leading to and within the sites.

To maximize efficiency and consistency along the national trails, the NPS has developed standardized orientation panels. For STSP and CAJO, one standard panel provides an overview of the specific trail, while a second panel conveys more detail related to trail themes and/or visitor opportunities. In many locations, a third panel conveys regional or site-specific information. For POHE, standard panels introduce regional trail networks and associated themes.

This page:

Opposite page:

Left: Interpretive signage at Point Lookout State Park (photo credit: Sarah Rogers)

Top Left: Paddling Group in front of the schooner Sultana (photo credit: Sultana Education Foundation Instagram feed)

Top right: Wayfinding signage at Douglas Point Special Recreation Management Area (photo credit: Donald E. Briggs)

Bottom Left: Watermen working along the Northern Neck section of the Potomac River (photo credit: NPS archive)

Bottom right: 6-panel Kiosk installed at Mason Neck (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)



INTERPRETATION



Education: Sultana Education Foundation provides a series of immersive on-water excursions along portions of the Captain John Smith Trail. The programs regularly sell out and have been touted as “life changing” adventures. [Between 2008 and 2013, approximately 3,500 students traveled portions of CAJO; many on week-long excursions.]

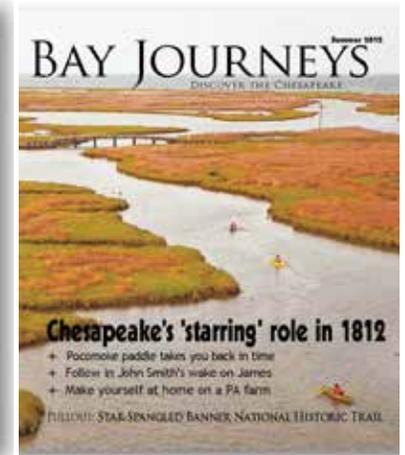
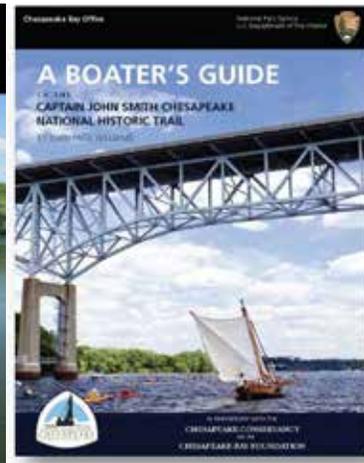
Technology: For both CAJO and STSP, geotrails have become quite popular and encourage residents and travelers to explore trail destinations previously unknown to them. Junior Ranger programs are effective in reaching younger audiences and provide online, as well as on-the-ground experiences. NOAA’s Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System provides water and weather data along with trail-related interpretive narratives.

Maps and Guides: *A Boater’s Guide for the Captain John Smith Trail* was produced by NPS that includes itineraries for a variety of watercraft along several area tributaries, including the James, Rappahannock, Patapsco and Potomac rivers. The NPS is working with the American Canoe Association, among others, to develop a Paddler’s Guide for the tidal Potomac. Similar guides/itineraries have been designed by state agencies such as Maryland DNR in cooperation with local tourism organizations such as St. Mary’s County Division of Tourism.



Cultural Heritage: The Chesapeake Conservancy developed the **Watermen Heritage Tourism Training Program** in partnership with Maryland Watermen’s Association, the Coastal Heritage Alliance and the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Over 80 watermen

have completed the program, having received instruction related to thematic tour development, historic and cultural community asset identification, storytelling and heritage interpretation, and the Captain John Smith Trail. It has since been used as a model for a similar program in Virginia (<http://watermenheritagetours.org/>).



Interpretation

Major interpretive themes adopted for each of the national trails provide consistency and guidance for conveying concepts and stories along the Potomac. Further investments are needed to develop place-based trail-related concepts and stories to provide holistic interpretive experiences that reflect the richness and diversity of the region’s natural and cultural heritage.

Interpretive programs and self-guided experiences help visitors learn about trail-related historical features and events, various cultures, wildlife, the environment and the principals of conservation.

Personal interpretation, including guided tours, presentations, workshops, demonstrations and living history programs actively engage visitors in learning and discovery.

Interpretive products (media) enable visitors to explore and absorb information at their own pace. Interpretive panels, multi-media exhibits, films, brochures, books, field guides, websites, audio touring devices and GPS software guide visitors through an array of self-guided and on-the-ground immersive experiences.

According to tourism officials and a membership survey conducted by the American Canoe Association (March 2014), some travelers prefer “suggested routes” (or “packaged” experiences), therefore, trail itineraries are highlighted in this plan. Itineraries suggest trail-related travel routes and describe the associated landscapes, special features, prominent sites and visitor amenities. They also provide practical information regarding access, travel distances, area conditions and visitor safety. Trail users may follow the itineraries closely or use them as general guides while creating their own excursions. The plan suggests opportunities to create new itineraries or update/expand existing itineraries associated with the national trails in coordination with trail sites and nearby communities.

Guide training and materials would serve to optimize visitor experiences within the trail corridors. Guided tours may be provided by agencies and organizations managing trail-related sites, as well as by private sector services. The plan prescribes development of shared training and materials related to trail themes, resources and stories. In addition, the NPS has initiated a two-tiered pilot training program to create tourism ambassadors and tourism guides along STSP and CAJO. The program — designed to enhance the effectiveness of trail-related outreach and interpretation — will target staff at trail sites, hospitality venues and outfitters.

Trails Promotion and Support Services

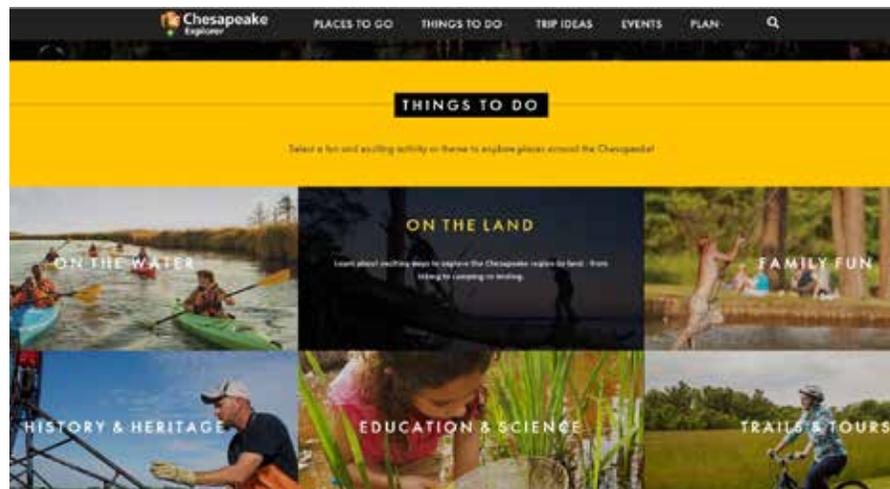
Trails Promotion

Raising awareness of the national trails with the public is an on-going effort. Effective communication with potential visitors involves:

- A visible trail presence at key sites and along travel routes, as well as on the internet and on mobile devices;
- A series of events and programs designed to draw targeted audiences to the trails; and,
- Strategic marketing and promotional activities by partner agencies, tourism organizations and the private sector.

As mentioned previously, the NPS has developed standardized signage and other products to enhance visibility of the trails. The trails' presence on the internet is established via www.smithtrail.net, www.starspangledtrail.net and their links to www.nps.gov, and through www.nps.gov/pohe. The Chesapeake Explorer app introduces visitors to trail-related sites and thematic tours and helps them create customized experiences. NPS Chesapeake Bay Office promotes trail sites, events, trip ideas and planning tools to enhance the visitor experience through <http://findyourchesapeake.com/> The Chesapeake Conservancy promotes events and planning through Trips and Tips <http://www.chesapeakeconservancy.org/trips-and-tips>. Social media and blog posts also support the digital presence of the national trails.

Trail partners and NPS have developed numerous programs and special events to draw visitors to the trails. This plan calls for further development of programs, such as guided tours, and highlights the importance of coordinated special events to raise awareness



of the trails and trail themes. Festivals, river sojourns, regattas and challenge events are all promising ventures. Development of a strategic marketing and promotional effort is needed and will be most effective when organized and led by tourism officials along the Potomac, in collaboration with other trail partners.

Support Services

A variety of services are needed to augment visitor experiences along the trails. Residents and travelers often require guide services, food, lodging, equipment rentals and other amenities. A robust network of providers ensures more holistic visitor experiences and may result in repeat and/or lengthier trail visits. Efforts will be made to incorporate providers in training to ensure consistent and accurate interpretation and information.

Commercial guided tour boat cruises, paddling and cycling tours and similar activities offer opportunities for people to experience the national trails — particularly visitors who may be unable or reluctant to do so on their own. Several touring companies already provide these services on the Potomac, including the Atlantic Kayak Company which offers tours for youths and adults. A number of cruise lines, such as the Potomac Riverboat Company and Odyssey Cruises, offer sightseeing tours and private charters.

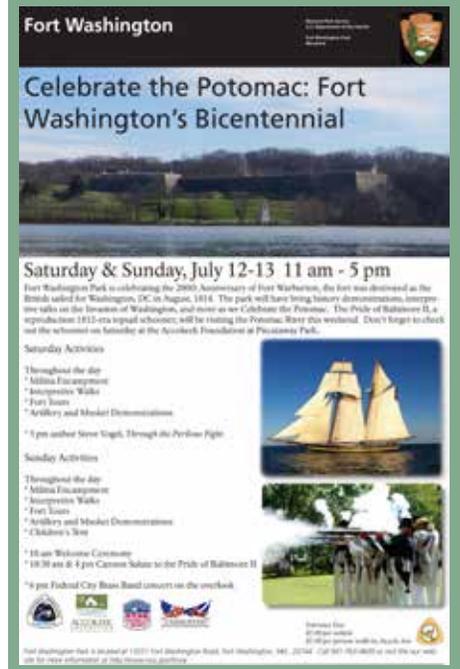
Public and private marinas provide launches, docks, boat slips, moorings, fuel, boat repairs, rentals and information that enable people to access and enjoy various sections of the national trails.

Conveniently-located **overnight accommodations** are an essential component of the national trails network. They include: hotels, motels, bed-and-breakfast establishments, hostels and campgrounds. Focus group discussions identified a particular need for additional water-accessible camping areas to serve paddlers and boaters.

Many trail users will benefit from other **commercial services**, including restaurants, grocery stores, equipment sales, rentals and repairs, and general merchandise. **Public transportation**, including busses, ferries and shuttles, are also important amenities. In particular, ferries can serve to cultivate “cross-river” experiences.

TRAILS PROMOTION

In 2013, the Accokeek Foundation initiated a “Celebrate the Potomac” event at Piscataway Park which coincided with a commemoration of the opening of a renovated and expanded water access site. It has since become an annual event at the park that is heavily attended by vendors, trail partners and general park enthusiasts. The opportunity exists to expand this annual celebration to include events at multiple partner sites along the Potomac.



Opposite page:

This page:

Bottom Left: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office website Find Your Chesapeake <http://findyourchesapeake.com/>

Top: Tent camping in Virginia (photo credit: NPS archive)

Bottom: Chesapeake Bay Watershed Public Access Plan (2013, NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)



Public Access and Connectivity

Expanded Land/Water Access

Along the Potomac, expanded or enhanced public access will broaden the array of opportunities for trail users and will likely increase overall use and attract new audiences. Increased land access can be achieved through the development of new or expanded hiking, biking and/or equestrian trails, site-specific (vehicle) touring routes and associated trailheads, parking areas and other amenities.

Although water access is adequate along many stretches of the Potomac, there are areas, particularly along lower portions of the river, where access is limited. For instance, in Virginia, between Leesylvania State Park and Smith Point – about 75 river miles – there are only seven public boat access sites. The 30-mile stretch between Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve and Colonial Beach is devoid of public boat access sites.

Also, many areas lack water-accessible camping facilities, hindering extended paddling excursions. The development of new or expanded soft and hard launches and landings, dock slips, floating docks, boat-in camping areas and associated amenities will facilitate increased paddling, boating and overnight use. New or expanded piers and shoreline fishing areas will increase access for anglers, while designated beaches and shorelines will expand swimming opportunities. Additional observation platforms and overlooks are necessary to extend visual access to the water.

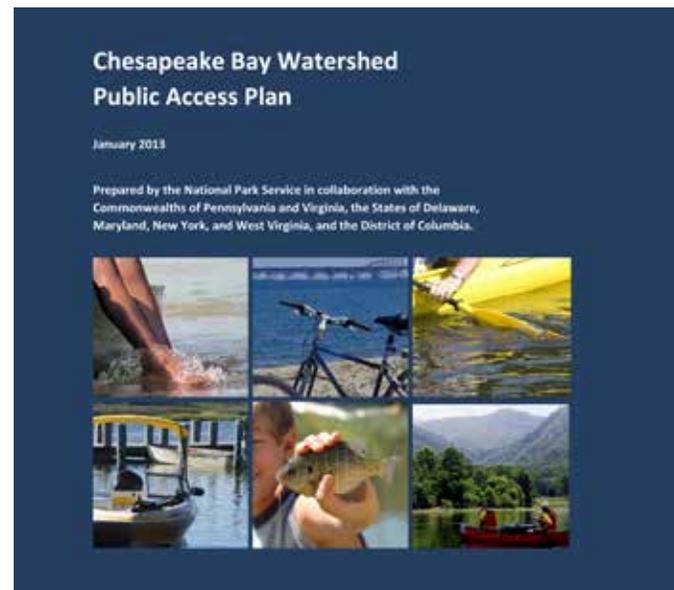
Increased Connectivity

Increased connectivity will enhance the national trail network along the Potomac. Seamless visitor experiences — with numerous physical linkages between various destinations and services — will provide optimal opportunities for trail users. Strategies for improving connectivity may include:

- Improving sections of existing hiking and biking trails (through rerouting, widening or resurfacing) to allow for more varied use as appropriate;
- Developing new access to close gaps in existing land routes;
- Establishing new water trail segments to connect national trail components and/or link them with local water trails;
- Acquiring properties or easements to connect key sites; and
- Supporting development of expanded or improved connector roads and mass transit options.

PUBLIC ACCESS

The long-standing public demand for increased access to the water in the region is addressed in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Public Access Plan, developed in 2011 by the NPS in collaboration with watershed states (as a response to Executive Order 13508). The plan outlines ways to increase public access to the Bay and its tributaries, with a target of creating 300 new access sites by 2025. Feedback related to the draft plan indicated people want more places along the water to walk, sit, play, picnic, camp, swim, fish, watch wildlife and launch canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, sailboats and powerboats.



Resource Conservation

Resource conservation encompasses a broad set of actions intended to protect or restore historic, cultural and natural sites, landscapes and other features contributing to the quality of visitor experiences associated with the national trails. Any proposed enhancement or development along the trails should avoid archeologically sensitive areas when looking to establish new trail connections or amenities to enhance existing trails. Additionally, increased threats posed to historic resources from increased visitor use should be considered when studying the cumulative impacts of any proposed development. Probable locations of cultural resources should be considered in any new development project, from signage to group tours, and effort made to minimize potential impacts from increased visitation, site use and related development that might ensue. In all cases, care should be taken to avoid revealing locations of sensitive archeology sites.

In addition to historic and cultural resources, special care should be given to the identification of state or federally listed populations of rare and endangered plant species and globally rare plant communities in all areas of proposed development. In some cases, new development could negatively impact these species and promote the spread of non-native invasive species. All proposed developments should be reviewed by NPS and the respective state Natural Heritage Programs to ensure avoidance, minimization or mitigation of potential impacts.

As summarized in Chapter 1, the National Trails System Act and supporting planning documents provide guidance for protection and conservation of trail-related resources. The Act also recognizes the importance of state and metropolitan trails and the relevance of protection strategies in both national and regional contexts. Policy guidance for resource protection is also provided in other federal legislation, such as the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act.

More specifically, land conservation strategies endorsed by many of the partners engaged throughout this planning process should be considered as part of any development project in an effort to identify solutions that support efforts to protect the scenic and historic qualities of the Chesapeake's special places.

Existing Strategies

Management operations associated with CAJO, STSP and POHE embrace historic, cultural and natural resources, and consider resource conservation intrinsic to providing quality outdoor recreational opportunities. Trail planning documents identify and define trail resources — including evocative landscapes, high potential route segments and historic sites — and recommend protection strategies that support quality visitor experiences.

Nationally significant resources associated with one or more of the national trails include: the route, stops and places sited by Captain John Smith's voyages; sites of American Indian towns of the 17th century; original routes of travel, battlefields and historic structures associated with the events of the War of 1812 in the Chesapeake; cultural landscapes connected to George Washington, Robert E. Lee and the evolution of the nation; and relevant archeological sites.

Trail-related protection strategies include: conserving local and regional natural resources and open space in rapidly developing areas; providing connections between ecological islands or hubs; preserving cultural landscapes; protecting archeological resources and historic sites; and high potential historic sites and (land and water) segments; providing public access to evocative places; and offering recreational opportunities.

Supporting Visitor Experiences

Identifying and protecting places that contribute to diverse and enriched visitor experiences will be a primary element in establishing an overall conservation strategy for the Potomac. Desired visitor experiences may differ among the national trails because of their varying purposes and significance, requiring reconciliation among conflicting landscape values. Kayakers on the Captain John Smith Trail might seek an immersive experience along a protected creek with evocative landscapes, whereas a bus tour group may be interested in historic sites associated with the Star-Spangled Banner Trail.

Visitors on the Potomac will encounter vast tracts of relatively undeveloped shoreline that contributes to their trail experiences. However, the presence of these shoreline forests, wetlands and farm fields can be deceiving as much of the land is privately owned and subject to land use change or development. Opportunities for landscape conservation within the Potomac corridor could assist to safeguard the visitor experience.

RESOURCE PROTECTION



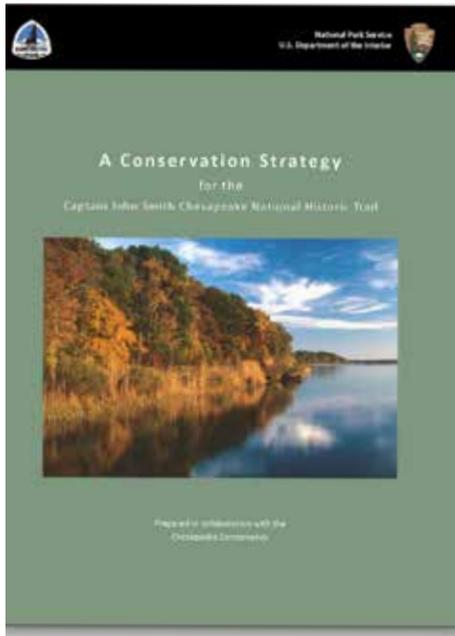
High Potential Route Segments can provide high quality recreation experiences in areas with exemplary scenic values or can offer opportunities to vicariously share the experience of the original users of a historic route. High Potential Historic Sites provide the opportunity to interpret the historic significance of a trail during the period of its major use.

The CAJO Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) identifies the “Middle Potomac” as a high-potential route segment, and highlights a significant (Smith) voyage stop and two significant 17th century American Indian archeological sites. The STSP CMP recognizes more than 20 high potential historic sites on or near the tidal Potomac and lists five high potential routes (including the middle Potomac River from Anacostia River to Leesylvania State Park, VA/Smallwood State Park, MD).

The POHE Foundation Document identifies the trail network as important for preservation of historic routes and sites connected with the evolution of the nation; conservation of open space, rare species and functioning ecosystems; and for public access to historic features and

“Given that these national trails consist of very little public land along the entirety of their routes, the Section 106 review process is an important tool for protecting trail resources along the Potomac.”

-Destry Jarvis, President, Outdoor Recreation & Park Services, LLC



Opposite page: The Ghost Fleet at Mallows Bay (photo credit: Don Shomette)

This page: A Conservation Strategy for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT

An Overall Strategy

A resource protection and conservation strategy for the Potomac River corridor must reflect a coordinated effort to treat the protection needs of the three national trails, as well as associated local trails and partner sites. Additionally, it must include protection efforts that clearly enhance visitor experience opportunities.

The overall strategy will rely on partnerships among NPS and other federal agencies, state and local governments, nonprofit organizations and others. Numerous examples of successful conservation projects attest to the value of such partnerships. Developing a common framework for resource protection will allow partner organizations with varying interests and strengths to assume appropriate roles in developing and implementing comprehensive strategies related to particular conservation opportunities.

The Conservation Strategy developed for the Captain John Smith Trail in 2013 presents a methodology that assesses resources contributing to the trail experience and a “scorecard” technique to identify focus areas for resource protection. It also describes a “partnership action model” as a guiding framework for resource protection initiatives, consisting of the following elements:

1. Assessing Resources Contributing to Trail Experiences
2. Promoting the Trail’s Recognition
3. Developing Strategic Conservation Plans
4. Encouraging Private Land Stewardship
5. Permanently Protecting Lands to Ensure the Trails’ Integrity
6. Guiding Compatible Development
7. Monitoring Progress and Adjusting Strategies to Reflect Changing Situations

This Conservation Strategy related to the Captain John Smith Trail will serve as the foundation for developing a specific resource protection strategy for the Potomac River. That strategy, rather than this plan, will address protection goals of high priority trail resources and specific initiatives in detail. The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership will also help identify conservation and resource protection opportunities.

Collaborative Approach

Further development and success of the national trails in the Chesapeake region depends on collaborative partnerships among federal, state and local government agencies; non-profit organizations; commercial interests; volunteers; and various private interests.

Along the Potomac River, the shared capacity of numerous agencies and organizations will be required to enhance and manage visitor services and resource protection efforts. The actions outlined within this plan depend upon successful coordination among a range of partners. What may be impossible for a single entity to achieve may well be feasible through effective collaboration.

This plan represents a shared vision for elevating the significance of the stories associated with the national trails along the Potomac and for using the trail designations to support local and regional efforts to expand public access, visitor experiences and land conservation. The partnerships may involve activities ranging from marketing, fundraising and program design to resource protection, technical assistance and facility development. It will take innovative and efficient collaborative efforts to realize the full potential of the national trail designations as tools to develop, conserve and promote premier educational, recreational, tourism and conservation assets in the region.

CONSERVATION STRATEGY

The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership is a coalition of diverse organizations and agencies working to advance land conservation and public access in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Partnership was convened in July 2009 by the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office and the Chesapeake Conservancy to develop a strategy in response to President Obama’s Executive Order 13508. Through a series of working groups and an annual meeting, the group makes progress on large landscape efforts in a collaborative and strategic way. In 2015 the Partnership provided primary input into the development of the Protected Lands Management Strategy, one of 23 developments under the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement which seeks to protect an additional two million acres of lands by 2025.



Existing and Potential Partnerships

Numerous effective partnerships are active along the Potomac River corridor, boasting an array of impressive public services and conservation initiatives. The following entities may play a role in implementing the specific actions called for in this segment plan:

Public Site Managers

- Natural area preserves
- Historic sites
- Wildlife refuges and management areas
- Federal and state parks
- County and municipal parks
- Recreational trails and ferry services
- Water access sites

Commercial Facilities and Services

- Marinas
- Campgrounds, motels and other overnight accommodations
- Guide services
- Equipment sales and rentals

Non-Profit Organizations

- State, County and Local Tourism Organizations
- Watershed and river-based organizations
- Organizations associated with particular sites
- American Indian tribes, descendant communities and other organizations
- Land conservation and historic preservation organizations
- Trail clubs
- User groups

Educational and Research Institutions

- Area universities and associated sites
- Community colleges

This page:

Left: Boat show at the National Harbor waterfront (photo credit: NPS archive)

Top right: Colonial Beach Yacht Center at Monroe Bay along the Potomac River (photo credit: MLS listing)

Bottom right: Kayak rentals and dock at Westmoreland State Park (photo credit: Sarah Rogers)

Opposite page:

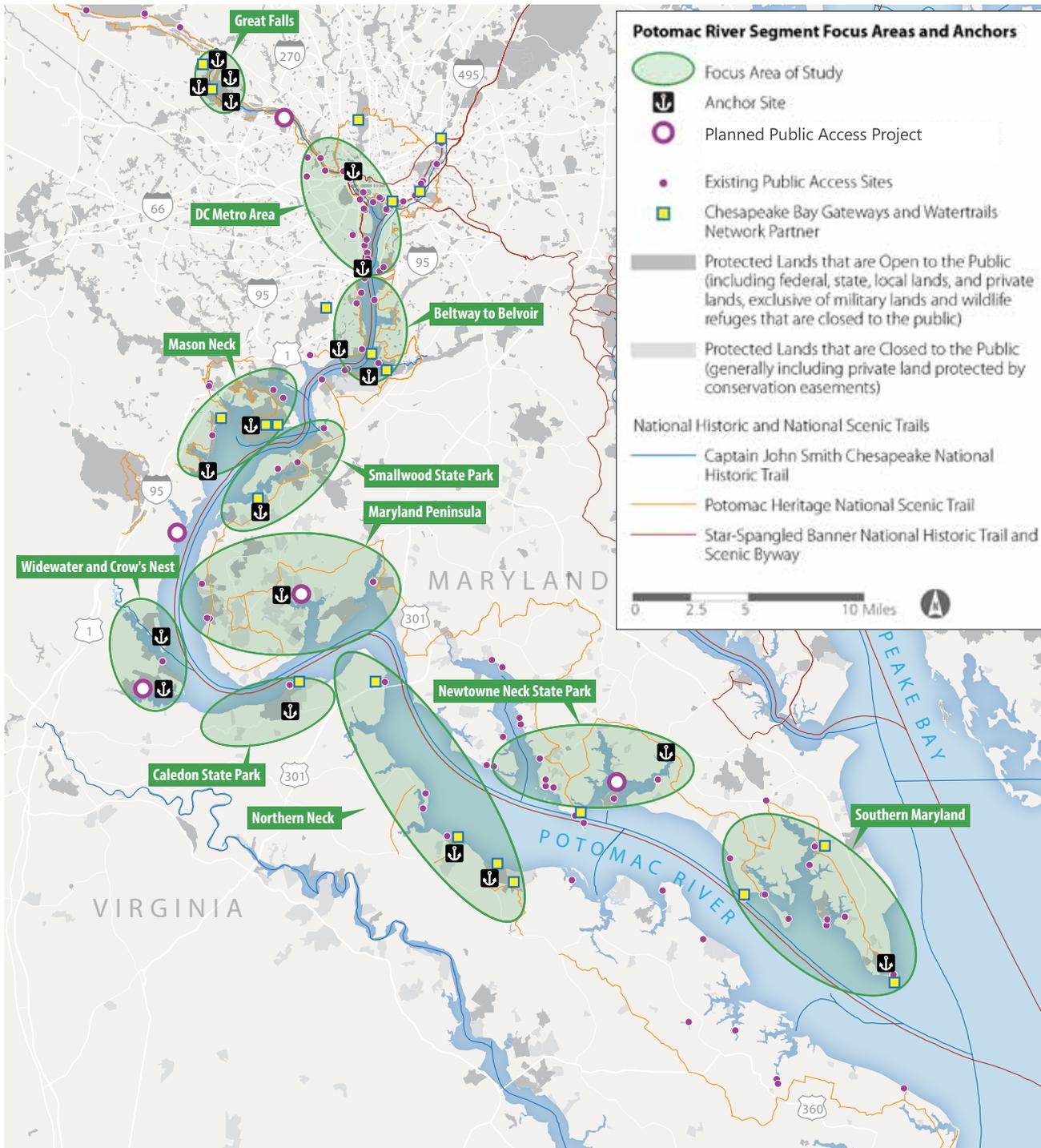
Beach and piers along Westmoreland State Park (photo credit: Sarah Rogers)



Chapter 3

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Chapter 3

Potomac River Segment Plan

“We have to make sure that activities on our boundaries are compatible with preservation goals.”

Glenda Booth, Friends of Dyke Marsh (from Chesapeake Bay News interview, March 14, 2012)



Introduction (How to Use Chapter 3)

This chapter provides guidance on both broad-based and area-specific actions intended to raise the visibility and usability of the three national trails along the Potomac River. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part considers the river as a whole and proposes actions that affect all seven geographic sections of the river. These cross-cutting actions can and should be applied throughout the river corridor as appropriate. The second part highlights each of the (seven) individual River Sections and prescribes specific recommendations tailored to those geographic areas.

All of the recommendations outlined herein are based on site analyses, focus group meetings and input from stakeholders. The actions are intended to be implemented within the next two to five years and are subject to all appropriate compliance regulations; which could include the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). It should be noted that this is not an all-inclusive list of potential enhancements; new ideas and opportunities will develop over time. It is also

realized that while the river should be viewed as a whole, actions are often locally-based. Thus, the importance of thinking about the trails in their entirety and how each action builds on the entire trail experience.

While many proposed action items may provide the benefit of new or enhanced public access along trail routes, even the best intended improvements can have negative impacts on natural, historic or cultural resources if they are not thoroughly reviewed in the project planning process. Serious consideration of site resources and characteristics should be weighed against increased public use, land conservation opportunities and other cumulative impacts. Any recordation or survey of sites, archeological, architectural, or cultural landscapes should be filed with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Office. In all cases, care should be taken to ensure the avoidance of archeologically sensitive areas; rare, threatened or endangered animal species or habitat; populations of state listed rare plant species and globally rare plant communities.

This page:

Hiking Trail along the C&O Canal (photo credit: NPS archive)



It should also be noted that the National Park Service owns very few parcels of land in areas where proposed action items were submitted. The segment plan is meant to enhance the physical and virtual connections of many publicly accessible lands and related services along both shorelines of the Potomac, which include federal, state, county, local and municipal partners. Individual park and site manager recommendations for proposed action items informed the segment plan with projects that could benefit the national trails along the tidal Potomac River. All action items in the plan should be understood to be reflective of the individual sites' missions and objectives, which are subject to political and financial shifts that impact staffing and funding.

A common issue raised at all of the stakeholder meetings was a concern over too much signage. Some sites already have an abundance of signs and adding more could not only be a distraction but also confusing to the visitor. While this plan does contain recommendations for important interpretive and orientation signs, it is recognized that these must be considered in the context of what is currently present and how additional information might be best presented. Such decisions are at the discretion of the site manager. Options to be considered include where best to place any new interpretive signs; the potential of combining information, where appropriate, onto the same display panel or kiosk; the use of electronic or public art as signage; eliminating older, out of date signage; and/or looking at other forms of media, such as podcasts or QR codes, as a means of telling stories and providing interpretive material. It is also important that all displayed information accurately reflect the history, stories and resources of the site. This may require coordination with a number of stakeholder and interest groups.

For ease in implementation and tracking, the following recommended cross-cutting actions are presented in five major categories:

- Orientation and Interpretation;
- New/Enhanced (Physical) Connectivity;
- New/Enhanced Public Access;
- Trails Promotion and Services; and
- Resources Protection and Land Conservation

Cross-Cutting Components Orientation and Interpretation

Orientation Kiosks: Multi-paneled kiosks introducing the three trails could be installed at prominent sites within the river corridor. [Note: Many kiosks are already in place or are scheduled for installation.] Sites could include federal, state and local parks, wildlife refuges, historic sites, and private marinas, campgrounds and other facilities open for public use. Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in a river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area.

Interpretive Signs: Single-panel interpretive signs, reflecting the natural and cultural richness of the area and keyed back to the trails, could be installed at important observation sites, smaller historical sites and parks, boat launch areas and at publicly accessible private facilities.

Wayfinding Signs: To help visitors locate trail segments, sites and other amenities and easily follow travel routes, wayfinding signs should be installed at appropriate locations. In coordination with state departments of transportation and local governing bodies, such signs may be located at key intersections to direct travelers to important sites. They could also be installed within smaller trail sites where kiosks and other interpretive signs may not be appropriate.

Maps and Guides: To help visitors become familiar with national trail segments, trail resources and sites to explore along the trail routes, maps and guides for each trail could be made available at the anchor sites and at select trail destinations, outfitter locations and local community facilities.

Exhibits: Visitor center exhibits throughout the region could potentially be enhanced with information related to the national trails. Other permanent and/or temporary exhibits could be placed at federal, state and local parks, national wildlife refuges, historic sites and regional and local information centers.

Top: 3-sided Interpretive Kiosk at Mason Neck State Park (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Bottom: Trail marker at Seaford, DE paddle craft launch site (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Audio tours/podcasts: To help visitors gain an understanding of trail-related themes along the river corridor, audio tours or podcasts could be developed or revised. Potential topics include: American Indian cultures, significant historic events, historical and contemporary fishing techniques, key bird species, etc.

Off-site Interpretation: To help visitors gain an understanding of significant cultural and historical resources and events related to non-accessible Department of Defense (DOD) lands, stories could be told from adjacent accessible public properties. For example, the story of John Wilkes Booth crossing the Potomac and landing within the confines of the Dahlgren Naval Weapons Laboratory could be told at nearby Barnesfield Park.

Paddling/Boating Itineraries: Touring itineraries for paddlers and small power boats could be developed or expanded for both guided and self-guided trips along the river. Such itineraries would allow people to take “journeys through time”, departing from federal lands, state parks, regional and local parks or other public or accessible private facilities along the river corridor. Stand-up paddle boarding (SUP) itineraries could be developed (or modified from existing itineraries) to engage the growing number of SUP enthusiasts.

Guided Boating Tours: Guided boating and paddling tours, departing from any of the public or private accessible sites along the river, could provide visitors with opportunities to explore the region’s natural and cultural keystones. Such tours could connect a number of national trail partner sites along the Potomac River and tell stories related to any of the three national trails’ themes. NPS staff could assist tour leaders in becoming “Certified Trail Ambassadors” to ensure that accurate and high quality trail-related information is being shared.

Motor Vehicle/Bicycle Itineraries: A series of guides/itineraries (possibly in mobile app or other electronic form) could be developed for use by visitors touring the region via motor vehicle or bicycle. These guides, using local road networks and developed bicycle routes, could highlight access to key sites, trailheads and other area opportunities for enjoying the associated resources related to the trails.

Guided Walking Tours: Opportunities exist to develop guided walking tours of key sites within the corridor. Such tours could provide new perspectives on key sites and stories within the Potomac Segment. These could be done in partnership with DOD facilities, public park areas, historic sites, and other resource areas that support themes related to the trails.

Private Marinas and Waterfront Restaurants: The potential to provide marinas and waterfront restaurants with trail-specific information, such as menu placemats or rack cards that showcase trail-specific themes, identify the site location within the greater context of the trail route and highlight significant trail sites in the area, could be explored.

New/Enhanced (Physical) Connectivity

Trail Linkages: Opportunities should be explored to enhance the linkages between facilities along the Potomac corridor. Such linkages could create continuous routes between important resources by developing new trail segments that link together existing trails and resource areas. This could include the development of new land or water trail components.

New/Enhanced Public Access

New Public Water Access: Opportunities are needed to enhance the public’s ability to access the Potomac River and its associated tributaries. There are significant gaps in the provision of public access sites that allow boaters to be able to access the water and related trail resources. New opportunities to provide additional paddle craft and trailer boat launches should be explored whenever available and as appropriate. This includes both land-to-water and water-to-land public access.

Boat-in Camping: There is a great need for the provision of boat-in campsites along the Potomac River corridor. Such sites are important for those wishing to make multi-day trips along the water routes of the national trails. Opportunities to provide such sites should be explored on both existing public lands and on appropriate private lands in the corridor. Camping platforms and houseboat hostels could also be explored in suitable locations.



Top: Promotion for the Virginia State Parks mobile app at Caledon State Park (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Bottom: Electronic information kiosk outside Visitor Center at Caledon State Park (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

“Tourism is the world’s largest industry, and Charles County has so many amenities to offer visitors that it is natural for us to take destination marketing seriously. Whether attracting long-stay visitors or ‘day trippers’ from the D.C. metro area, we intend to showcase everything that Charles County has to offer.”

Ken Robinson, Charles County Commissioner, District 1 (from Charles County press release September 16, 2014)



Trails Promotion and Services

Event Promotion: There are a myriad of festivals and special events celebrated along the Potomac corridor. Opportunities should be explored to tie trail themes into these events as appropriate. Trail stories, displays, or other forms of marketing and interpretation should be included whenever feasible.

Rental Equipment: Work with public and private providers to expand the availability of rental equipment for people wishing to explore the trails by bike or water craft. This may be particularly feasible through concession or other partnership activities at existing public access sites or commercial marinas.

Electronic/Social Marketing: Trail partners could consider opportunities to use the internet, mobile apps and website hosting to better promote the significant sites and features in the region and to connect visitors to additional sites in the area.

Communication Strategy: The National Park Service will look at the development of a communication strategy, which will keep stakeholders throughout the Potomac Segment aware of progress made on plan implementation, as well as on opportunities to advance the plan. Stakeholders within each of the seven sections could develop a communication network to leverage and promote their work in advancing the trails within their area of interest.

Resource Protection and Land Conservation

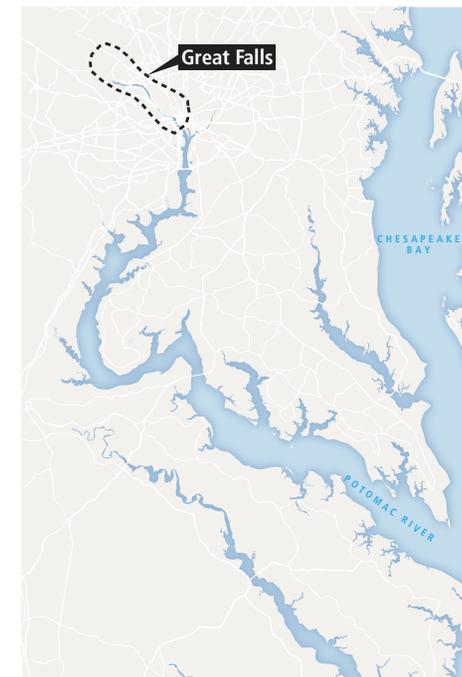
While there are many sections of land along the tidal Potomac River corridor that are in public ownership and, thus, have a degree of protection, the bulk of the land along the river is privately held. The size of the river and the fact that much of its shoreline is still very rural can give the impression of a large protected landscape. In reality, the views and natural areas now exhibited on much of the lower river corridor could easily be erased through improper development.

Thus, there is a need for key viewsheds, sensitive lands, and lands that could link together trail resources to be identified and efforts made to conserve them through any appropriate conservation measure. One of the biggest challenges for each of the national trails is having a land base. It is a fundamental necessity for the connectivity of national scenic trails and a critically important component for the management of national historic trails. Everything else, from interpretive facilities to trailheads to docks and boat ramps, depends on it.

It should be clear that land conservation efforts can be identified as a potential action item of this plan, as it would serve the interests of enhancing trail resources along the Potomac River. Land protection and conservation could be accomplished through public acquisition or a less-than fee approach, such as a protective easement held by one of the land trusts, a public entity or another conservation organization.

The key is that all interested parties must be alert to opportunities to conserve and protect critical shoreline areas and, wherever feasible, make these available for public access. NPS may not necessarily be interested in acquiring any new lands and may elect not to have a role in conservation efforts due to federal or trail management regulations. However, NPS will do what it can, where appropriate, to support public and private entities interested in owning and managing land for conservation purposes. In many cases, visual access to undisturbed lands in lieu of public recreation access provides a connection between the user, the conservationist and the cultural resources inherent within the landscape.

River Section 1 – Great Falls



Overview

This river section includes the sites and resources located between Riverbend Park (Fairfax County, VA) and the area just east of the American Legion Memorial Bridge that carries the Capital Beltway (Interstate 495) across the Potomac River between Montgomery County, Maryland and Fairfax County, Virginia. Routes for POHE and CAJO national trails, along with significant sites along the STSP trail, are located within this region. The area is rich in conserved natural landscapes and history related to American Indians, Captain John Smith, Civil War defenses of Washington, D.C., early industrialization of the United States, George Washington and Colonial settlement.

Located northwest of Washington, D.C., the Potomac Gorge is a transition zone between the Piedmont and the Atlantic Coastal Plain. Steep cliffs, rock outcrops, waterfalls, swift moving water and whitewater rapids contrast with the downstream character of the

tidal Potomac. Man-made structures such as dams, canals, intake stations and off-channel reservoirs are evident. Much of the shoreline in this area is undeveloped and protected lands border many of the tributaries extending into more developed areas.

This river section is also characterized by suburban residential development (Montgomery County, MD) and rural fields and farms (Fairfax County, VA). Access to the river is primarily available via the George Washington Memorial Parkway (VA), and the Clara Barton Parkway (MD). A network of trails — including the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, the Capital Crescent Trail, the Billy Goat Trail, Rock Creek Park trails and segments of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail — offer connections to the Potomac's shoreline and/or to inland suburban parks and the DC Metro area.

Top: Great Falls Park
(photo credit: NPS
Chesapeake Bay Office)

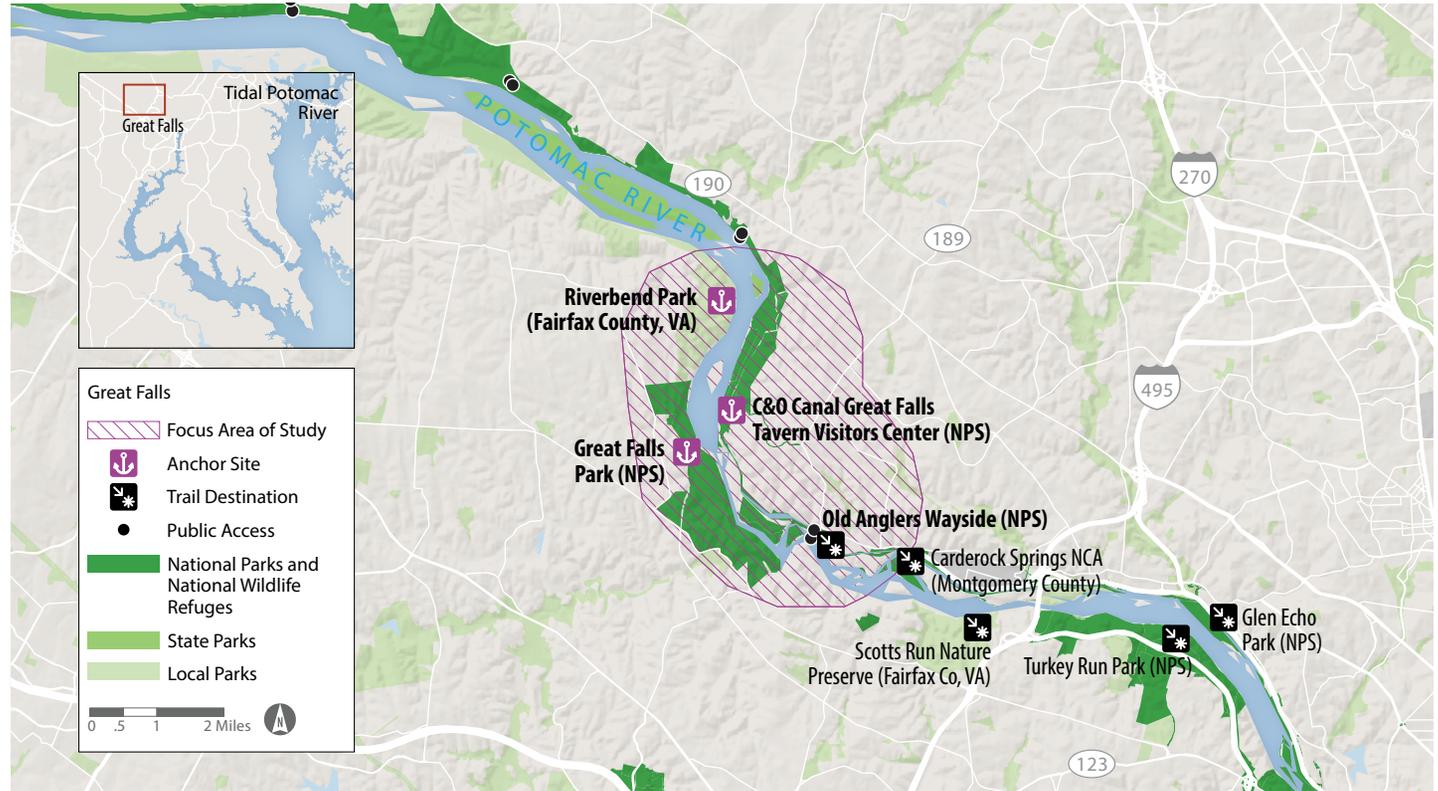
Because of long vehicular travel times between access sites across the river from each other, the facilities within this river section are separated by state and Focus Area. These facilities include:

Virginia

- Great Falls Park (NPS)
- Riverbend Park (Fairfax Co., VA)
- Scott’s Run Nature Reserve (Fairfax Co., VA)
- Turkey Run Park (NPS, George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP))
- Claude Moore Colonial Farm (GWMP concession, privately operated)

Maryland

- Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center (NPS)
- Old Angler’s Wayside (NPS)
- Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Canal National Historical Park, including the C & O Canal Towpath
- Carderock Springs Neighborhood Conservation Area (Montgomery Co., MD)
- Rockwood Manor Park (Montgomery Co., MD)
- Clara Barton National Historic Site (NPS)
- Glen Echo Park (NPS/Glen Echo Park partnership)



Trail Components

The following trail components have been identified to support strategic planning within this river section of the Potomac. Each of the focus areas described below contain anchor sites, which are viewed as first-tier locations for trail development efforts as they already contain significant visitor support facilities. The next level of development would include additional trail components, such as destinations and linking routes, enhancements would occur as resources and opportunities become available.

Focus Areas

There are two Focus Areas identified in the Great Falls map that share the same area of study. While the study area itself contains a density of resources, visitor experiences and a visual shore-to-shore connection of trail-evocative landscapes, physical access across the river is limited. Therefore, the Virginia resources are identified in Focus Area #1 and the Maryland resources are identified in Focus Area #2.

- **Focus Area #1** (Virginia): Riverbend Park- Great Falls Park
- **Focus Area #2** (Maryland): C&O Canal Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center

Anchor Sites

Proposed anchor sites for Focus Area #1 (Virginia) include Riverbend Park and Great Falls Park. Both sites are staffed, offer interpretive exhibits and programming and are major draws for numerous visitors and residents of the communities northwest of Washington, D.C.

- **Riverbend Park** (Fairfax Co. Park Authority) offers views of the Potomac upstream of Great Falls. Hiking trails connect to Great Falls and to interior sections of the park; some equestrian trails are also available. Picnic areas, boat launch, kayak rentals, guided tours, a nature center and interpretive programs are offered.

Anchor Sites (continued)

- **Great Falls Park** (NPS) <http://www.nps.gov/grfa/index.htm> offers spectacular views of the Potomac. The River Trail provides dramatic views of the River and Mather Gorge below the falls. Other trails include an old carriage road, the Patowmack Canal Trail, the Ridge Trail through upland forest and several equestrian routes. A segment of the POHE is marked between Difficult Run and the boundary with Riverbend Park, and a visitor center is open daily.

For Focus Area #2 (Maryland), the proposed anchor site is the C&O Canal Great Falls Visitor Center.

- **C&O Canal Park Great Falls Visitor Center** (NPS) offers a staffed facility and access to the C&O Canal Towpath, the primary segment of the POHE, and numerous trails, including one that leads to an overlook of Great Falls. Interpretive programs are available, including a mule-drawn canal boat ride. <http://www.nps.gov/choh/index.htm>

Trail Destinations

- Virginia: Scott's Run Nature Preserve; Turkey Run Park and Claude Moore Colonial Farm, both within George Washington Memorial Parkway lands
- Maryland: Old Angler's Wayside; Carderock Springs Park; Rockwood Manor Park; Clara Barton NHS and Glen Echo Park along the Clara Barton Parkway.

Linking Routes

- Virginia: Several segments of the Potomac Heritage Trail include hiking and biking trails. Vehicular access to many sites is provided by the George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP). The I-495 American Legion Memorial Bridge provides a high-traffic vehicular river crossing in this area but does not accommodate pedestrian or bicycle traffic.
- Maryland: The C&O Canal Towpath along the Maryland side of the Potomac provides uninterrupted, vehicular-free hiking and bicycling opportunities between Georgetown and the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center. Multiple locks along the canal provide paddlers of all skill levels a calm-water alternative to paddling on the Potomac. The Clara Barton Parkway provides vehicular access to trailheads along the River.

Note: Public transit options are limited in areas north and west of the Arlington and Georgetown areas.

Support Services

- Virginia: The town of Great Falls (population 15,427 as per 2010 census) is located less than 5 miles from Great Falls Park. Restaurants, grocery stores and gas stations are available. Also within the focus area, McLean, VA provides a variety of retail, restaurant and commercial services.
- Maryland: The town of Potomac (population 44,965) is located less than 5 miles from the C&O Canal Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center. The town offers a variety of restaurants, retail stores, lodging options and gas stations.



Top: Mule-drawn Canal Boat Rides at Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Bottom: Paddling at Old Angler's Wayside (photo credit: Anacostia Riverkeeper)



Key Trail Stories and Associated Resources

The following key stories associated with CAJO, STSP and POHE themes are relevant to the various trail components in this river section:



Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT

(Smith's explorations, American Indian cultures, natural history of Bay)

- Captain John Smith and his crew spent approximately one month exploring the Potomac, guiding their craft as far up the river as was navigable. He mapped the Nacotchtank tribe in this area and referred to them as one of the tribes that “did their best to content us.”
- Englishman Henry Fleet lived with the Nacotchtank for five years in the 1620s and learned the Virginia Algonquian language, which allowed him to become a trader and translator for Lord Calvert when Calvert brought settlers to Maryland. The tribe was called the Anacostan in later years, hence the name of the Anacostia River. (Reference Henry Fleet’s “A Brief Journal” from Edward Neill, The Founders of Maryland)
- The Great Falls are a prominent geologic feature in the region. Great Falls Park is located along the boundary between the Piedmont Plateau and the Atlantic Coastal Plain, the fall line. Most of the rocks here formed deep beneath the surface of the ancient Lapetus Ocean over 500 million years ago.

Features that support these stories include: evocative landscapes; American Indian petroglyphs carved into metamorphic rock in areas along the river; Great Falls and Mather Gorge.



Star-Spangled Banner NHT

(military events, individual contributors, Bay region as hub, icons of war)

- Efforts against the advances of the British in Fairfax County, VA and Montgomery County, MD both contributed to the American resistance in the War of 1812.
- The area includes routes associated with the Madison’s escape from the British troops’ burning of Washington, D.C., and the removal of national documents to rural Maryland for safekeeping.

Features that support these stories include: Chain Bridge; Conn’s Ferry; Riverbend Park; nearby Brookeville, MD (a hub for War of 1812 activities).



Potomac Heritage NST

(meeting ground of conservation ideas and practices, five physiographic regions, crossroads of opportunity, development of U.S. Republic)

- Patowmack Canal in Great Falls Park and the C&O Canal reflect the story of early American industrialization along the Potomac (http://gfns.org/local_lore/gf_history.htm).
- At the end of the eighteenth century, George Washington's efforts to build the Patowmack Canal were well underway. While skirting canal construction was successfully completed and the venture operated for several years, it would take the C&O Canal and B&O Railroad until the mid 19th Century to truly open the Potomac River valley to trade. Ultimately, the Patowmack Canal had important political repercussions that helped lead to the stronger union of the American states.
- In the eighteenth century, Great Falls was primarily a collection of huge farms, many run by tenants of absentee landlords. Due to thin soil and poor accessibility to ports, farms here did not prosper.
- After the American Revolution, more farmers bought land in the Great Falls area. In the 1830s, prosperity in this region took a severe downturn. Many Virginians went west seeking richer land or greater opportunity; northerners came to Great Falls to buy cheap land.

Features that support these stories include: Virginia side: the ruins of the Patowmack Canal and Matildaville; Claude Moore Park (containing one of the few original sunken road segments in the country). Maryland side: the locks and towpath of the C&O Canal.

Proposed Trail Enhancements and Implementation Strategies

In addition to the cross cutting strategies which apply to all river sections, this river section provides or has near-term potential to provide a wide variety of desired visitor experiences for different types of trail users. Providing optimal trail-related visitor experiences in a way that highlights this area’s resources, primary features and key stories could best be achieved as follows:

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area #1 - Virginia Resources from Riverbend Park to Great Falls Park			
Great Falls Park	 Anchor Site	Enhance Interpretive Exhibits	Kiosks that introduce CAJO & STSP— similar to the panels for POHE near the Great Falls Park and Great Falls Tavern visitor centers—could be placed at specific viewing platforms, along with a select number of designated destinations. The panels could provide site-specific information, create context of the site in relation to the overall trail routes and direct visitors to other significant trail-related destinations in the area. Consideration should be given to providing multi-lingual versions of the panels, as appropriate.
		Provide Interpretive Exhibits	Interpretive signage at Potomac Canal Overlook #3 could be added to interpret the canal and any associated trail resources, as applicable.
		Enhance Interpretive Panels	The 12 (or so) existing interpretive signs between Great Falls and Riverbend Park are badly weathered and should be replaced or updated.
		Enhance Visitor Center Exhibits	Exhibit space at the Great Falls Park Visitors Center could potentially be used to showcase the national trails along the Potomac.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Hiking groups and private outfitters currently offer tours along the various trails in this area. NPS staff could assist the leaders of these sites/organizations to become “Certified Trail Ambassadors” to ensure the trail-related information being shared is accurate and of high quality.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	At trailheads, interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points and other trail-related points of interest.
		River Festival Trails Promotion	A family-oriented river and culturally themed event with musical performances, guided trail walks, and a panel discussion on the park-specific issues called “Celebrating the Potomac” has been held annually at Piscataway Park in summer months. A similar event at Great Falls could be coordinated to coincide with or be held on concurrent dates to strengthen the unity between Trail sites and add continuity to Trails stories that occur along the entire length of the Potomac river. The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) is interested in helping to provide volunteers, media, and potential fundraising support for programs similar to the “Celebrate the Potomac” event.
		River Festival Trails Promotion	Each year, Potomac Paddlesports is involved in hosting the “Great Falls Race”, a whitewater championship event on the Potomac River at Great Falls/C&O Canal NHP. The event typically draws a large amount of spectators and could provide an opportunity for NPS to promote trail resources, interpretation and outreach to the recreation community.
		Interpretive Opportunity	Dean Herrin, NPS National Capital Regional Office (NCRO) Regional Historian is starting work on a Regional History Prospectus and is inventorying the Potomac River Gorge area (from Great Falls to Roosevelt Island). The findings of this research could be incorporated into trail-related interpretive opportunities. Guided tours and interpretive panels could be installed along existing trails to reference POHE.
Bicycle rentals	A seasonal outfitter or incorporation of bike rental options could be explored.		

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area #1 - Virginia Resources from Riverbend Park to Great Falls Park			
Riverbend Park		Anchor Site	Enhance Interpretive Exhibits The existing two-panel exhibit at Riverbend Park could be expanded to include a CAJO panel describing the types of fish that would have been in the Potomac during John Smith's voyage to serve anglers at this popular fishing destination.
		Enhance Visitor Center Exhibits	The existing exhibit space at Riverbend Park Visitors Center has excellent information on resources that are reflected in CAJO and POHE. These exhibits could potentially be updated to include trail-specific stories and used to showcase the national trails along the Potomac.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Outfitters, summer camps and paddling club members currently providing paddling tours and using the launch sites could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE stories into their trip itineraries.
		River Festival Trails Promotion	Riverbend Park frequently hosts the Virginia Indian Festival where American Indian culture is celebrated. Tying in similar themes of CAJO to the festival could bring more attention to the trails.
		Park Planning and Development	Due to the rapids and shallow water depths, power boats have limited range to explore west of the Key Bridge. A users' map and guide could be developed to assist motor boating enthusiasts in exploring specific river stretches and destinations further downstream.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	At trailheads, interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section will give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Develop Boat-in Primitive Campsites	Riverbend Park could explore the possibility of adding water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and overnight car camping campsites and related visitor facilities where feasible.
Scott's Run Nature Preserve		Trail Destination	Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties Investments by a range of agencies and organizations in trail planning, design and construction could bridge the gap between the Difficult Run Trail in Great Falls Park and Scott's Run Nature Preserve, providing a continuous route for hiking between Riverbend Park and the DC Metro river section.
		Park Planning and Development	Consideration of expanding visitor services could include new accessible canoe and kayak launch, fishing pier, wayside landing access, viewing platforms or other appropriate access facilities.
Turkey Run Park		Trail Destination	New Public Access Site Consideration of expanding visitor services at sites along the George Washington Memorial Parkway could include new accessible wayside landing access, viewing platforms or other appropriate access facilities.
		Develop Boat-in Primitive Campsites	Turkey Run Park could explore the possibility of adding water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and overnight car camping campsites and related visitor facilities where feasible. The current headquarters for the George Washington Memorial Parkway, located at Turkey Run Park, may be relocated to a permanent location; if so, the utilities on-site could be re-purposed to support camping.
Private Bus tours		Linking Route	Develop Stories Related to the Trails Private bus tour operators transporting visitors from the DC Metro area to Great Falls Park could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE-specific information into their interpretive narrations and printed materials.
Public transportation		Linking Route	Utilize Metro Stations The Silver Line (currently under construction) will extend the DC Metro service through Fairfax County to Washington-Dulles International Airport, but will not directly connect to any of the parks along the river. There could be an opportunity to extend bus service from the completed Silver Line to connect to the parks along the Potomac.
Regional Promotion		Support Services	Develop Policy and MOU Coordinate development and promotion of national trail-related experiences in Northern Virginia (professional and self-guided tours, events, etc.); integrate into Brand USA, Destination USA and Capital Region promotions. Utilize the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) site to promote the trails (NPS has an MOU among Virginia agencies at the Commonwealth level).

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description	
Focus Area #2 - Maryland Resources from C&O Canal Great Falls Visitor Center to Old Angler's Wayside				
C&O Canal Great Falls Tavern Visitors Center		Anchor Site	Provide Interpretive Panels	The existing single paneled POHE exhibit at the visitor center could be expanded to reference STSP and CAJO trails as appropriate.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Existing guided tours of the historic structure could expand to include information that connects the canal's development with the Industrial Revolution and reference POHE.	
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	At trailheads, interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points and other trail-related points of interest.	
		River Festival Trails Promotion	Canal Pride Days are held throughout the year along the C&O Canal to encourage volunteers and neighbors to maintain the trails along the canal. Opportunities exist to engage the volunteers with CAJO, STSP and POHE stories during these events.	
		Develop Boat-in Primitive Campsites	While there are existing camping areas along the C&O Canal Towpath, the majority are located north of Great Falls Park and cater primarily to hikers/bikers rather than paddlers. The existing paddle-in accessible Marsden Tract Campsite is currently the only paddle-accessible camping south of Great Falls. Additional sites in the region, such as C&O Canal Great Falls Tavern Visitors Center, could explore the possibility of adding additional water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and overnight car camping campsites and related visitor facilities where feasible.	
Old Angler's Wayside		Trail Destination	Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Outfitters, summer camps and paddling club members currently providing paddling tours and using the launch sites could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE stories into their trip itineraries.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	River recreation in the Potomac Gorge has expanded to include new users and new equipment. As safety is a primary concern, re-examination of what constitutes a "vessel" and the safety requirements associated with use may need to be implemented at access sites such as Great Falls, Carderock Springs, Old Angler's Wayside and Riverbend Park.	
		Paddle Craft Rentals	Opportunities to expand boat rentals could be considered.	
Carderock Springs		Trail Destination	New Public Access Site	Consideration of expanding visitor services at sites along the Clara Barton Parkway could include new accessible canoe and kayak launch, wayside landing access, viewing platforms or other appropriate access facilities.
		Develop Boat-in Primitive Campsites	Carderock could explore the possibility of adding water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and/or overnight car camping campsites and related visitor facilities where feasible.	
Glen Echo Park		Trail Destination	Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Trails leading from Glen Echo Park, Clara Barton Parkway and sites beyond could be developed and connected to the C&O Canal Towpath.
Potomac Heritage Trail		Linking Route	Funding opportunity for Public Access	The Federal Lands Access Program (MAP-21, §1119; 23 UCS 201, 204) supports capital and planning expenses for new or existing alternative transportation, including transportation by bike, bus, rail or any other publicly available means of transportation (including sightseeing services). This region is well-suited for the development of a transit in parks program that includes interpretation of the national trails along the Potomac. Funding sources for a trail connection formerly procured through the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13094_6106.html can now be accessed through the Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP) http://www.flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/fltp/
Capital Bikeshare		Linking Route	Bicycle rentals	National Capital Bikeshare locations could be added in parks along George Washington Memorial Parkway and Clara Barton Parkway, such as Carderock Springs and Turkey Run, and advertised at other kiosks in the area to enhance visitation to the parks.
Regional Promotion		Support Services	Technology	The Chesapeake Bay Explorer mobile app could be updated to include additional partner sites in the area and the water- and land-based trail routes that connect to the national trails.
Private Marinas		Support Services	Gateway Site	Installing signage and providing rack cards and other trail-related materials at areas where the public currently access the Potomac via boat ramps and marine-related services, like restaurants and other businesses, could be an effective way to reach a larger portion of existing river users.



Overview

This river section includes the sites and resources located between the Francis Scott Key Bridge (north) and the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (south). Routes associated with POHE, CAJO and STSP national trails are located within this region. This area is recognized as one of the most iconic landscapes in the United States with many significant national monuments, memorials and museums located within close proximity to the Potomac (DC attracts approximately 18 million tourists annually). The DC Metro area is rich in stories related to restored natural landscapes, American Indian heritage, Captain John Smith, George Washington, Colonial settlement, the Civil War, British plundering and the burning of the White House during the War of 1812, industrialization of the United States, and more.

The Potomac is flatter in this area as compared to the whitewater rapids upstream. Here, very few (if any) portions of the river have not been manipulated at one time or another. To accommodate the urban growth and industrial development over the last two centuries, shoreline areas have been heavily developed and seawalls have been built to protect against the tidal fluctuations and erosion. Several islands that exist today were created by the spoils of river dredging that occurred many years ago. Shoreline re-vegetation efforts have

restored river ecology in areas, providing natural landscapes such as Roosevelt Island and Oxon Cove.

This river section is characterized by its proximity to the densely-populated residential, commercial and industrial areas within the urban core of Washington, D.C. (The 2010 Census reported a population of over 4.9 million people within the 21 local governments in the District, suburban Maryland and Northern Virginia that comprise the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.) There are thousands of acres of public open space and multiple opportunities for active and passive recreation. Nearly all of the river shoreline is accessible by waterfront hiking and biking trails, many of which extend into the city. Public transportation provides multi-transit connections to the river from surrounding urban communities.

The Anacostia River connects with this stretch of the Potomac. Both CAJO and STSP follow the Anacostia and connect back to the Potomac River. The multiple parks, marinas, trails and historic landmarks offer many opportunities for enhancing visitor experiences along the Potomac River as well as providing a connection further east into the DC Metro community.

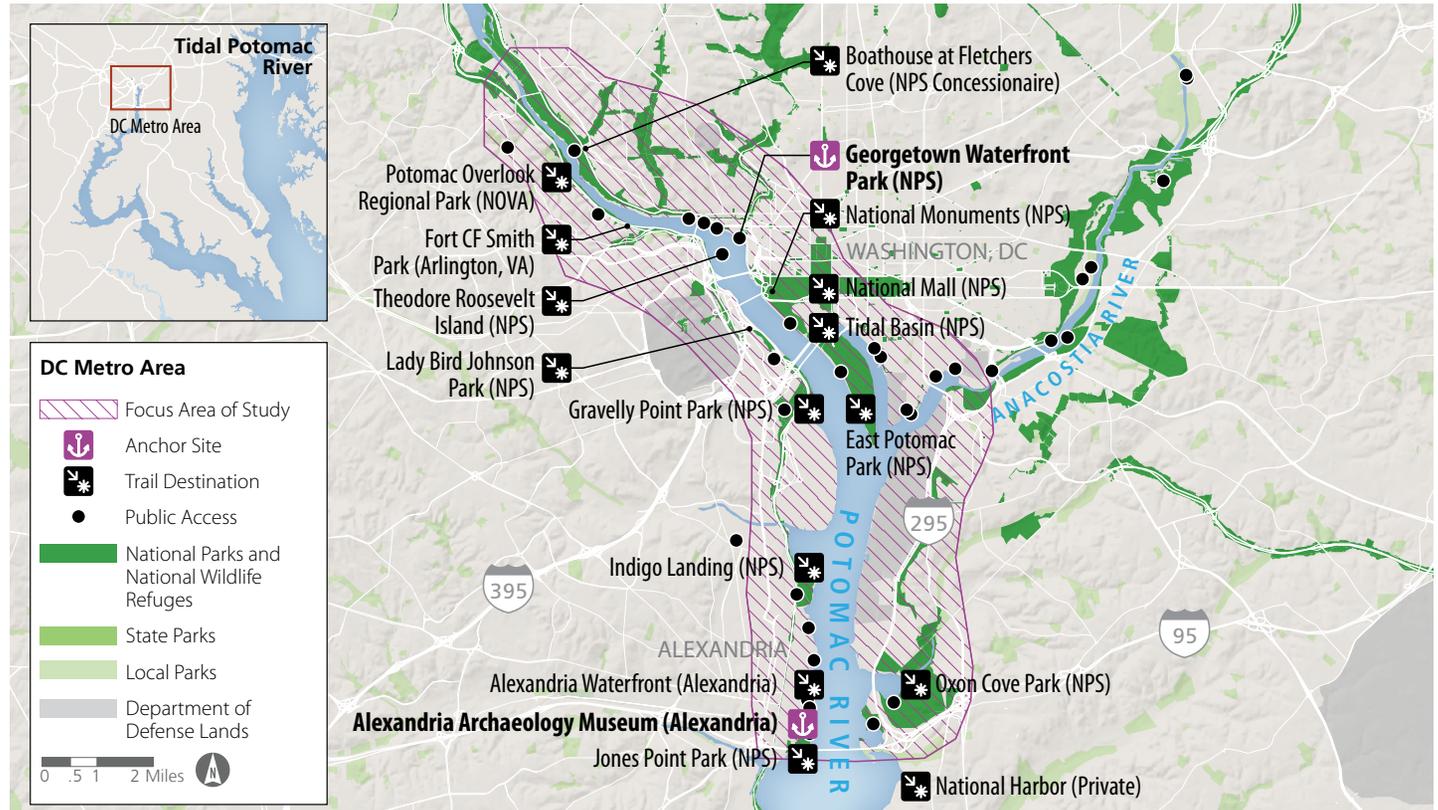


Top left: The Tidal Basin of the Potomac River with the Thomas Jefferson Memorial and U.S. Capitol Building in the distance (photo credit: Christopher A. Koberg)

Bottom right: Jones Point Park shoreline along as seen from the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (photo credit: NPS archive)

Facilities within this river section include:

- Fort Marcy Park (NPS, GWMP)
- Potomac Overlook Park (Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority/ NOVA)
- Fort C.F. Smith Park (Arlington, VA)
- The Boathouse at Fletcher’s Cove (NPS concession, privately operated)
- Georgetown Waterfront Park (NPS)
- Washington Harbour Georgetown (private)
- Alexandria Archeology Marina and Historic Waterfront (public/private)
- East Potomac Park (NPS)
- West Potomac Park (NPS)
- Lady Bird Johnson Park (NPS)
- Gravelly Point Park (NPS)
- Gangplank Marina (private)
- The National Mall, Tidal Basin and associated National Memorials (NPS)
- Theodore Roosevelt Island (NPS)
- Jones Point Park (NPS)
- Oxon Cove and Oxon Hill Farm Park (NPS)
- Segments of the George Washington Parkway including Daingerfield Island (NPS)
- Segments of the Mount Vernon Trail (NPS)
- Segments of the C&O Canal Towpath (NPS)
- Segments of the Rock Creek Park Trail (NPS)
- Segments of the Capital Crescent Trail (NPS)
- Long Bridge Park (Arlington, VA)



Trail Components

The following trail components have been identified to support strategic planning within this river section. The focus area described below contains several anchor sites, which are viewed as first tier locations for trail development efforts as they already contain significant visitor support facilities. The next level of development would include additional trail components such as destinations and linking routes; enhancements would occur as resources and opportunities become available. While many connections to sites occur across state or district borders, the focus areas and anchor sites have been grouped by state for the purposes of jurisdictional collaboration.

Focus Areas

Focus Area: The entire river section is a designated Focus Area due to the density and connectivity of trail-evocative landscapes and existing immersion visitor experiences.

Anchor Sites

Proposed anchor sites for this Focus Area includes Georgetown Waterfront Park and Alexandria Archaeology Museum (at the Old Town Alexandria Waterfront). While neither site is staffed full-time by NPS, both sites receive significant use by residents and tourists, can be reached via public transportation, and are within close proximity to private outfitters offering bicycle and boat rentals, and offer public launch sites and trailhead parking for excursion opportunities.

- **Georgetown Waterfront Park (NPS)** curves along 10 acres of the Potomac extending from the Washington Harbour complex to the Key Bridge. Connections to national trails and trail sites, such as the C&O Canal, are provided by a canoe/kayak launch, along with hiking and biking trails. Water taxis and private ferry service are provided at the adjacent Washington Harbour (private).

Anchor Sites (continued)

- **Alexandria Archaeology Museum** on the Alexandria Waterfront (City of Alexandria) offers public access recreational opportunities such as fishing piers, parks and a non-motorized boat launch. The park is located adjacent to Old Town Alexandria and has segments of the national trails running along its shoreline. Interpretive programs are provided by public and private operators.

Trail Destinations

Potomac Overlook Regional Park; Windy Run Park; Fort C.F. Smith Park; the Boathouse at Fletcher's Cove; Theodore Roosevelt Island; the National Mall; the Tidal Basin and National Memorials; the Potomac Heritage Trail; Lady Bird Johnson Park; Daingerfield Island; East Potomac Park; Long Bridge Park; Gravelly Point Park; the Anacostia River; Indigo Landing; Oxon Cove and Oxon Hill Farm Park; Old Town Alexandria; Alexandria City Marina; Mount Vernon Trail, King Street Park and Jones Point Park.

Anacostia River Destinations

Unique to this river section is the confluence of the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers. For the purposes of the Potomac Segment Plan, the Anacostia River (as a whole) is treated as a trail destination. The Anacostia River is an important segment of both the Captain John Smith Chesapeake and Star-Spangled Banner national historic trails. Through a separate planning effort, the Anacostia Water Trail Master Plan is focusing more explicitly on opportunities for trail development within the Anacostia River corridor. The Anacostia Water Trail (AWT) traverses the 9-mile length of the Anacostia River, from Bladensburg, MD to the confluence with the Potomac, intersecting the National Park Service unit - Anacostia Park in the District of Columbia as well as regional parks of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) in Prince George's County, MD. Continuing development of the AWT will enhance opportunities for the public to experience the national historic trails as well as Anacostia Park. Additionally, the last segment of the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail (ART) is currently under construction and, when completed, cyclists, runners and hikers will be able to travel the length of the Anacostia through parkland on the shore. Together, the developing AWT and ART serve as great connecting trails linking other features along the Anacostia that are trail destinations unto themselves.

While there are already many opportunities for trail access there is also much real and unrealized recreational potential for the Anacostia

River. For the purposes of the Potomac Segment Plan, trail resources located along the Anacostia that could potentially or currently provide excellent opportunities to connect to the trail resources along the Potomac are explored. These and other opportunities for continuing enhancement of Anacostia-based recreation are more specifically described in development plans for Anacostia Park and the AWT. Trail destinations along the Anacostia include Anacostia Park (NPS), Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens (NPS), the U.S. National Arboretum (USDA), Bladensburg Waterfront Park (MNCPPC), Bladensburg Wetlands (MNCPPC), Kingman Island (District of Columbia), Anacostia Community Boathouse (DC), James Creek Marina and Buzzard Point (NPS), Washington Navy Yard (Dept. of Defense), Yards Park (Capitol Riverfront Business Improvement District) and the many other emerging attractions along the Capitol Riverfront and Southwest Waterfront in DC.

Linking Routes

Nearly the entire river section of the DC Metro area is connected by a network of hiking and biking trails. These trails extend to other Potomac River sections: north to Great Falls via the C&O Canal Towpath and south to Mount Vernon via the Mount Vernon Trail. The Gulf Branch Trail Access site in Arlington also connects to POHE. Several water taxi and ferry routes provide commercial boat transit options and river paddling trails provide dozens of routes for canoeists and kayakers.

Many of the high-traffic bridges in this section have dedicated pedestrian and bike lanes for safe crossing. The Chain Bridge near Little Falls is intended to accommodate local traffic, rather than commuters, and is located where several previous bridges have stood dating back to 1797.

While the George Washington Memorial Parkway (nearly 7.5 million visits in 2012) provides a vehicular route in Virginia, Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling prohibits a riverfront vehicular route on the Maryland side of the river. Public bus and transit stops occur within close proximity to trail-significant sites and public transportation routes extend into neighborhoods and business districts to serve the community.

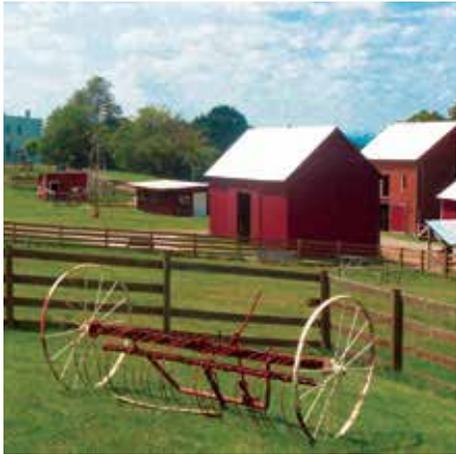
The Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, managed by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, celebrates the diversity of birds, fish, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates throughout Virginia's 43,000 square miles of habitat. The Coastal



While sites along the Anacostia are not technically within the boundary of the Potomac Segment Plan, future development, visitor experiences and connections to the Anacostia River corridor have been considered in this plan in coordination with members of the Anacostia Water Trail planning team.

Top: Torpedo Factory along the Alexandria Waterfront (photo credit: NPS archive)

Bottom: Georgetown Waterfront Park (photo credit: NPS archive)



Top: Oxon Hill Farm at Oxon Cove Park (photo credit: NPS website)

Bottom: Theodore Roosevelt Island (photo credit: NPS archive)

Linking Routes (continued)

Trail consists of 18 trail loops - including the Great Falls Loop within this river section study area - featuring great opportunities to view nature and wildlife along the Potomac and other sites within the region.

Support Services

This highly visited river section has many visitor services, far too many to mention in this document. Effort should be taken to continue to coordinate with these visitor services to ensure that national trail resources along the Potomac are adequately represented.

Key Trail Stories and Associated Resources

The following key story lines associated with CAJO, STSP and POHE themes are relevant to various trail components in this river section:



Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT

(Smith's explorations, American Indian cultures, natural history of Bay)

- Although Smith sailed past this area on his exploratory journey, there are few recorded experiences in this area.
- The Indians on the south shore of the Potomac would have followed a typical Chesapeake Bay indigenous lifestyle, based on agriculture, fishing, shell fishing and hunting, as well as trade with other groups upriver, across the river and possibly across the Bay.
- While there is no Nacotchtank descendent community, the Piscataway tribes take an active interest in interpreting the American Indian history of the DC metro area.

Features that support these stories include: restored or preserved landscapes; Theodore Roosevelt Island; Kingman Island; Kenilworth Marsh; Oxon Cove; Bladensburg Wetlands and Anacostia Water Trail.



Star-Spangled Banner NHT

(military events, individual contributors, Bay region as hub, icons of war)

- Alexandria - British occupation and pillaging of American seaports; American resistance to the advances on Washington; Surrender of Alexandria to British Fleet.
- Want Water – Enslaved persons seeking freedom; Mary Meeks Coombs, owner of Want Water house, escaped to British ships after Admiral Cochrane issued a proclamation offering emancipation to those seeking to resettle or fight against the Americans.

- Oxon Hill Farm – Mount Welby house, located on present-day Oxon Hill Farm, was in earshot of explosions that destroyed Fort Washington and within view of the plundering of Alexandria. Mary Welby DeButts describes hearing “every fire” from the Battle at Bladensburg and how the house was illuminated by fires in Washington, D.C. She writes of finding rockets “on our hill” and that a British fleet “lay directly before our house”.
- National Mall - British burning of the Capital on August 24, 1814.
- Washington Navy Yard – Ship-building hub during the time of the War of 1812; supported the defense of Washington, D.C.; one of the last lines of defense in the Battle at Bladensburg ; ordered to be burned by Admiral Tingey as the British marched into Washington to prevent its capture by the enemy.
- Anacostia River - Land and water advances of British troops; significant battles such as the Battle at Bladensburg.

Features that support these stories include: Chain Bridge, Alexandria Waterfront; Bladensburg Waterfront Park; Mount Welby at Oxon Hill Farm; Washington Navy Yard; Francis Scott Key Bridge; Star-Spangled Banner Memorial; Dolley Madison House, Anacostia Riverwalk Trail; Anacostia Water Trail; and Want Water Ruins.



Potomac Heritage NST

(meeting ground of conservation ideas and practices, five physiographic regions, crossroads of opportunity, development of U.S. Republic)

- Oxon Cove - wildlife habitat including bald eagle nesting areas and potential sturgeon spawning sites; protected lands, including some conservation easements on private lands and some undeveloped parcels, which may provide future visitor opportunities.
- Oxon Hill Farm – reflects early American agriculture and farming.
- Alexandria, Jones Point Park - 19th/20th century industrial stories; Colonial settlement; African-American historic sites; early navigation and shipping on the Potomac.
- George Washington Memorial Parkway, Potomac Heritage Trail and Mount Vernon Trail - George Washington; tobacco farming.
- National Mall - historic monuments dedicated to significant events, people and national leaders.
- C&O Canal - industrialization of early America.

Features that support these stories include: Oxon Hill Farm homestead; Jones Point Lighthouse; tobacco warehouses and Freedom House museum; Torpedo Factory building; National War College.

Proposed Trail Enhancements and Implementation Strategies

In addition to the cross cutting strategies which apply to all river sections, this river section provides or has near-term potential to provide a wide variety of desired visitor experiences for different types of trail users. Providing optimal trail-related visitor experiences in a way that highlights this area’s resources, primary features and key stories could best be achieved as follows:

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Georgetown Harbor to Woodrow Wilson Bridge			
Old Town Alexandria, VA Waterfront  Anchor Site		Enhance Guided Walking Tours with Trail Themes	Existing self-guided walking and bicycling tours, such as the “Walking With Washington” podcast, and smart phone tours designed by the Office of Historic Alexandria could provide expanded or new trail-related information.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	The Alexandria Waterfront Small Area Plan includes components related to expanded public space, connectivity, landscaping, public art and historical interpretation. There are three private redevelopment sites along the waterfront that are required to incorporate art and history into their design and public spaces. Each site has development goals and guidelines, including requirements for active ground floor space. Developers may be willing to partner with NPS to convey trail-related themes within their developments. Coordination between NPS staff and the City of Alexandria could help to facilitate this and other interpretive projects.
		New Public Access and Trail Itineraries	The City of Alexandria is engaged in a planning and design project for a prominent section of the City’s waterfront, which will expand access to the river. This project could provide a waterfront extension of the Potomac Heritage and Mount Vernon hiking and biking trails. Additionally, the new design could consider providing new fishing, observation and/or canoe/kayak launch facilities. Encouraging a stronger user connection with the river; and possibly redeveloping the abandoned docks should be discussed with potential partners within the Alexandria community
		Partnership Opportunity	The City of Alexandria is currently in phase 2 of 7 of their Wayfinding Program, which includes three large kiosks and 24 pedestrian directional signs along King Street between the King Street Metro Station and the Waterfront in the Old Town area. This program’s comprehensive system has a consistent design. Phase 7 has allotted \$241,000 for interpretive panels and two-sided kiosks for the Waterfront, as well as District Markers scheduled for installation in 2020. This installation date could potentially be advanced if there were cooperative opportunities, potentially, with NPS to share the costs of design, fabrication and installation.
			In addition, in June 2014 Alexandria City Council approved Phase 1 of a new landscape design and flood mitigation plan for the City’s waterfront. The design includes an integration of historical interpretation and art into a trail along the waterfront and incorporates both interpretive elements as well as markers. These initiatives could also be supported by NPS collaboration for trail marking.
		Partnership Expansion Opportunity	Alexandria Archaeology Museum, located in the Torpedo Factory building along the Alexandria Waterfront, has offered to serve as a partner site for visitor orientation to the national trails along the Potomac. Already a site along the Star-Spangled Banner NHT, expanding this existing partnership could benefit the trails and entire City of Alexandria museum system. Follow up with the Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria should be executed to maximize both the partnership between NPS and the City of Alexandria.
			NPS staff could work with Museum staff to engage the Alexandria Waterfront museums, businesses and service providers in opportunities to promote the trails through brochures, touring opportunities and celebratory events.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Charter boat tours and ferry operators that currently provide service to the Alexandria Waterfront could offer new and expanded narratives related to American Indian uses of resources, Captain John Smith’s explorations, the War of 1812, river commerce and fishing, industrialization and the river’s natural values and wildlife. Potomac Riverboat Company has expressed a strong interest in Trail interpretive materials for use in their narrations along the river and various historic sites.
		Enhance Interpretive Exhibits	Due to Old Town Alexandria potentially reaching a “signage saturation” point, alternate opportunities to convey trail-related information such as public art, exhibits, embedded pavement, temporary displays in empty storefronts, interactive and electronic kiosks could be considered.
Enhance Wayfinding Signage	Updates to existing trail-specific signage and kiosks placed in strategic areas along the existing Mount Vernon and Potomac Heritage Trails could inform users of the larger stories of the three national trails that extend beyond the DC Metro area.		
Enhance Paddle/Bike Tours with Trail Themes	Existing walking, bicycling and boating tours (promoted by the Alexandria Convention & Visitors Associate) could include expanded or new trail-related information and stories in their tour narratives and itineraries.		

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Georgetown Harbor to Woodrow Wilson Bridge			
Georgetown Waterfront Park	 Anchor Site	Provide Interpretive Panels	Effective visitor orientation here might include a three-panel kiosk installed at an area of congregation with CAJO, STSP and POHE panels to orient users to the Trails in a larger context and identify key trail spots along the Potomac River specifically within the DC Metro area. The POHE panel on the exhibit could relate the development of the C&O Canal with the Industrial Revolution. CAJO and STSP panels could also relate site-specific information and also identify Trail sites to be seen further along the river to encourage visitors to explore beyond their immediate area and to understand where they are located in context to the entire Trail routes.
		Enhance Wayfinding Signage	In addition to existing site-specific signs, there is potential to add new trail-related orientation/interpretive signs and enhanced wayfinding signage.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Guided tours could include information that connects Georgetown's history to the Canal's development during the Industrial Revolution and will reference POHE. The private tour operators could benefit the visitor experience by sharing CAJO, STSP and POHE stories during their tours. NPS could assist in training the operators to be "Certified Trail Ambassadors."
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Outfitters and paddling club members currently providing paddling tours and utilizing the launch sites at or near Georgetown Waterfront Park could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE stories into their trip itineraries.
		River Festival Trails Promotion	A family-oriented river and culturally themed event with musical performances, boat cruises, kayak tours, guided trail walks, and a panel discussion on the park-specific issues called "Celebrating the Potomac" has been held annually since 2013 at Piscataway Park in summer months. A similar event could be scheduled at Georgetown Waterfront Park and coordinated to coincide with or be held on concurrent dates at other parks along the river to strengthen the unity between trail sites and add continuity to Trails stories that occur along the entire length of the Potomac river.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Charter boat tours and ferry operators that currently provide service to Georgetown Waterfront Park and Washington Harbour could offer new and expanded narratives related to American Indian uses of resources, Captain John Smith's explorations, the War of 1812, river commerce and fishing, industrialization and the river's natural values and wildlife. Potomac Riverboat Company has expressed a strong interest in Trail interpretive materials for use in their narrations along the river and various historic sites.
Jones Point Park	 Trail Destination	Enhance Interpretive Exhibits	The existing POHE panel could be expanded to include CAJO and STSP panels to describe stories relevant to the trail themes. Reference to NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy located just south of Woodrow Wilson Bridge Chesapeake Bay could be included.
		Develop Trail Paddling Itineraries	On self-guided or guided trips, visitors could depart from Alexandria Waterfront, Jones Point Park or other area marinas to explore the environment at Oxon Cove and Fox's Ferry Cove and learn about trail-related themes such as; how the river once was, key changes in the ecology and present day reclamation efforts. Additional paddling tour itineraries to Belle Haven Park and Dyke Marsh could be explored.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Existing guided tours of the historic lighthouse could expand to include information that connects the area's development with the Industrial Revolution and reference POHE.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Outfitters, summer camps and paddling club members currently providing paddling tours and utilizing the launch sites at Jones Point Park could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE stories into their trip itineraries. NPS staff could assist tour leader staff in becoming "Certified Trail Ambassadors" to ensure the trail-related information being shared is accurate and of high quality.
		River Festival Trails Promotion	A family-oriented river and culturally-themed event with musical performances, boat cruises, kayak tours, guided trail walks, and a panel discussion on the park-specific issues called "Celebrating the Potomac" has been held at Piscataway Park annually in summer months. A similar event could be scheduled at Jones Point Park and coordinated to coincide with or be held on concurrent dates at other parks along the river to strengthen the unity between trail sites and add continuity to Trails stories that occur along the entire length of the Potomac river.
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Potomac Riverboat Company, which provides water taxi service from major populous locations such as Historic Alexandria, Georgetown Waterfront and many other locations, has attempted to work with NPS to allow for water taxi service from Jones Point Park to Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling and allow for a commercial floating dock under the Woodrow Wilson Bridge to accommodate the water taxi service. Follow-up on the status of this development should be monitored to determine if Trail interpretation can be included where appropriate.
		New Public Access Sites	There is the potential for increased access along the waterfront and additional recreation at a site below the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Development of a plan for active and passive recreation at this site could be considered.
Fort Marcy Park	 Trail Destination	Develop Stories Related to the Trails	At trailheads, interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Georgetown Harbor to Woodrow Wilson Bridge			
Boathouse at Fletcher's Cove		Provide Interpretive Panels	Where feasible at other popular fishing locations, such as the Boathouse at Fletcher's Cove, POHE and CAJO kiosks could be installed to interpret these stories and connect to other sites.
		Paddle Craft Rentals	Inclusion of trail information at www.fxva.com , which highlights destinations and activities at Great Falls, Pohick Bay and Occoquan could be considered.
Theodore Roosevelt Island		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	While bicycle riding is prohibited on Roosevelt Island, inclusion of Capital Bikeshare kiosks at the mainland across from the island could be considered to connect the island with the Mount Vernon Trail and other sites, but continue to prohibit biking on the island itself.
		Enhanced Public Access	The potential to add visitor services on the Island including a paddle craft landing area could be explored. Restrictions regarding the Memorial should be understood before any proposed development.
		New Public Access Sites	While the Island's trails are designed to be pedestrian-only, viewing platforms, wayfinding and/or a fishing pier could be considered on the mainland side.
		New Public Access Sites	At the Arlington Boathouse, the ongoing Environmental Impact Study (EIS) includes consideration of river access for rowing vessels, and would also consider an area for public launch of paddle craft. Multiple potential locations will be considered in the review process, including the pedestrian bridge leading to Rosslyn, to determine the most appropriate location.
National Mall, Tidal Basin and Associated Memorials		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	NPS staff in and around the National Mall and private tour operators (including buses, private guides, Segway, bike and walking tours) are located at numerous locations throughout the city, most visibly located at the National Mall, Georgetown and Jones Point Park. The private tour operators could benefit the visitor experience by sharing CAJO, STSP and POHE stories during their existing tours or NPS could provide content to help create new itineraries. NPS could also assist in training the operators to be "Certified Trail Ambassadors."
		River Festival Trails Promotion	National holidays (July 4th, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, etc.), seasonal celebrations (Cherry Blossom Festival), Washington DC Dragon Boat Festival (April) and a variety of river volunteer clean-up weekends occur throughout the year. Multiple recreational events such as marathons, 5K walks, critical mass bike rides and paddle races occur in and around the city on an annual basis.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Opportunities exist to engage the existing paddle boat outfitters at Tidal Basin Paddle Boats and others to incorporate Trail stories into their existing hourly rental operations.
		Expand recreation equipment rental opportunities	Opportunities to promote additional rental services on the National Mall and along the Alexandria Waterfront could be explored. These areas are accessible by both public and private transportation from nearly every area of the city; however, many residents and travelers do not own the appropriate recreational equipment necessary to experience the full breadth of opportunities at these sites.
West Potomac Park		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	West Potomac Park recently added a Capital Bike Share station and a commercial ferry landing at the park. This new infrastructure presents an opportunity to establish trail-related interpretation at the park. Additionally, updated wayfinding and orientation signage could be considered at this site.
East Potomac Park		Provide Interpretive Panels	At trailheads at East Potomac Park, interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Interpret Stories at Non-public Accessible DOD Lands at Adjacent Parks	Interpretive panels regarding the following stories related to lands within present-day Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling (which is not accessible to the general public) could be installed at adjacent public access sites such as East Potomac Park..
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Water taxi opportunities could be expanded by adding stops at some of the other major marinas and sites in the area such as East Potomac Park.
		New Public Access Sites	The potential to expand visitor services at East Potomac Park to include new accessible canoe and kayak launch, fishing pier, wayside landing access and/or viewing platforms will be explored.
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Charter boat touring opportunities could be expanded by adding charters at some of the other major marinas and sites in the area such as East Potomac Park.
		Campsite Development	Existing parks in the region such as East Potomac Park could explore the possibility of adding water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and/or overnight car camping campsites and related visitor facilities where feasible.
		Bike, Canoe and/or Kayak Rentals	Incorporation of bike and boat rental options at East Potomac Park could be explored.

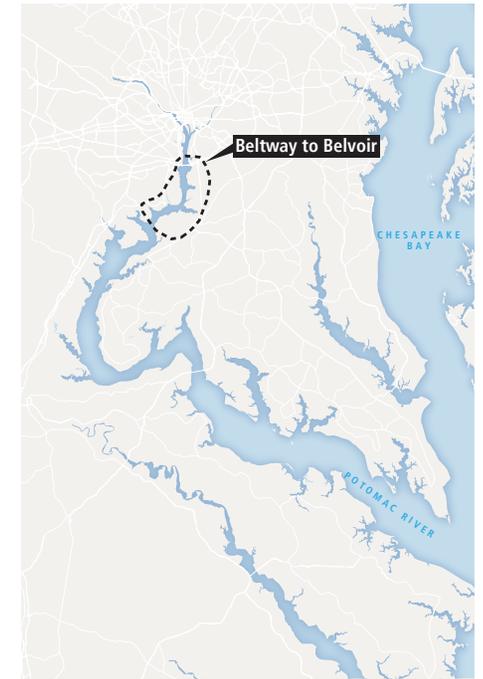
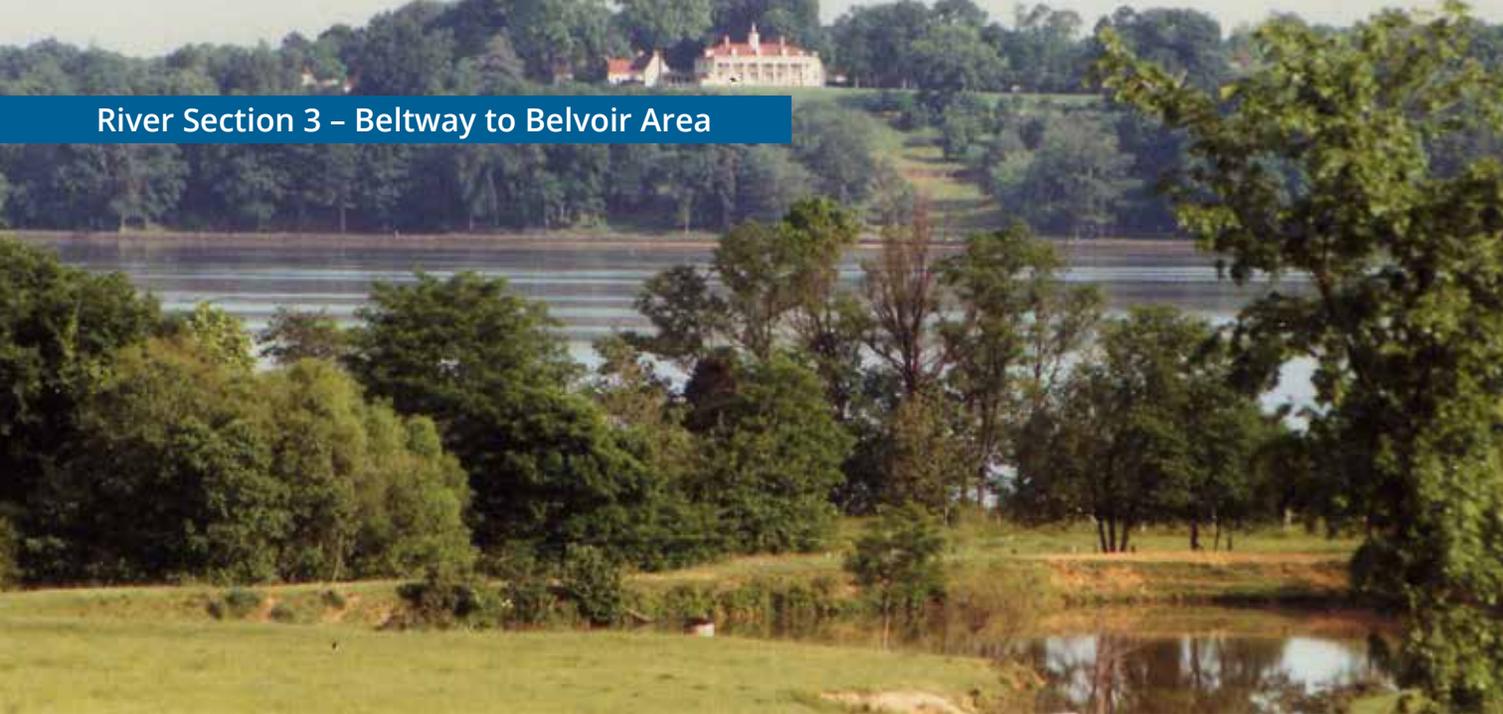
Site	Trail Component	Action	Description	
Focus Area - Georgetown Harbor to Woodrow Wilson Bridge				
Anacostia River Destinations		Trail	Enhance Wayfinding Signage	Trail-specific signage and kiosks placed in strategic areas along the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail and Anacostia Water Trail could inform users of the larger stories of the three national trails that extend beyond the Anacostia area.
		Destination	New Public Access and Trail Itineraries	Adding paddling launch sites, and incorporation of trail-specific stories into paddling itineraries, could be considered at Anacostia Park, Kingman Island, Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens and other sites.
			Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Itineraries specific to the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail are most evident in the story of the burning of the Capital building during the War of 1812. Additional stories could tie into the planning efforts of Anacostia Water Trail due to the large number of significant events occurring along that river. Additional signage at locations up to the northeast and northwest branches of the Anacostia Water Trail could be considered.
			Provide Interpretive Panels	Coordination with Prince George's County Parks and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) could result in additional signage up to the northeast and northwest branches of the Anacostia. Specific sites for consideration could include the existing public access sites at Dueling Creek, Colmar Manor Park and the Bladensburg Wetlands (ANA-11), and at sites along the planned extension of the Anacostia Tributary trail system further into Montgomery County. These sites could benefit from the addition of interpretive panels promoting connections to the national trails and other sites in the area.
			New Interpretive Opportunity	Potomac Riverboat Company has been working with DC Government to bring the historic warship, USS Olympia, to the Anacostia and place the ship near the proposed new Navy Museum, contemplated to be moved closer to Buzzards Point. The ship was Admiral Dewey's warship and the pride of the U.S. in the Spanish-American conflict that launched U.S. Naval supremacy. The ship also brought the first "unknown soldier" back for burial at Arlington National Cemetery. Follow-up on the status of this development should be monitored to determine if Trail interpretation can be included where appropriate.
			Interpret Stories at Non-Public Accessible DOD Lands at Adjacent Parks	Interpretive panels regarding the following stories related to lands within present-day Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling (which is not accessible to the general public) could be installed at adjacent public access sites such as Anacostia Park or along a trailhead of the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail.
			Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	A new trail and pedestrian bridge could connect Kenilworth Park to the National Arboretum just above Benning Road. The NPS and the District of Columbia have recently completed an Environmental Assessment to construct these elements. Incorporation of trail-specific stories along this potential route, as well as along connections from the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail to the Anacostia Tributary Trail System, could be considered.
			Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Potomac Riverboat Company, which provides water taxi service from major populous locations such as Historic Alexandria, Georgetown Waterfront and many other locations, has expressed interest in working with DC Government to provide water taxi service to the Buzzards Point area for the proposed soccer stadium. Follow-up on the possibility to expand service to this area should be exercised.
			Develop Boat-in Primitive Campsites	While year-round camping at sites along the Anacostia is not currently feasible, sites that could be considered for controlled camping, either through permit or group events, could include the existing Tent Landing Park or at the Bladensburg Wetlands (ANA-11).
			Develop Stories Related to the Trails	The existing paddling tours and pontoon boat ride tours from Bladensburg Waterfront Park could include expanded or new interpretive information related to STSP.
			River Festival Trails Promotion	The national trails could be promoted (via a booth and/or other activities) at Port Towns Day, an annual springtime event held at Bladensburg Waterfront Park and Colmar Park, which includes music, food, activities and boat tours. Additional waterfront festivals could serve as venues for trails promotion.
	Endurance Event Hosting	Patuxent River Sojourn is an annual event that aims to elevate participants' awareness of the river's importance to the region and to encourage local residents to play an active role in its restoration and preservation. Programs during past sojourns included night paddles, live music and historic, environmental and cultural presentations. A similar event could be considered for the Potomac River, with Bladensburg Waterfront Park serving as the launch site. Hosting of a trail-themed triathlon or other type of endurance event could also be considered.		
Key Bridge Boathouse		Trail	Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Opportunities exist to engage the existing paddle boat outfitters at Key Bridge (formerly Jack's) Boat House and others to offer/expand Trail stories into their existing hourly rental operations.
		Destination	New Public Access	Opportunities exist to add ADA accessibility to the existing paddle launch site. Coordination with site management and interested partners could be explored for feasibility.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description	
Focus Area - Georgetown Harbor to Woodrow Wilson Bridge				
Gravelly Point Park		Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Panels	Where feasible at popular boating locations such as Gravelly Point, CAJO, STSP and POHE kiosks could be installed to interpret these stories.
		Interpret Stories at Non-Public Accessible DOD Lands at Adjacent Parks	Interpretive panels regarding Historic Flights that have taken place at present-day Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling (which is not accessible to the general public) could be installed at adjacent public access sites where visitors watch airplanes land at Reagan National airport such as East Potomac Park or along a trailhead of the Mount Vernon Trail (such as Daingerfield Island or Gravelly Point Park).	
		Enhanced Public Access	Enhancing the existing boat ramp at Gravelly Point to include a dedicated canoe/kayak launch could be considered.	
		Develop Paddle Itineraries	Local outfitter REI currently conducts a day paddling trip within the Tidal Potomac from Gravelly Point. The paddling trip and itinerary explores the Monumental core in Washington, D.C. Trail information and themes could be included or expanded in this tour itinerary.	
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Additional paddling launch sites such as Diamond Teague Park, Gangplank Marina and Buzzard Point could incorporate trail stories into their itineraries.	
Lady Bird Johnson Park		Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Panels	Where feasible at popular boating locations such as Columbia Island Marina at Lady Bird Johnson Park, CAJO, STSP and POHE kiosks could be installed to interpret these stories.
Oxon Hill Farm Park		Trail Destination	Develop Stories Related to the Trails	While the site is staffed full time by NPS, a partnership could result in descriptions of Trail-related stories and experiences offered up and down the river. NPS staff could assist tour leader staff in becoming "Certified Trail Ambassadors" to ensure the trail-related information being shared is accurate and of high quality.
		Provide Interpretive Panels	Compliance has been completed for installation of trail-related signage at the park. Efforts to address themes related to all three national trails in this or future installation(s) could be considered.	
		Interpret Stories at Non-Public Accessible DOD Lands at Adjacent Parks	Interpretive panels regarding the following stories related to lands within present-day Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling (which is not accessible to the general public) could be installed at adjacent public access sites such as Oxon Hill Farm Park or along a trailhead of the Oxon Run Trail.	
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Oxon Hill Park management could consider adding a trail along Piscataway Creek, pending a review of the Environmental Assessment (currently underway). NPCA is open to supporting the work to be done to assess the feasibility of adding new trails at this site where appropriate.	
		New public access	Consideration of expanding visitor services at Oxon Hill Farm Park to include new accessible canoe and kayak launch, fishing pier, wayside landing access and/or viewing platforms could be explored.	
		Develop Boat-in Primitive Campsites	Existing parks in the region such as Oxon Hill Farm Park could explore the possibility of adding water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and/or overnight car camping campsites and related visitor facilities where feasible.	
		Bike, canoe and/or kayak rentals	Incorporation of bike and paddle boat rental options at Oxon Hill Farm Park could be explored.	
Gangplank Marina		Trail Destination	Partnership Opportunity	A large development project surrounding Gangplank Marina, The Wharf, will provide opportunities to engage retail, commercial and residential users along the Potomac River. Proposed enhancements include a waterfront park, enhanced Capital Bikeshare service, new piers, relocated boat slips, historic plaques, historic sidewalk markers, heritage trail signage and pedestrian-focused active public spaces. Communication with the developer of The Wharf, Hoffman-Madison, should be established to discuss possible opportunities to work with NPS or other partner organizations to maximize public access to the river, connect the site to existing trails in the area and the potential to share Trail-related stories via interpretive opportunities within the development's intent to support and enhance the waterfront as a public amenity.
		Provide Interpretive Panels	Where feasible and likely after marina modifications from The Wharf development are completed, CAJO, STSP and POHE kiosks could be installed to interpret these stories.	
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Charter boat tours and ferry operators that currently provide service to Gangplank Marina could offer new and expanded narratives related to American Indian uses of resources, Captain John Smith's explorations, the War of 1812, river commerce and fishing, industrialization and the river's natural values and wildlife. Potomac Riverboat Company, which anticipates providing service from The Wharf, has expressed a strong interest in Trail interpretive materials for use in their narrations along the river and various historic sites.	

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Georgetown Harbor to Woodrow Wilson Bridge			
Riverfront Trails	 Linking Route	Enhance Wayfinding Signage	Trail-specific signage and kiosks placed in strategic areas along the existing Mount Vernon, Rock Creek and Anacostia Riverwalk trails could inform the user to the larger stories of the 3 Trails that extend beyond the DC Metro area.
		Enhance Wayfinding Signage along the Mount Vernon Trail	Additional wayfinding signage along the Mount Vernon Trail, possibly totems, could be utilized to promote the national trails at Roosevelt Island, Jones Point and at the trail terminus at Mount Vernon.
		Enhanced Public Access along the Mount Vernon Trail	Addition of different recreational zones along the Mount Vernon Trail, including fitness stations, and opportunities to increase recreational diversity could be considered. Sites along the Mount Vernon Trail could also consider adding new recreational access.
		Funding Opportunity for Public Access	The Federal Lands Access Program (MAP-21, §1119; 23 UCS 201, 204) supports capital and planning expenses for new or existing alternative transportation including transportation by bike, bus, rail or any other publicly available means of transportation including sightseeing services. This region is well-suited for the development of a transit in parks program that includes interpretation of the national trails along the Potomac. Funding sources for a trail connection formerly procured through the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13094_6106.html can now be accessed through the Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP) http://www.flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/fltp/
Potomac Heritage Trail	 Linking Route	Power Boaters Map and Guide	A users' map and guide could be developed to assist motor boating enthusiasts in exploring specific river stretches and destinations further up and downstream.
		Develop New Trail Linkage and Access	A new connector trail could bridge the gap between Anacostia Riverwalk Trail and the Oxon Hill Farm Trail in Oxon Hill Farm Park. Consideration to connect to the Oxon Run Trail will also be explored for maximum regional connectivity. Extension of this trail could be continued south toward the planned extension of the Potomac Heritage Trail along Oxon Hill Road to Fort Foote and the Broad Creek Historic District.
		Extending Bike Trails in Arlington, VA	Increased coordination would aid the City of Arlington's efforts to improve the directional and interpretive signage to the parks that are affiliated with or connected to POHE, including Gulf Branch, Donaldson Run, Windy Run and Long Bridge.
		Extending Bike Trails in Arlington, VA	Urban parks in Arlington that connect to the Mount Vernon Trail and offer bike share locations and access to Metro public transit are located in the Rosslyn area and the Airport section of the Four Mile Run Trail. Coordination between the City of Arlington and NPS to include these sections as formal connections to POHE could be considered.
		Extending Bike Trails in Prince George's County	Increased coordination would aid Prince George's County efforts to continue the current off-road improvements to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Trail, with a goal to continue improvements down Livingston Road.
C&O Canal Towpath	 Linking Route	Partnership Opportunity	The Washington Canoe Club, located off the Capital Crescent Trail and C&O Canal Towpath, honors strong traditions of excellence in canoeing and reaches a large paddling community in the Washington, D.C. area. Efforts to restore and preserve the historic Club building located along the C&O Canal Towpath are currently underway. Education outreach, paddling tours and opportunities to interpret trail resources exist between WCC and NPS and should be explored.
		New Public Access	The Georgetown Business Improvement District (BID) is working to explore opportunities to enhance the sections of the canal within Historic Georgetown: http://www.georgetownheritage.org/canal/ Possible improvements include canoe/kayak launch, restoration of historic barge and the resurrection of mule-drawn boat rides for tours and educational programs. While connections to POHE and STSP trail resources seem most appropriate, CAJO route runs within this section of the river and could benefit from a DC Metro trail partner interested in trail promotion. Communication with Georgetown BID should be maintained as opportunities for partnerships and interpretation become more apparent.
Capital Bikeshare	 Linking Route	Bicycle Rentals	National Capital Bikeshare locations could be added or expanded at Jones Point Park, Alexandria Waterfront, Oxon Hill Farm Park, East Potomac Park, James Creek Marina, Buzzard Point Park, Diamond Teague Park and Roosevelt Island Park and advertised at other kiosks in the area to enhance visitation to the parks.
		Bicycle Rentals	Bladensburg Park currently offers bike rentals. Bikeshare locations in Prince George's County could be located at sites away from the River (not at parks).

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Georgetown Harbor to Woodrow Wilson Bridge			
Public Transportation	 Linking Route	Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Metro Public Transit bus operators transporting visitors and commuters within the DC Metro area could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE-specific information into their interpretive narrations and printed materials. Trail-related promotions could be included onboard the circulator that carries visitors around the National Mall. (There is currently an initiative to expand the service around the mall.)
		Develop Public Transportation Maps to Show Transit Routes and Stops to Access Trail Sites	Utilizing the existing Metro bus and train map graphic style to indicate which stops transit riders can take to visit partner sites along the national trails could be a useful way to encourage urban residents and visitors to explore sites along existing public transit routes. Rather than listing which bus or train number to take to reach a site, a replication of Metro's System Map indicating sites that can be reached along the routes could be created. This product could help millions of urban residents and DC tourists "Find Your Park" via public transportation and could be supported by the NPS Urban Parks and Programs Urban Agenda.
		Connect Suburban Trail Sites to Urban Public Transportation Systems	Cities such as Portland, Seattle and San Francisco offer public transportation access from urban areas to suburban and rural parks through a network linking existing public transportation services. An example in San Francisco is Transit and Trails http://www.transitandtrails.org/ . These "Transit to Trailhead" types of connections bring urban transit riders to local towns, and the towns act as the trailhead connected for the trails. Economic support is provided to local towns by offering weekend service to towns where trail resources are most prominent. Federal or state transportation grants for this type of program may be available, application of this model to towns and sites north and south of the DC Metro area could be considered.
		Commuter Ferry Transportation Network on the Potomac	Various studies on the feasibility of water transportation on the Potomac have been completed by both public and private entities in recent years, including the Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC) and the Potomac Riverboat Company. Consensus is that with public funding and support, a commuter ferry is feasible and market ready. Coordination with this effort as it continues to mature should be maintained to determine if NPS sites, trail partner sites or partnership opportunities could be leveraged to help create the network.
Private Marinas	 Support Services	Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Consideration to provide waterfront restaurants with trail-specific information such as menu placemats or rack cards that showcase trail-specific themes, identify the site location within the great context of the trail route and highlight significant trail sites in the area could be explored.
		Provide Interpretive Panels at Marina Locations	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
Private Outfitters	 Support Services	Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Many private bus, walking and Segway tours operate in and around the National Mall area. Many of these tours could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE specific information in addition to the stories of the monuments and memorials.
Regional Promotion	 Support Services	Technology	The Chesapeake Bay Explorer App could be updated to include additional partner sites in the area and the water- and land-based trail routes that connect to the national trails. NPS National Capital Region (NCR) could link the explorer app to their promotional materials. Additionally, NCR could link the national trail websites to their websites and their friends' groups websites to increase trail promotion.
		Partnership Opportunity	Coordinate development and promotion of national trail-related experiences in Northern Virginia (professional and self-guided tours, events, etc.); integrate into Brand USA, Destination USA and Capital Region promotions. Link trail promotion efforts to Destination DC and utilize the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) site to promote the trails (NPS has an MOU among Virginia agencies at the Commonwealth level).
		Partnership Opportunity	Several recreation-based programs dedicated to supporting U.S. Military Veterans returning home from service exist and annually seek locations for bicycle, paddling, fishing, horseback riding and running events. Ride 2 Recovery, Helping Heroes, Warrior Hike, Warrior Paddle, PATH International Equine Services for Heroes, and potentially many other programs, could partner with trail sites along the Potomac for future or annual events along the trail routes.
		Feature Trails-related Material at Park Events	The Trails could be highlighted during the numerous volunteer river clean-ups that are sponsored throughout the year; trail-related cosponsorships should be considered.

River Section 3 – Beltway to Belvoir Area



Overview

This river section includes the sites and resources along the Potomac from approximately the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (north) to Fort Belvoir, VA and Piscataway Park, MD (south). Routes associated with POHE, CAJO and STSP are located within this region. The area is rich in conserved natural landscapes and history related to American Indians, Captain John Smith, George Washington, Colonial settlement, the Civil War, War of 1812 British fleet activity and American defenses, and more.

This area is punctuated by wide coves and varied shoreline elevations. Public lands along the water are more fragmented as compared to the DC Metro area upstream. Suburban residential development along both sides of the river surrounds the multiple historic fortifications. American Indian stories are extensive, with multiple significant archeological sites and known locations of Piscataway communities and farming areas.

There is a vivid contrast here between residential and commercially developed sites and lands which are nearly pristine in appearance and evocative of the time periods associated with Captain John Smith, George Washington, Colonial settlement and the War of 1812. (The 2010 Census reported a population of over 1 million residents in

Fairfax County, VA and over 860,000 residents in Prince George's County, MD.) Dyke Marsh and Broad Creek, within close proximity to the heavily developed National Harbor, offer wildlife viewing opportunities, demonstrate the fragility of natural wetlands and the importance of supporting future habitat restoration projects. Mount Vernon offers a glimpse of late 18th century colonial life, while Piscataway Park offers protected evocative views along the eastern shoreline of the river. The interior Piscataway Creek (adjacent to Fort Washington) is known for its robust American bald eagle population.

Trail Components

Trail components are existing publicly accessible lands that have been identified to support strategic planning relative to CAJO, STSP and POHE within this river section. The focus area described below contains one anchor site, which is viewed as the first tier location for trail development efforts as it already contains significant visitor support facilities. The next level of development would include additional trail components such as destinations and linking routes; enhancements would occur as resources and opportunities become available. While many connections to sites occur across state borders, the trail components have been grouped by state for the purposes of jurisdictional collaboration.

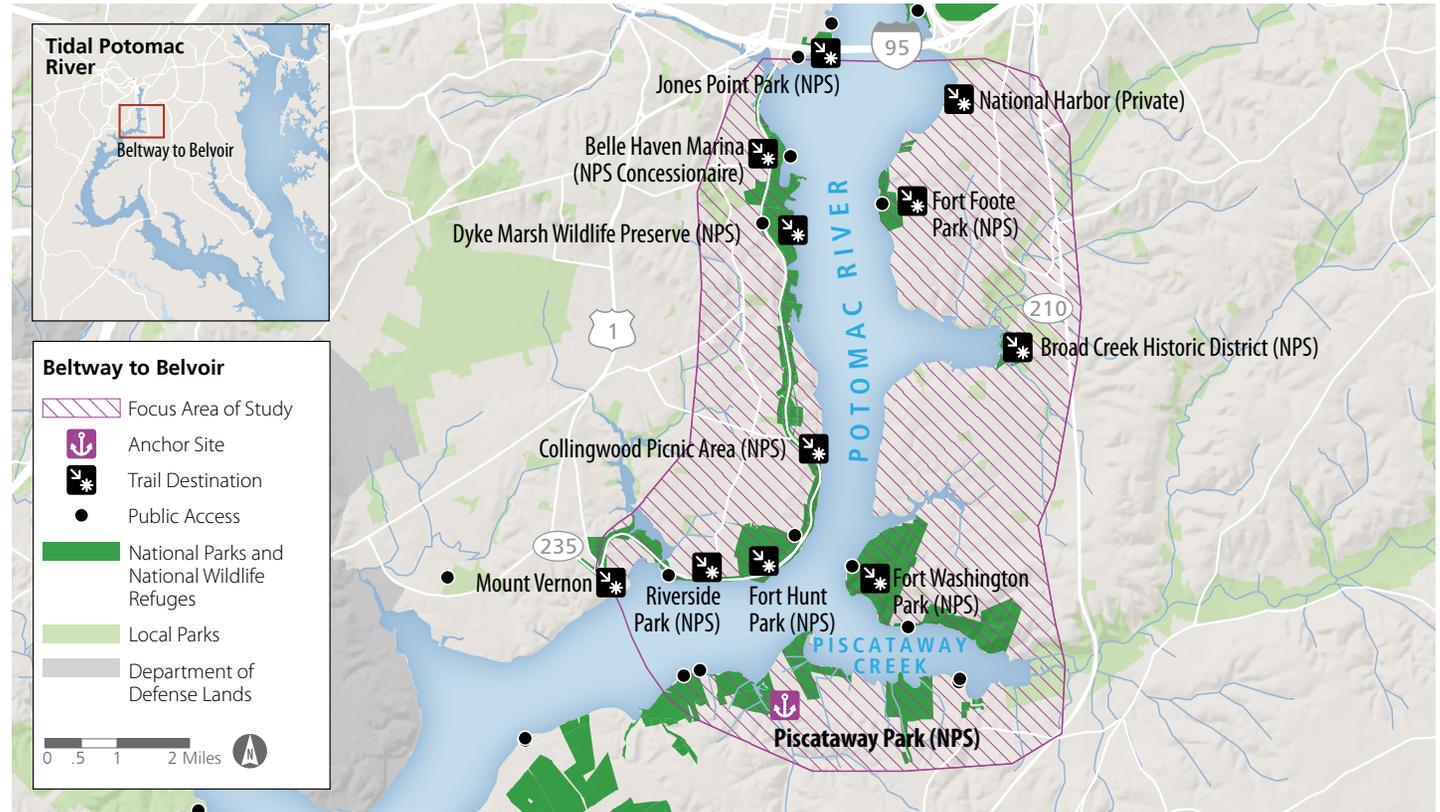


Top: View of Mount Vernon from Piscataway Park (photo credit: NPS website)

Bottom: Mount Vernon present day (photo credit: NPS archive)

Facilities within this river section include:

- National Harbor (private development)
- Fort Washington Park (NPS)
- Mount Vernon (Mount Vernon Ladies' Association)
- Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve (NPS)
- Piscataway Park including the National Colonial Farm, Marshall Hall and Hard Bargain Farm; (NPS, Accokeek Foundation, Alice Ferguson Foundation, Marshall Hall Foundation)
- Broad Creek Historic District (Prince George's County, MD)
- Fort Foote Park (NPS)
- Fort Hunt Park (NPS)
- Fort Washington Marina (NPS)
- Segments of the George Washington Parkway including Collingwood, Belle Haven Marina and Riverside (NPS)
- Segments of the Mount Vernon Trail (NPS)



Focus Areas

Focus Area: The entire river section serves as a Focus Area because of the close cross-river proximity, relative density and connectivity of trail-evocative landscapes and existing immersion visitor experiences.

Anchor Sites

The proposed anchor site for this Focus Area is Piscataway Park, which includes the National Colonial Farm (living history), Hard Bargain Farm and Marshall Hall.

- Piscataway Park, MD (NPS, Accokeek Foundation) offers conservation and interpretation of historic lands along the Potomac. Hiking trails and water trails connect to Hard Bargain Farm, Mount Vernon and Fort Washington. Picnic areas, an education center and interpretive programs are available.

Trail Destinations

- Virginia: *Mount Vernon; Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve; Fort Hunt Park; Riverside Park; Belle Haven Marina; Collingwood Picnic Area; Fort Belvoir Marina [*Note: Although Mount Vernon is a well-developed site and draws substantial visitation (over 1 million visitors annually), management policies preclude identification as an Anchor Site.]
- Maryland: Fort Washington Park; *National Harbor; St. John's Episcopal Church; Harmony Hall; Ruins of Want Water House; Piscataway House; Marshall Hall; Freedom Manor; Fort Foote Park; Fort Washington Marina [*Note: National Harbor (NH) attracts 10 million visitors per year and has tremendous potential to serve as a "gateway" to the trails.]

Linking Routes

- Virginia: There is a continuous and dedicated national trail route, consisting of several segments of the Potomac Heritage Trail including the Mount Vernon Trail, which provides hiking and biking access along the Potomac shoreline. The George Washington Parkway provides a vehicular route to many sites. There is seasonal water ferry service located at Mount Vernon.
- Maryland: While there is not presently a continuous national trail route along the eastern Potomac, several on-road biking routes of the Potomac Heritage Trail connect parks within this area. There are opportunities to expand access within Piscataway Park and to Oxon Hill (NPS) and Henson Creek (Prince George's County) for increased connectivity. Vehicular access between sites is provided by Indian Head Highway and supported by smaller residential roads.

Note: Public transit options are limited to bus service along major roadways in areas south of the Alexandria and Oxon Hill areas.

Support Services

- Virginia: The suburban residential neighborhoods of southern Alexandria city surround the shoreline amenities and parks along the Potomac and offer many restaurants, grocery stores, lodging establishments and gas stations.
- Maryland: The towns of Fort Washington and Accokeek are home to many of the parks and public lands along the Potomac and offer a variety of restaurants, retail outlets, lodging options, gas stations and other services.

Key Stories and Associated Resources

The following key story lines associated with CAJO, STSP and POHE themes are relevant to various trail components in this area:

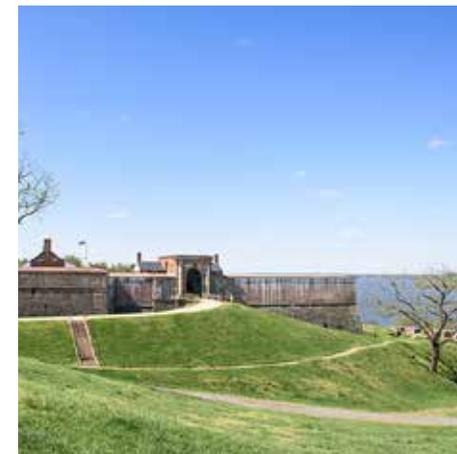


Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT

(Smith's explorations, American Indian cultures, natural history of Bay)

- Smith visited the area now encompassed by Piscataway Park in June of 1608. He met with Piscataway Indians in a town called Moyaone, the political center of the Piscataway nation at that time.
- Archaeological evidence shows indigenous occupation of the area for approximately 11,000 years. By the end of the 17th century, the Piscataway people had mostly dispersed to other places and this land became an integral part of the tobacco culture that remained central to the Southern Maryland economy for the next 300 years.
- Piscataway towns in this area sustained themselves on the natural riches of the Potomac and Piscataway Creek, and nearby game and agriculture. Visitors to Piscataway Park can experience a natural landscape similar to that found during the height of American Indian habitation and the Colonial era. The Accokeek Foundation, which provides interpretive and educational services at Piscataway Park, works with descendant Piscataway tribes and other scholars to interpret Piscataway values at the park.

Features that support these stories include: evocative landscapes; American Indian archeological areas along the river; Piscataway Creek; Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve



Top: Fort Washington Park (photo credit: NPS archive)

Bottom: National Harbor waterfront (photo credit: NPS archive)



Star-Spangled Banner NHT

(military events, individual contributors, Bay region as hub, icons of war)

- On August 27, 1814 as Washington, D.C. was burning, the British fleet was on the Potomac near Mount Vernon. Captain Samuel Dyson ordered his 50-man garrison at Fort Washington to blow up its 3,000 lb. of black powder. He was court-martialed soon after for his decision. Oxon Hill Farm (then Mount Welby Farm) housed American troops trying to defend its shores from the advancing British forces. In August 1814, as British land forces attacked and burned Washington, a British naval squadron sailed up the Potomac and forced the surrender of Alexandria. Loaded with loot, the fleet then headed down river. On September 1, the British attempted to run the deep-water channel below the Belvoir house site, a position that previously had been identified as a strategic defensive location on the river. Here, a hastily assembled American force, composed of Virginia and Alexandria militia under the command of U.S. Navy Captain David Porter, hurriedly began to mount a battery on the bluffs above the River. For four days, British and American forces exchanged cannon and musket fire. The British fleet eventually passed the American positions. British shells demolished what little was left of the old Belvoir Manor.
- British ship Anna Maria, serving as a sentry near Swan Creek to make sure that American forces did not re-occupy the strategic point that had been abandoned when Fort Washington was destroyed, took onboard many runaway slaves. The British Army and Navy had been sending out the call through the slave communities that any slave that offered to assist the British in the war, by offering intelligence or fighting against the Americans, would receive a life of freedom somewhere in the British Empire for their service. Upon reaching the Anna Maria these men would be trained with small arms and eventually join a regiment known as the Colonial Marines. Sixty-five slaves made it to the Anna Maria as it sat anchored in Swan Creek. Today there are communities in Trinidad, Nova Scotia, and Sierra Leone that can trace their origins to the resettlement of Colonial Marines and their families.
- Battle of the White House - September 1-5, 1814: Porter and Hungerford forces fire from batteries; White House battle begins; under almost constant fire until September 5.

Features that support these stories include: Fort Washington; Mount Vernon; Fort Hunt; Fort Belvoir; Belvoir Manor

Top: Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve (photo credit: NPS archive)

Bottom: Want Water House ruins within the Broad Creek Historic District (photo credit: NPS archive)



Potomac Heritage NST

(meeting ground of conservation ideas and practices, five physiographic regions, crossroads of opportunity, development of U.S. Republic)

- Piscataway Park was established to protect the viewshed from Mount Vernon; tax credits to local property owners initiated the land trust movement in the United States.
- Marshall Hall (built circa 1725 and destroyed by fire in 1981) is an example of colonial-era land use in the area. Before its destruction, Marshall Hall had been the home of the Marshall family. Beginning in 1650, the original property was combined with other smaller sites, including a parcel deeded to the family by the Piscataway Indians. The property stayed in the Marshall family until they were forced to sell it after the Civil War. From the late 1800s until the 1970s, the estate was the site of a popular amusement park.
- The National Colonial Farm is a living museum of colonial farming and also a modern day organic farm which generates its own electricity using solar energy. The traditional farming methods used at the colonial farm demonstrate the life of most tobacco-farming colonists.

Features that support these stories include: Piscataway Park; St. John's Episcopal Church; Freedom Manor; the ruins at Want Water Plantation; Harmony Hall; Marshall Hall; Fort Washington; Fort Foote; Fort Hunt; Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve; Mount Vernon

Proposed Trail Enhancements and Implementation Strategies

In addition to the cross cutting strategies which apply to all river sections, this river section provides or has near-term potential to provide a wide variety of desired visitor experiences for different types of trail users. Providing optimal trail-related visitor experiences in a way that highlights this area’s resources, primary features and key stories could best be achieved as follows:

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Beltway to Belvoir			
Piscataway Park	 Anchor Site	Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Content could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Enhance Interpretive Exhibits	The existing wayside panel exhibit on the fishing pier at Piscataway Park could be updated to include a STSP and/or CAJO panel to describe the types of fish that would have been in the Potomac during Captain John Smith’s voyage to the anglers who enjoy opportunities to fish the river rapids and flat oxbows from the shorelines.
		Develop Paddle Itineraries	Excellent itineraries exist for trips in and around Piscataway Creek that have been provided by Atlantic Kayak Company for many years. Publicizing these offerings on NPS websites and/or social media outlets should be considered. Stand-up paddleboard (SUP) paddling itineraries could be developed (or modified from existing itineraries) to engage the growing number of SUP enthusiasts.
		New Public Access	The potential exists to develop a soft landing (for water to land access only) at the Hard Bargain Farm (managed by the Alice Ferguson Foundation) at Piscataway Park.
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Mount Vernon and the NPS will continue to support the concept of developing a ferry service between Mount Vernon and Piscataway Park and/or Fort Washington to provide a “cross-river” experience for visitors.
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Touring opportunities and existing ferry/water taxi routes could be expanded by adding charter operations to the newly refurbished boat docks. Potomac Riverboat Company has expressed interest in possibly providing service during events at the park or for private tour groups.
		River Festival Trails Promotion	An annual family-oriented river and culturally-themed event with musical performances, boat cruises, kayak tours, guided trail walks, and a panel discussion on the park-specific issues called “Celebrating the Potomac” has been established at Piscataway Park in summer months. Entering its third year in 2015, this annual festival could be coordinated to coincide with or be held on concurrent dates at other parks along the river to strengthen the unity between trail sites and add continuity to Trails stories that occur along the entire length of the Potomac river. National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) is interested in helping to provide volunteers, media, and potential fundraising support for programs similar to the “Celebrate the Potomac” event.
		Water Craft and Bicycle Rentals	A seasonal outfitter or incorporation of bike and/or paddle boat rental options could be explored.
		Develop Boat-in Primitive Campsites	Existing parks in the region such as Piscataway Park could explore the possibility of adding water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and/or overnight car camping campsites and related visitor facilities where feasible.
Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve	 Trail Destination	Park Planning and Development	The George Washington Memorial Parkway (NPS) is in the process of completing an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for wetland restoration and a long-term management plan for Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve. Opportunities to provide low-impact public access to the River where appropriate (including wildlife viewing and environmental/cultural education) and showcase stories related to American Indian heritage, Captain John Smith’s explorations, environmental influences on the river and the War of 1812 could be incorporated into the park’s goals related to cultural and natural resource interpretation and visitor experiences. As with all proposed development, potential negative impacts to the health of the River should be avoided at all costs and any negative impacts should be minimized or mitigated (as deemed appropriate) prior to proceeding with any implementation.
		Park Planning and Development	There is a large gap in public access sites in the vicinity between Dyke Marsh and Fort Hunt Park. Meetings with community park planning efforts and NPS park units along the George Washington Parkway could be held to discuss the relationship between preservation/restoration of natural shoreline and the potential to add low-impact public access opportunities to close this gap.
		Park Planning and Development	Opportunities may exist to add protected lands to areas in or around Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve. Consideration to protect additional land and waters that support this valuable area which provides tremendous ecosystem services for the river should be explored.
		Provide Interpretive Panels	Opportunities to showcase stories of the American Indian heritage, Captain John Smith explorations, environmental influences on the River and the War of 1812 could be incorporated into the restoration goals planned on being implemented at the park.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Beltway to Belvoir			
Mount Vernon	 Trail Destination	Develop Stories Related to the Trails	While interpretive panels highlighting the national trails in this river section are not desired, publications, interpretive exhibits and/or other related products could give context on how individual sites in the area fit into the larger story of the Mount Vernon Viewshed Protection.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Mount Vernon and the NPS may share research and narratives (scripts) for the development of interpretive programs related to mutually occurring themes. In particular, Mount Vernon and the NPS may collaborate to promote enhanced interpretation aboard tour boats traversing the Potomac or connections between the Grist Mill and trail resources.
		Establish Connection with Related Sites on the River	Presently there is no formal connection between George Washington's Mount Vernon and George Washington Birthplace National Monument. Communication between both organizational management staff has indicated an interest to discuss possibilities that could best interpret the connection while maintaining each site's individual mission. National trails along the Potomac could potentially support this connection through historic/cultural interpretation and recreational opportunities.
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Referring visitors to additional significant sites in the area could be considered. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest such as George Washington Birthplace NHM, Ferry Farm or Fort Washington.
		Support Regional Museums and Historic Entities Along the River	The Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon is a world-class facility for compelling, ground-breaking scholarship about George Washington, colonial America, and the Revolutionary and founding eras. Library resources could support smaller, less established museums and historic entities along the Potomac that have shared interest in the interpretive themes and resources archived at the Library.
		River Festival Trails Promotion	Mount Vernon hosts many events throughout the year, seasonal or otherwise, that could incorporate trail-related stories into their programs. Mount Vernon and the NPS may potentially cosponsor special events associated with mutual themes (including War of 1812 commemorative events). Consider incorporating Trail themes into existing celebrations.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Charter boat tours and ferry operators that currently provide service to Mount Vernon could offer new and expanded narratives related to American Indian uses of resources, Captain John Smith's explorations, the War of 1812, river commerce and fishing, industrialization and the River's natural values and wildlife.
Marshall Hall	 Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Develop Boat-in Primitive Campsites	Existing parks in the region such as Marshall Hall could explore the possibility of adding water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and/or overnight car camping campsites and related visitor facilities where feasible.
		Park Planning and Development	Consider developing additional public access facilities, including trails, fishing piers and boat docks. The shoreline between Piscataway and Marshall Hall has the potential to be activated as a public access area with increased interpretive signage and enhanced visitor opportunities.
		Park Planning and Development	The shoreline at Marshall, although not suited for vessels needing more than 5 feet of water, has a history of boats docking at its former pier (when an amusement park was in operation in the mid-20th century). The potential may exist to develop a new boat dock to accommodate water taxis or tour boats. Connections to docks in the area (at Accokeek, Fort Washington, Mount Vernon, Pohick Bay and Smallwood State Park) could present some potential itineraries and shared trail interpretive experiences.
Fort Hunt Park	 Trail Destination	Park Planning and Development	There is an Environmental Assessment in progress to determine the types of active recreation and improvements that may be appropriate in the park. Once complete, implementation of new access and trail-specific interpretation could be considered. An existing paved road that is closed to the public could potentially be re-purposed and re-opened for public use as a fitness trail as part of the Healthy Parks/Healthy People Initiative.
		Park Enhancements	The Friends of Fort Hunt Park have expressed interest in rehabilitating the existing NCO Quarters at the park entry to be used as an exhibit space for significant historical stories that could be displayed. As this is a contributing structure to the Fort Hunt Historic District, consideration of appropriate recommendations should be factored into future plans. NPCA has expressed interest in working with the friend's group and other partners to assist as needed.
		Park Enhancements	Consider expanding visitor services at multiple sites along the George Washington Memorial Parkway, such as Fort Hunt Park, to include new water access, trail connections/enhancements and/or viewing platforms.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Beltway to Belvoir			
Fort Belvoir	 Trail Destination	Develop Stories Related to the Trails	At the National Museum of the United States Army, slated to open in 2016, opportunities to showcase stories of the War of 1812 and Star-Spangled Banner NHT could be incorporated into the stories planned or being told at the museum. Interactive exhibits that get visitors on the water could be offered to re-live American defense maneuvers or British fleet movements during the campaign. The potential for public access to the museum from the Potomac River or a shoreline-accessible museum annex exhibit highlighting STSP could be discussed with the museum planning team leadership.
		Park Planning and Development	Communication with NMUSA should be established to fully discuss the potential for incorporating trail-related opportunities into the museum programs, experiences and exhibits. Multiple development master plans were completed in 2014 that outline future development, land use and zoning development standards. Expanding trail signage or interpretive opportunities at existing recreational facilities should be considered. Additionally, creation of shoreline-accessible amenities or connections to land-based bicycling trails could be considered.
Fort Foote Park	 Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Panels	Existing signage at Fort Foote could be improved to better orient the visitor to the site and provide wayfinding throughout the park.
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	While a land trail connection to National Harbor is not permitted, a water trail connection and signage indicating this connection could be considered.
		New Public Access Site	Additional public access facilities, including trails, fishing piers and boat docks, could be considered for development.
Fort Washington Park	 Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Panels	Compliance has been completed for installation of trail-related signage at Fort Washington. Efforts to address themes related to all three national trails in this or future installation(s) could be considered.
		Develop Boat-in Primitive Campsites	Park Management could explore the possibility of adding water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and/or overnight car camping campsites and related visitor facilities where feasible.
		Park Enhancements	Additional public access facilities, including trails, fishing piers and boat docks, could be considered for development.
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Potomac Riverboat Company, which provides water taxi service from major populous locations such as Historic Alexandria, Georgetown Waterfront and many other locations, has attempted to work with NPS to allow for water taxi service to and from Fort Washington. Follow-up with Park management on the status of this development should be monitored to determine if Trail interpretation can be included where appropriate.
		Water Craft and Bicycle Rentals	Incorporation of bike and boat rental options, or hosting of a local outfitter to provide these services annually, could be explored.
Belle Haven Marina	 Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Private tour operators and concessionaires could benefit the visitor experience by sharing CAJO, STSP and POHE stories during their tours or creating new itineraries to explore trail-related features on the river. NPS could assist in training the operators to be "Certified Trail Ambassadors."
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Outfitters, summer camps and paddling club members currently providing paddling tours and utilizing the launch sites could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE stories into their trip itineraries.
Riverside Park (George Washington Memorial Parkway)	 Trail Destination	Park Enhancements	Consider expanding visitor services at multiple sites along the George Washington Memorial Parkway, such as Riverside Park, to include new accessible canoe and kayak launch, fishing pier, wayside landing access and/or viewing platforms. Increased trail interpretation and signage could also be considered as appropriate.
Daingerfield Island (George Washington Memorial Parkway)	 Trail Destination	Park Enhancements	Consider expanding visitor services at multiple sites along the George Washington Memorial Parkway, such as Daingerfield Island, to include new accessible canoe and kayak launch, fishing pier, wayside landing access and/or viewing platforms. Increased trail interpretation and signage could also be considered as appropriate.
Collingwood Picnic Area (George Washington Memorial Parkway)	 Trail Destination	Park Enhancements	Consider expanding visitor services at multiple sites along the George Washington Memorial Parkway, such as Collingwood Picnic Area, to include new accessible canoe and kayak launch, fishing pier, wayside landing access and/or viewing platforms. Increased trail interpretation and signage could also be considered as appropriate.

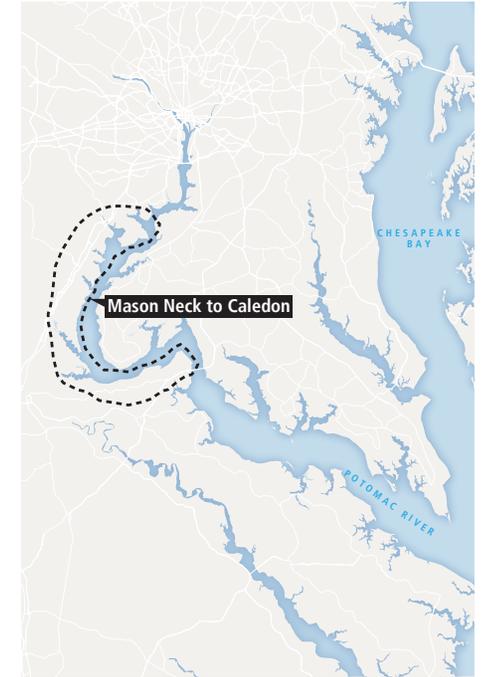
Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Beltway to Belvoir			
National Harbor	 Trail Destination	Gateway Site	National Harbor is a logical location to invest efforts to promote the trails. The significant number of visitors to the shopping, hotel, convention center and (planned) casino and waterfront entertainment complex makes it an optimal forum to highlight the trails.
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	The MGM Casino will be located within close proximity to the on-road portion of POHE. The potential for the new roadway infrastructure to include bike lanes, resting areas and interpretive signage opportunities for POHE, CAJO and STSP should be explored.
		Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Provide Interpretive Panels	A sign interpreting the NOAA buoy that is visible from the site could be developed/installed in cooperation with NOAA.
		Enhance Electronic Kiosk	NH operates a large outdoor video screen on their plaza; NPS could provide trail-related material for display. Coordination with NOAA to display a live feed from the buoy to their large outdoor video screen could be considered.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Interpretive materials could be provided for the "Observation Wheel" passengers to highlight the national park units associated with the trails (Oxon Hill Farm, Dyke March Wildlife Preserve, Jones Point Park, etc.).
		Develop Visitor Center Exhibits	Temporary exhibits, including artifacts related to the trail themes such as the Sultana Education Foundation's Captain John Smith shallop, could be displayed in public spaces within National Harbor.
		Develop Educational Exhibits	Trail-related information and/or exhibits could be placed in the Children's Museum or alternate venue to provide teachers, students and visitors opportunities to learn about the trails.
		New Public Access Site	Consider creating a landing or "pocket park" near the western gravel-trail entrance to NH so bicyclists/pedestrians can get oriented to the site/national trails and park their bicycles and/or walk them through the complex.
		New Public Access Site	The existing piers (owned by Maryland SHA) at the northern end of the National Harbor property (near the I-495 overpass) may potentially be publicly accessible (would require coordination beyond NPS and NH).
		New Public Access Site	MNCPPC is steward to parkland adjacent to National Harbor and the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. It has been proposed that a multi-purpose structure be constructed on the waterfront at National Harbor for use by the Park Police, County Police, Fire/EMS, and Department of Natural Resources. If this development comes to fruition, a space could be designated for exhibits featuring the natural and cultural resources of the River and the Oxon Hill area. This proposed structure for Park Police and other agencies would be an ideal place for orienting visitors to the national trails and for the display of archaeological artifacts related to Oxon Hill Manor and the recent discoveries of artifacts from the Salubria Plantation excavated by Peterson Companies prior to the construction of the Tanger Outlet Mall. In addition, exhibits on Potomac wildlife, kayak and boat rentals, and boat trips could all be based there. Investigate this project's potential to fulfill the MOU between Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Historical Trust and the Peterson Companies that was established as part of the National Harbor development plan.
		New Public Access Site	Prince George's County is planning to add a parking lot at the Potomac Waterfront Park (across the street from the Sunoco Gas Station/McDonalds) for free trailhead parking to get on Trail. Coordination with Prince George's County and NPS could result in information regarding POHE, CAJO and STSP being included at this trailhead
		Trail Promotion at Retail Services	NH hosts numerous 5K/other runs; they could be willing to highlight the trails at these events (i.e., naming a run after Captain John Smith). NPS could provide trail-related information to the concierge at The Gaylord and at other hotels and information centers, as appropriate.

(Continued on next page)

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Beltway to Belvoir			
National Harbor (cont.)		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	In addition to the potential for interpretive signage, guided tour guides, paddling/bicycling rental outfitters and other operators could incorporate Trail itineraries into their existing offered services.
		Water Craft and Bicycle Rentals	A seasonal outfitter (located at the southern end of the NH property) could provide kayak rentals and associated guided tours (NH already rents paddleboards, kayaks, etc. through DC Boating and plans to establish fishing charters).
		Enhance Interpretive Exhibits	The existing history mural could be enhanced with information pertaining to the trail themes; NH is particularly interested in interactive elements.
		River Festival Trails Promotion	National Harbor hosts many events throughout the year, seasonal or otherwise, that could incorporate trail-related stories into their programs. Consider incorporating Trail themes into celebrations.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Charter boat tours and ferry operators that currently provide service to/from National Harbor could offer new and expanded narratives related to American Indian uses of resources, Captain John Smith's explorations, the War of 1812, river commerce and fishing, industrialization and the river's natural values and wildlife. Potomac Riverboat Company has expressed a strong interest in Trail interpretive materials for use in their narrations along the river and various historic sites.
Harmony Hall		Park Planning and Development	Archeological studies could be undertaken to attempt to locate the outbuildings and slave quarters at Harmony Hall. The findings could be investigated and preserved for presentation and interpretation to the public. Coordination with those involved with drafting Harmony Hall's Foundation Statement could consider the inclusion of CAJO, STSP and POHE trail-related themes and interpretation opportunities.
		Park Planning and Development	The potential to increase public access opportunities, such as trails to the shoreline, exist. An Environmental Assessment of the site is currently under development; the final document should be reviewed for additional access opportunities.
		Park Enhancements	Additional public access facilities, including trails, fishing piers and boat docks, could be considered for development.
Broad Creek Historic District		Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels could be installed at areas within the Broad Creek District sites (St. John's Church, Historic Piscataway House, Historic Want Water ruins and canal, Harmony Hall, Freedom Manor) to reference CAJO, STSP and POHE.
		Interpretive Opportunity	Archeological studies could be undertaken to attempt to locate the outbuildings and slave quarters at Harmony Hall. The findings could be investigated and preserved for presentation and (trail-related) interpretation to the public.
		New Public Access Site	A new water-to-land-only paddle-in access site could be proposed for the area to explore the ruins at Want Water House and other significant sites.
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Trails leading from the ruins of Want Water House could be developed and connected to the existing trail system at the Harmony Hall. Consideration to develop additional trails that connect to Harmony Hall and St. John's Episcopal Church should be considered.
		Partnership Opportunity	MNCPPC and NACE could potentially work together to extend the Henson Creek Trail through the Broad Creek Historic District and, ultimately, to Harmony Hall. Coordination with NACE and the Foundation Document discussing the NPS resources within Broad Creek Historic District should be referenced and implemented as appropriate.
		Park Planning and Development	This section of the Potomac, specifically the coves of Broad Creek, Swan Creek and Piscataway Creek, can be challenging for power boaters to navigate due to shallow water, underwater obstructions and no-wake zones. A users' map and guide could be developed to assist motor boating enthusiasts in exploring specific river stretches and destinations further downstream.
		Driving and Bicycling Itineraries	The Potomac River Heritage Tourism Alliance has opened a store front within the Tanger Outlet Mall. Coordination with leadership to include CAJO, STSP and POHE information should be maintained. Possible guided tours from the retail center, with connection to the significant sites within Broad Creek and beyond, should be explored.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Beltway to Belvoir			
Private Outfitters	 Linking Route	Funding Opportunity for Public Access	Coordinating with local organizations and private developers could lead to expanded visibility for the trails and local trail sites. Opportunities to leverage funding for new public access projects or to include physical trail enhancements (bike lanes, trail markers, signage) within infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate the proposed development could be explored.
		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Existing water taxi and ferry routes presently do not extend south past Mount Vernon. Explore adding routes to additional sites such as Piscataway Park and Fort Washington Marina.
Public Transportation	 Linking Route	Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Metro Public Transit bus operators transporting visitors and commuters within the DC Metro area could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE-specific information into their interpretive narrations and printed materials.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Prince George's County has mini-buses used to transport groups to sites for activities. The county could consider incorporating Trail-specific information on signs on the bus to tell the trail stories in the area.
Capital Bikeshare	 Linking Route	Bicycle Rentals	National Capital Bikeshare locations could be added or expanded at National Harbor, Fort Washington Park, Mount Vernon, Belle Haven Park and Marina and Piscataway Park and advertised at other kiosks in the area to enhance visitation to the parks.
Maryland Indian Heritage Trail	 Linking Route	Develop New Trail Linkage and Access	Planning efforts to connect CAJO trail resources, specifically American Indian historic resources and present-day sites of cultural significance, to the Maryland Indian Heritage Trail should be coordinated. Inclusion of pre-contact American Indian stories before Captain John Smith's era could be interpreted through this connection.
Potomac Heritage Trail	 Linking Route	Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Several planned segments of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail are proposed to connect along Oxon Hill Road which would provide a continuous trail from Oxon Hill Farm Park to Piscataway Park. Plans to complete these planned segments in the next two to five years could be discussed with Prince George's County and Maryland State Highway Administration.
		Funding Opportunity for Public Access	The Federal Lands Access Program (MAP-21, §1119; 23 UCS 201, 204) supports capital and planning expenses for new or existing alternative transportation including transportation by bike, bus, rail or any other publicly available means of transportation including sightseeing services. This region is well-suited for the development of a transit in parks program that includes interpretation of the national trails along the Potomac. Funding sources for a trail connection formerly procured through the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13094_6106.html can now be accessed through the Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP) http://www.flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/fltp/
Private Marinas	 Support Services	Gateway Site	Fort Washington Marina, National Harbor, Fort Belvoir Marina and Belle Haven Park and Marina are areas where the public currently access the Potomac via boat ramps and marine-related services. Installing signage and providing rack cards and other trail-related materials to restaurants and other businesses could be an effective way to reach a larger portion of existing river users.
Regional Promotion	 Support Services	Technology	The Chesapeake Bay Explorer App could be updated to include additional partner sites in the area and the water- and land-based trail routes that connect to the national trails.
Private Development	 Support Services	Funding Opportunity for Public Access	Coordinating with local organizations and private developers could lead to expanded visibility for the trails and local trail sites. Opportunities to leverage funding for new public access projects or to include physical trail enhancements (bike lanes, trail markers, signage) within infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate the proposed development could be explored.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Marinas and waterfront business in this area provide great locations to tell the Trail stories. Providing visitor waterfront support services, such as marinas and restaurants, information like rack cards or paper menus with trail-specific information could be an effective way to reach a larger audience of existing Potomac River users.

River Section 4 – Mason Neck to Caledon



Overview

This river section includes the sites and resources from approximately Mason Neck State Park (Fairfax County, VA) to Caledon State Park (King George County, VA). Water and land routes for CAJO, STSP and POHE along with many significant trail sites are located within this region. The area boasts conserved natural landscapes and stories reflecting American Indian history, Captain John Smith’s explorations, War of 1812 British fleet activity and American defenses, the industrialization of the United States, the Civil War and Colonial America settlement. Generally, the complex of resources provides a window into the development and evolution of the United States.

In contrast to the Route 1 and Interstate 95 corridor, this area is surprisingly rich in natural resources associated with the ecology of the tidal Potomac. The northern section includes large protected areas on the Mason Neck Peninsula along with Gunston Cove, Occoquan Cove and Belmont Bay. The southern stretch includes

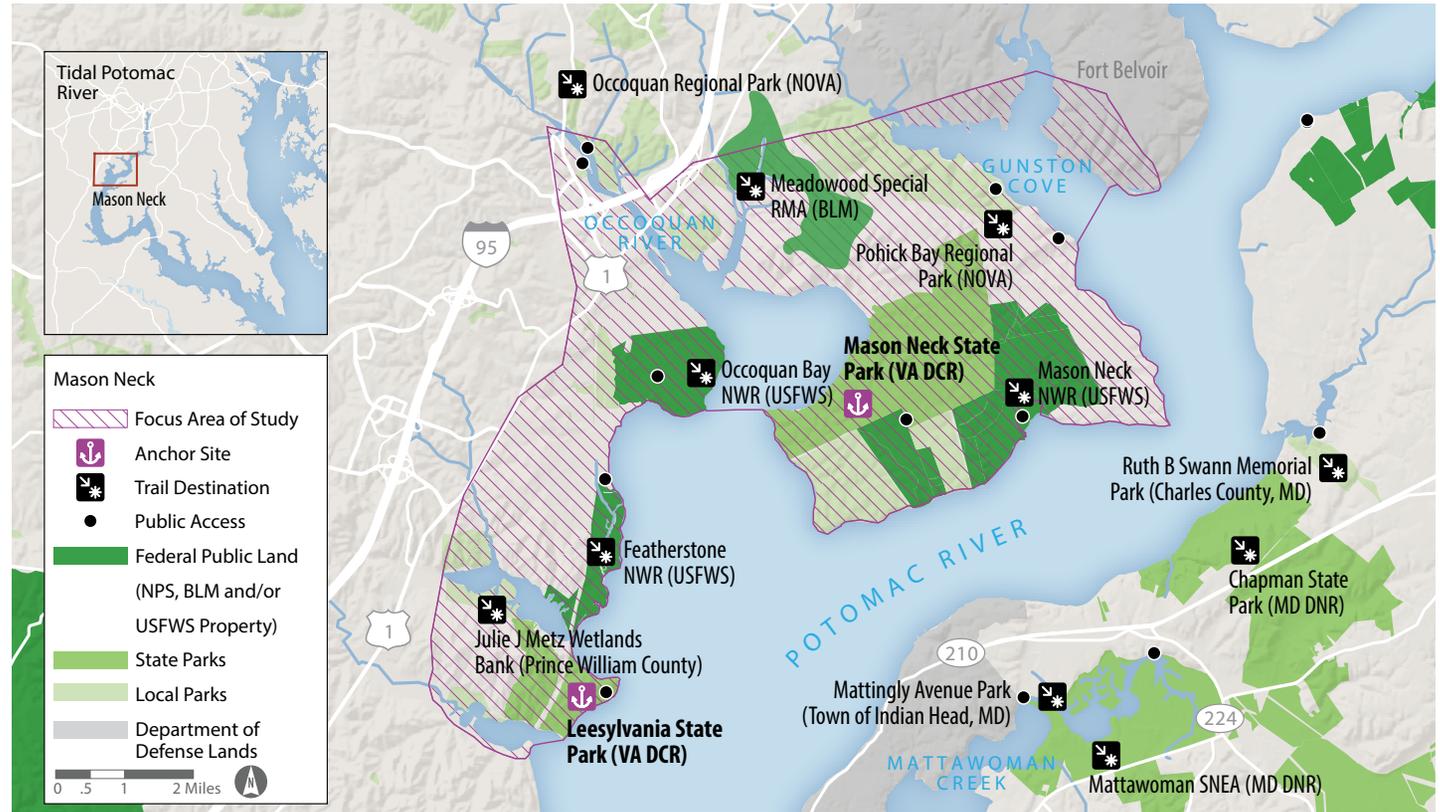
Widewater State Park, Aquia Landing, Crow’s Nest Natural Area Preserve and Caledon State Park, which together protect significant evocative settings along the Potomac and particularly on Potomac Creek. The Caledon/Crow’s Nest area is one of the best bald eagle viewing sites along the river. Across the river is the Maryland Peninsula, one of the largest identified evocative landscapes along the Potomac.

This area is characterized by a mix of protected resources, some commercial corridors, military lands and suburban residential developments. Though the river is wider here than upstream and easily accommodates power yachts and ships, it can generally be explored in paddle craft and smaller power boats. Three military bases are present — Fort Belvoir, Quantico and Dahlgren—so the turnover rate among area residents is high. The region is accessible by roadways, mass transit, water and air and has a multitude of nearby visitor support services.

Left: Mason Neck State Park (photo credit: Christopher A. Koberg)

Facilities within this river section include:

- Old Colchester Park and Preserve (Stafford Co., VA)
- Laurel Hill Park (Stafford County, VA)
- Mason Neck State Park (VA DCR)
- Leesylvania State Park (VA DCR)
- Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge (US Fish & Wildlife Service/USFWS)
- Occoquan Regional Park (Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority/NOVA)
- Aquia Landing Beach Park (Stafford Co., VA)
- Caledon State Park (VA DCR)
- Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve (VA DCR) [limited access currently]
- Widewater State Park (VA DCR) [scheduled to open for public use in 2017]
- Pohick Bay Regional Park (NOVA)
- Meadowood Special Recreation Management Area (US Bureau of Land Management/BLM)
- Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge (USFWS)
- Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge (USFWS) [limited access currently]



Trail Components

The following trail components have been identified to support strategic planning within the Middle Potomac river section. Each of the focus areas described below contain anchor sites, which are viewed as first tier locations for trail development efforts as they already contain significant visitor support facilities. The next level of development would include additional trail components, such as destinations and linking routes; enhancements would occur as resources and opportunities become available.

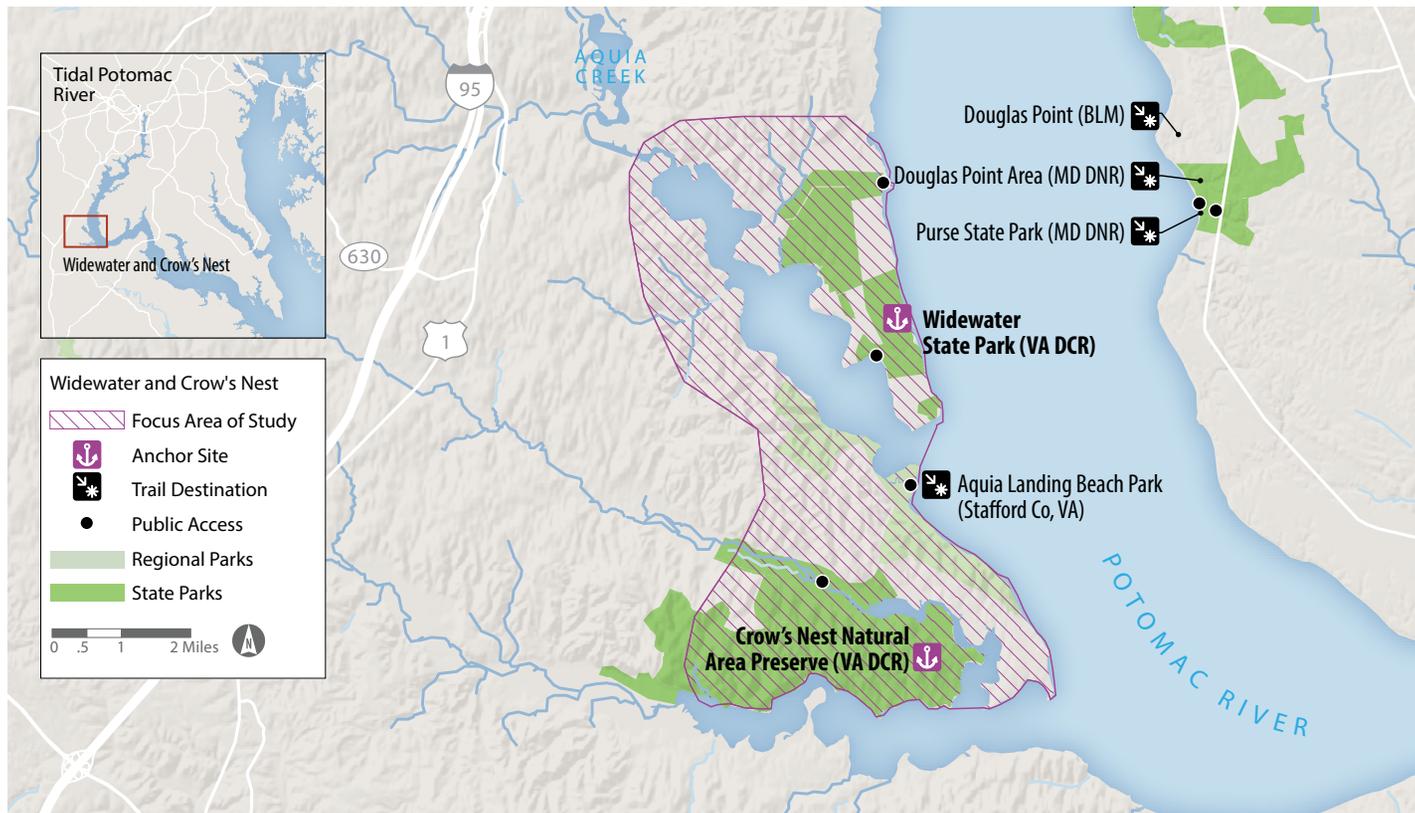
Focus Areas

- **Focus Area #1:** Pohick Bay Regional Park to Leesylvania Park
- **Focus Area #2:** Widewater State Park to Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve
- **Focus Area #3:** Fairview Beach, VA to Caledon State Park

Anchor Sites

Proposed anchor sites for Focus Area #1 are the Mason Neck complex and Leesylvania State Park.

- **Mason Neck Peninsula** offers an array of year-round visitor services provided by federal, state and regional agencies. This area receives heavy use and the various partners offer all necessary amenities and support facilities. Mason Neck State Park offers a visitor center, hiking trails, canoe/kayak launch, 3 miles of paved multi-use trails and connections to many of the other sites on the peninsula.
- **Leesylvania State Park** (VA DCR) is rich in Civil War history. The site offers a visitor center, hiking trails overlooking the Potomac and Occoquan Bay, picnic facilities, a beach, a fishing pier, a boat ramp, a soft launch and a store/snack bar. A marina caters to both sailboats and motor boats.



Anchor Sites (continued)

For Focus Area #2, the proposed anchor sites are *Widewater State Park and Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve (*once Widewater is developed and opened in 2017).

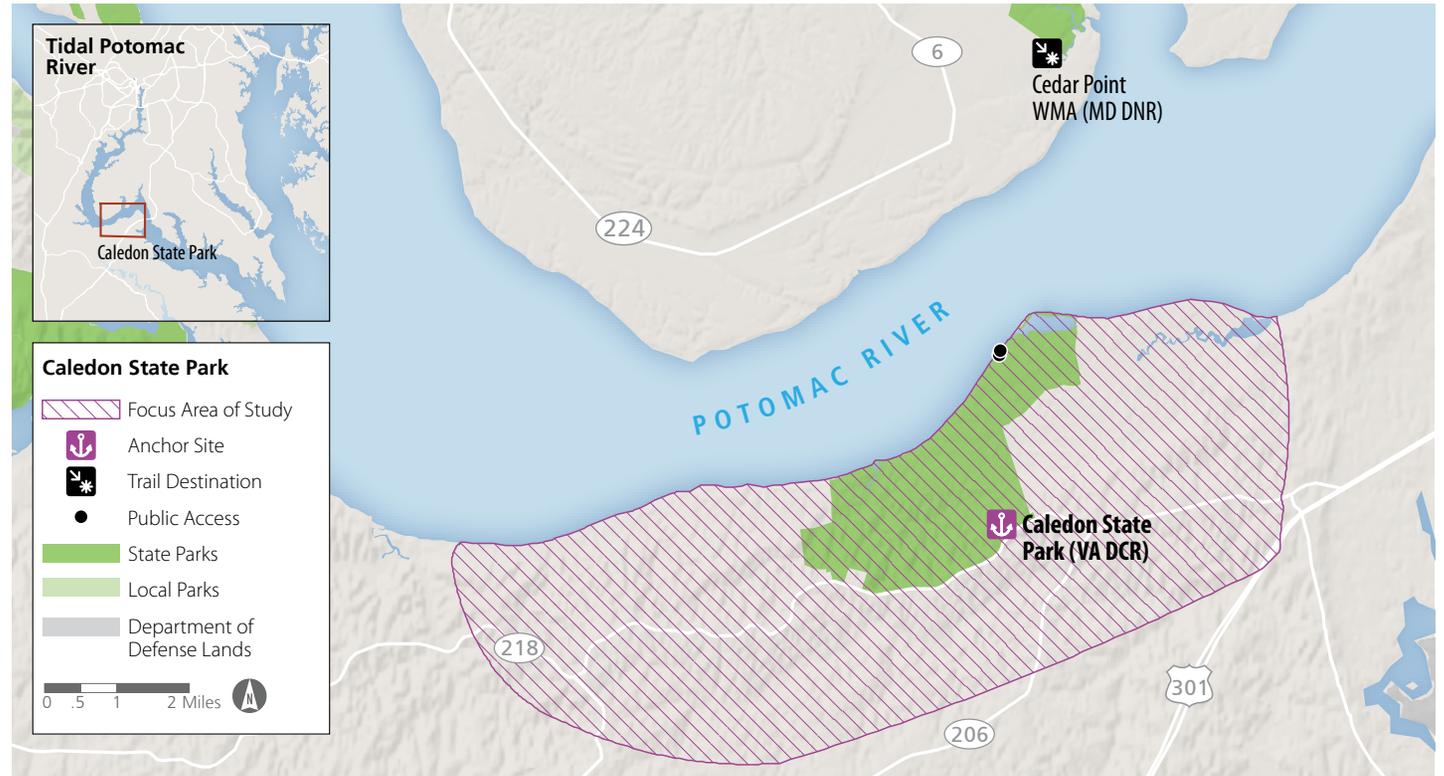
- **Widewater State Park** (VA DCR) is under development. Visitor support facilities will be installed to provide opportunities to explore the river, as well as some of the evocative creeks and settings around Crow's Nest. The Master Plan calls for water- and land-based interpretation and year-round public access. River and boat-in camping along the Potomac will be available via a reservation system, and a visitor center is planned near Aquia Creek.

- **Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve** (VA DCR) offers limited access currently. A soft launch access site on Accokeek Creek, accessed from the Brooke Road parking lot at Crow's Nest, opened in early 2015. A water trail that is under development will start at this location and terminate at Boykin's Island within the preserve. The soft landing site scheduled for Boykin's Island will also provide access to the preserve's land trail system. Currently, Stafford County has received a grant from VDOT to improve the 1.5 mile entrance road to an existing 16-car capacity parking area located within the preserve interior. The road improvements, which are being handled by VDOT, are expected to be completed in late 2015 or early 2016. Once improvements to the access road are completed, this parking lot will provide access to 12 miles of trails for visitors to Crow's Nest. It is anticipated that Crow's Nest will draw significant visitation due to its close proximity to the Fredericksburg/Northern Virginia metro area.



Top: Crow's Nest State park (photo credit: VA DCR)

Bottom: Widewater State Park (photo credit: VA DCR)



Anchor Sites (continued)

For Focus Area #3 the proposed anchor site is Caledon State Park.

- Caledon State Park (VA DCR)**, reclassified from a natural area to a state park in 2012, offers a staffed visitor center and gift shop, along with special events and interpretive programming. A network of trails provides access to the Potomac River and boat-in camping is available via a reservation system. The park and surrounding areas support one of the largest (summer) concentrations of bald eagles on the east coast, which are attracted to the park's pristine old growth forest.

Trail Destinations

Aquia Landing Beach Park; Pohick Bay Regional Park; Laurel Hill Park, Meadowood SRMA and Occoquan Regional Park serve as key destinations. Also, Barnesfield/Wayside Park (King George Co.), located adjacent to Route 301 at the base of the Governor Harry W. Nice (Route 301) Bridge, features a visitor center (leased to the Dahlgren Heritage Museum), beach access with informal hand carry launch, restrooms and picnicking facilities. It is in close proximity to a full range of lodging and food services associated with the Dahlgren Naval Weapons Laboratory.

Top: Caledon State Park (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Bottom: Fairview Beach, VA (photo credit: NPS archive)

Linking Routes

A small portion of the Potomac Heritage Trail is located within the Mason Neck complex. Prince William County has significant trail sections on the ground and is working with VDOT to install POHE wayfinding signs along the route throughout the county.

The Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, managed by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, celebrates the diversity of birds, fish, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates throughout Virginia's 43,000 square miles of habitat. The Coastal Trail consists of 18 trail loops to explore - including the Mason Neck Loop, Prince William Loop, Fredericksburg Loop and Northern Neck Loop within this river section study area - that feature great opportunities to view nature and wildlife along the Potomac River and other sites within the region.

The Dahlgren Railroad Heritage Trail (DRHT) is a privately owned and maintained trail that is available to the public via a permitting system. The Occoquan Water Trail explores the tidal estuaries and upper reaches of the Occoquan River as it extends 40 miles inland from the Potomac River Water Trail beyond the Mason Neck peninsula.

The Potomac River Water Trail extends from Washington, D.C. to the mouth of the Potomac. The associated map and guide, broken into six distinct sections, provides information regarding area history, public lands/points of interest and amenities, including restaurants and lodging.

Support Services

The towns of Lorton, Occoquan, Quantico and Woodbridge offer significant visitor services and are within close proximity to the Mason Neck complex. Fairview Beach, a small river-front community located between Crow's Nest and Caledon, has multiple marinas and restaurants that are accessible via land and water.

Key Stories and Associated Resources

The following key stories associated with CAJO, STSP and POHE themes are relevant to the various trail components in this river section:



Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT

(Smith's explorations, American Indian cultures, natural history of Bay)

- Smith traveled up the Potomac on his first voyage (June - July 1608) but recorded little about this period. Later, when describing encounters on the Rappahannock River, he referred to meeting an Indian named Mosco while on the Potomac. Mosco purportedly acted as a guide for Smith's crew and aided in persuading the chief of the Patowomeck tribe to lend men for a trek up Aquia (Quiyough) Creek to find a metallic ore (which later proved to be worthless).
- Indian communities in this area tended to be established along creeks, such as Aquia and Potomac. Smith mapped several Indian communities in the area, including Paspatanzie, Mattacunt, Patowomeck, Pamacocack, Quiyough and Tauxenent. The site of the latter can be determined from the Occoquan River based on its characteristic siting.
- Mason Neck and Caledon were first protected to help conserve and restore the American bald eagle; eagles and great blue herons are frequently seen nesting in these areas today.
- The preserved lands on Mason Neck and at Caledon State Park and Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve offer the opportunity to tell the natural history of the area and provide information on Virginia Indian lifeways.
- Smaller inland creeks such as Gunston Cove, Belmont Bay, Occoquan Bay, Powells Creek, Aquia Creek and Potomac Creek offer excellent opportunities for small boat or kayak/canoe use and for exploring settings that evoke much earlier time periods.

Features that support these stories include: Leesylvania State Park (prime fishing site dating back to pre-European contact); Mason Neck State Park; Mason Neck NWR, Featherstone NWR; Caledon State Park; Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve.



Top: Fishing at Leesylvania State Park (photo credit: Virginia Outdoors website)

Bottom: Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge (photo credit: American Towns website)



Star-Spangled Banner NHT

(military events, individual contributors, Bay region as hub, icons of war)

- An area known as Kettlebottom Shoals, located along the bend of the Potomac River between the Maryland Peninsula and Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve, proved to be difficult for British vessels to navigate when loaded down with plunder collected from raids at Alexandria.
- More research is underway to identify sites significant to British fleet movement through this area en route to Washington.

Features that support these stories include: Kettlebottom Shoals, STSP information panels at Crain Highway Visitor's Center



Potomac Heritage NST

(meeting ground of conservation ideas and practices, five physiographic regions, crossroads of opportunity, development of U.S. Republic)

- Superb examples of Tidal Potomac ecology and ecosystem conservation and restoration can be found along this stretch of the river.
- A (state) rare natural community – a Coastal Plain Depression Swamp – is located in the center of Old Colchester Park and Preserve (west of Meadowood SRMA). This 140-acre park includes the Colonial-era port town of Colchester.
- This area reflects the evolution of the United States, including the Colonial era, George Washington, tobacco farming, and 19th/20th-century industrial periods.
- The preserved lands on Mason Neck and at Caledon State Park and Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve offer the opportunity to tell stories of Colonial development.
- Mason Neck State Park supports one of the largest great blue heron rookeries in Virginia with over 1,400 nests.
- Some sites within this river section once supported robust commercial fishing operations.
- Because Aquia Creek sandstone is easy to shape and was mined within 45 miles of Washington, D.C. (at Wigginton's Island quarry located on Aquia Creek, now Stafford County's Government Island Park), it was selected as the primary building material for use in Washington's government buildings, specifically in the White House, the Capitol, the Treasury Building and the Patent Office (now the National Portrait Gallery) in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Features that support these stories include: Gunston Hall (home of George Mason) circa 1775; Leesylvania (commercial fishing hub); Wigginton's Island quarry at Aquia Creek (now Government Island Park)

Top: Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge (photo credit: Prince William County Conservation Alliance website)

Bottom: Pohick Bay Regional Park (photo credit: NPS archive)

Proposed Trail Enhancements and Implementation Strategies

In addition to the cross cutting strategies which apply to all river sections, this river section provides or has near-term potential to provide a wide variety of desired visitor experiences for different types of trail users. Providing optimal trail-related visitor experiences in a way that highlights this area’s resources, primary features and key stories could best be achieved as follows:

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description	
Focus Area #1 - Pohick Bay to Leesylvania Complex				
Mason Neck State Park		Anchor Site	Enhance Visitor Center Exhibits	Visitor Center exhibits at Mason Neck State Park could be enhanced with information related to the national trails. Fundraising efforts are underway to complete the exhibit plan for the visitor center. NPS/other partners could potentially assist with funding a portion of the overall exhibit and promote the trails and trail themes.
			New Trail Itineraries	Itineraries could be developed or expanded for both guided and self-guided trips along Kanés Creek and Belmont Bay.
			Develop Boat-in Primitive Campsites	The potential exists to develop primitive boat-in campsites at Mason Neck State Park for use by paddle craft. Depending on eagle nesting and nest locations, these sites may need to have restricted use periods once developed.
			Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Outfitters, summer camps and paddling club members currently providing paddling tours and utilizing the launch sites at Mason Neck State Park could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE stories into their trip itineraries. NPS staff could assist tour leader staff in becoming “Certified Trail Ambassadors” to ensure the trail-related information being shared is accurate and of high quality.
			Enhance Electronic Kiosk	Information regarding bicycle and paddle routes for day trips could be developed and provided at the park's electronic kiosk.
			Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Key sites within the Mason Neck complex could be connected by a multi-use non-vehicular trail that could support enhanced interpretive and recreational opportunities. The third phase of the trail connecting Gunston Road Elementary School to Route 1 is in the planning stage and may require additional funding for implementation.
Leesylvania State Park			Develop Trail Itineraries	Itineraries could be developed or expanded for both guided and self-guided trips along upper Powells Creek.
			Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Outfitters, summer camps and paddling club members currently providing paddling tours and utilizing the launch sites at Leesylvania State Park could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE stories into their trip itineraries. NPS staff could assist tour leader staff in becoming “Certified Trail Ambassadors” to ensure the trail-related information being shared is accurate and of high quality.
			Primitive Paddle in Camping	Explore incorporating water-to-land primitive campsites could be explored.
			Enhance Electronic Kiosk	Information regarding bicycle and paddle routes for day trips could be developed and provided at the park's electronic kiosk.
			Provide Training for Watermen Tours	Explore potential to work with watermen in this area that may be interested in participating in the Watermen Heritage Tourism Training Program. Share NPS/approved written scripts to develop custom Watermen Heritage Tours if appropriate.
Occoquan Regional Park			Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Private outfitters currently offer boating and paddling tours along the various trails in this area. NPS staff could assist the leaders of these sites/organizations to become “Certified Trail Ambassadors” to ensure the trail-related information being shared is accurate and of high quality.
			New Access Sites on Occoquan River Water Trail	Additional access/launch sites could be developed along the Occoquan River Water Trail (through a combined effort of NOVA and the NPS Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program).
			River Festival Trails Promotion	Tying in trail themes of CAJO, STSP and POHE to the Occoquan River Festival could bring more attention to the Trails.
Pohick Bay Regional Park			Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
			Primitive Paddle in Camping	Incorporation of water-to-land primitive campsites could be considered.
Meadowood SRMA			Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
			Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Key sites within the Mason Neck complex could be connected by a multi-use non-vehicular trail that could support enhanced interpretive and recreational opportunities. The third phase of the trail connecting Gunston Road Elementary School to Route 1 is in the planning stage and may require additional funding for implementation.
Old Colchester Park and Preserve		Trail Destination	Interpretive Opportunity	Archeological investigations have been underway for several years on a significant Indian community. Additional studies could be undertaken and findings preserved for interpretive purposes.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description	
Focus Area #1 - Pohick Bay to Leesylvania Complex				
Mason Neck NWR		Trail	Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Destination	Primitive Paddle in Camping	Incorporation of water-to-land primitive campsites could be considered.
			New Access Site	A new water-to-land-only paddle-in access site could be considered along the refuge shoreline.
			Develop New Trail Linkage and Access	Plans to link the existing Woodmarsh Trail to Sycamore Point by opening up the Sycamore Road, adding a new observation Platform on the bluff and provide a trail to the beach could be considered.
			Partnership Opportunity	Opportunities to leverage federal, state and local participation in USFWS programs, such as the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program, could be explored. Shared goals of conservation, stewardship and urban outreach could be enhanced by forming partnerships.
Occoquan Bay NWR		Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive signs, reflecting the natural and cultural richness of the area, could be installed at key wildlife viewing sites and boat launch areas. Guided tours highlighting the region's wildlife could be expanded and/or developed.
Featherstone NWR		Trail Destination	New Public Access Sites	Plans exist to install two new observation platforms, one on Farm and one on Neabsco creeks. Also, a water-to-land access point is proposed for Occoquan Bay. A dock for fishing and wildlife observation is proposed along with three additional fishing areas.
US Route 1		Linking Route	Varied Driving and Bicycling Itineraries	A driving guide or App highlighting Route 1 could be developed to guide visitors to a variety of opportunities, points of interest, visitor services and water access areas.
Potomac Heritage Trail		Linking Route	Utilize Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Stations	VRE stations in southern Fairfax and Prince William counties provide connections to trail sites via POHE. VRE stations may add more connections to trail sites and could be willing to provide national trail information on-board. Existing VRE stations could potentially become major points of entry into this area for bicyclists, particularly if Capital Bikeshare is expanded into southern Fairfax.
Focus Area #2 - Widewater State Park to Crows Nest Natural Area Preserve				
Widewater State Park		Anchor Site	Park Planning and Development	Communication with the park's master plan team and phased development should include CAJO, STSP and POHE trail-related themes to ensure the visitor experience includes exposure and inclusion of the national trails.
			Campsite Development	In addition to the primitive paddle-in campsite under development for permit-holders and groups, consideration could be given to other overnight and related visitor facilities.
			Park Development	Water access facilities including paddle launches, picnicking, and other related facilities are currently in the construction planning phase. Once developed these will provide key facilities in support of the Trails. A powerboat launch on the Potomac is planned but no funding has been allocated.
Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve		Anchor Site	Water to Land Access Facility	A new soft landing could be developed near Boykins Island on Potomac Creek within Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve to allow for water to land access at the site.
			Develop Paddle Itineraries	Itineraries could be developed or expanded for both DCR-sponsored and self-guided trips along Potomac and Accokeek Creeks.
Aquia Landing Beach Park		Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
			Primitive Paddle in Camping	Explore incorporating water-to-land primitive by permit-only camping for Aquia Landing Beach Park to support the Trails.
Focus Area #3 - Fairview Beach to the US 301 Bridge				
Caledon State Park		Anchor Site	Enhance Visitor Center Exhibits	Visitor Center exhibits at Caledon State Park could be enhanced with information related to the national trails. NPS/other partners could potentially assist with funding a portion of an exhibit that promotes the trails and trail themes.
			Enhance Electronic Kiosk	Information regarding bicycle and paddle routes for day trips could be developed and provided at the park's electronic kiosk.
			Enhance Water Access	Consider developing a car-top launch with parking to encourage park to park connectivity for the Potomac Water Trail.
			Connect with Dahlgren Railroad Heritage Trail (DRHT)	Provide a connecting route between the Park and the DRHT; also explore the future management and operation of the trail as a potential unit of the park. This could serve as a component of the POHE and provide a potential link from the State Park to the Barnesfield Park in Dahlgren.
Fairview Beach		Support Services	Water Craft Rentals and Orientation Signage	Opportunities to offer or expand boat, canoe and kayak rentals could be considered. Where appropriate a kiosk or other signage could be installed to interpret trail stories and connect with other sites.

River Section 5 – Maryland Peninsula Area



Overview

This river section includes the sites and resources along the Maryland Peninsula portion of the Potomac from approximately Pomonkey Creek below Marshall Hall near Bryans Road, MD (north) to the Port Tobacco River near the 301 Bridge (south). National trail routes for POHE, CAJO and STSP are located within this region. The area is rich in conserved natural landscapes, American Indian heritage, John Smith-related history, and stories related to George Washington, Colonial settlement and agriculture, and War of 1812 British fleet activity and American defenses.

The Potomac surrounds nearly all of this section of south-central Maryland and extends through several wide coves well into the interior of the peninsula. There is relative isolation from adjacent river sections and even from the neighboring state of Virginia due to the shoreline being largely devoid of development and the river width averaging nearly 2 miles. While there are few large towns and a lack of major highways within this river section (The 2010 Census recorded over 150,000 residents in Charles County), there are several public conservation lands and multiple historic sites located here.

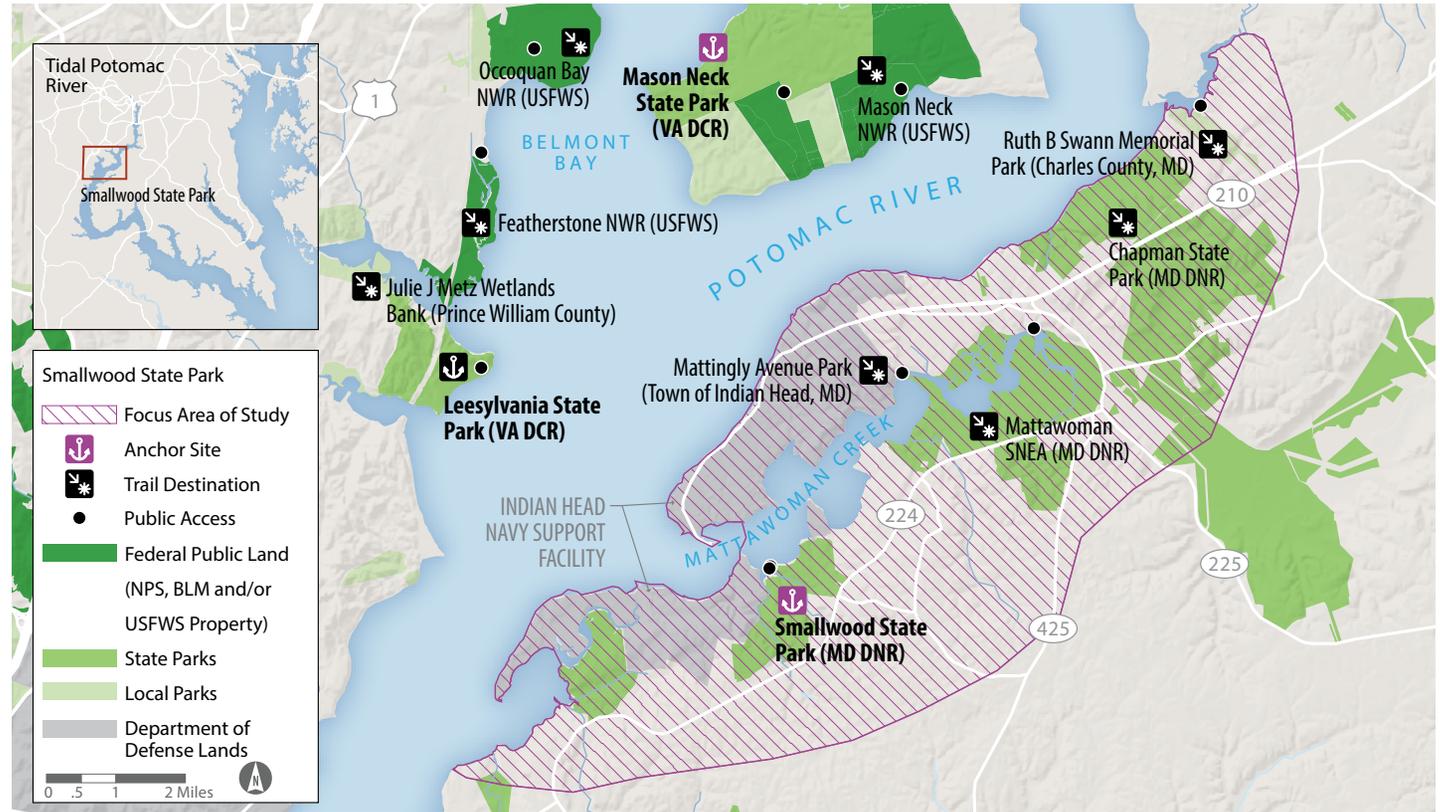
American Indian stories and known significant archeological sites, including those found around Nanjemoy and Mattawoman Creek, have been identified in this region.

This area is characterized by large tracts of undeveloped land and dense vegetation scattered with agricultural and rural residential communities along one of the most pristine shoreline landscapes on the Potomac. Many of these natural landscapes are identified as high priority evocative landscapes in the CAJO and STSP comprehensive management plans (CMPs). Charles County, founded in 1658, retains many of its agricultural characteristics; it was one of the most important regions for tobacco farming and port access in Colonial America, as reflected at Port Tobacco. Many of the first churches in the United States are located within this section and are highlighted along the Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway. It is known that John Wilkes Booth traveled through Charles County while fleeing Washington, D.C. after assassinating Abraham Lincoln. The story of the Ghost Fleet (of sunken ships) at Mallows Bay can be interpreted as part of WWI American Industrialization and as a vital marine ecosystem today.

Top: Fishing tournament at Smallwood State Park (photo credit: MD DNR)

Facilities within this river section include:

- Smallwood State Park (Maryland Department of Natural Resources/MD DNR)
- Chapman State Park (MD DNR)
- Purse State Park (MD DNR)
- Mattawoman State Natural Environmental Area (MD DNR)
- Nanjemoy Natural Resource Management Area (MD DNR)
- Chicamuxen Wildlife Management Area (MD DNR)
- Douglas Point Special Recreation Management Area (US Bureau of Land Management/BLM)
- Cedar Point Wildlife Management Area (MD DNR)
- Friendship Farm Park (Charles Co., MD)
- Ruth B. Swan Regional Park (Charles Co.)
- Mattingly Avenue Park (Charles Co.)
- Mallows Bay Park (Charles Co./ MD DNR)
- Port Tobacco Village (Charles Co.)
- Segments of the Religious Freedom Trail (Maryland Scenic Byways Program, Maryland State Highway Administration)
- Segments of the Indian Head Rail Trail (Charles Co.)
- Thomas Stone National Historic Site (NPS)
- Chapel Point State Park (MD DNR)



Trail Components

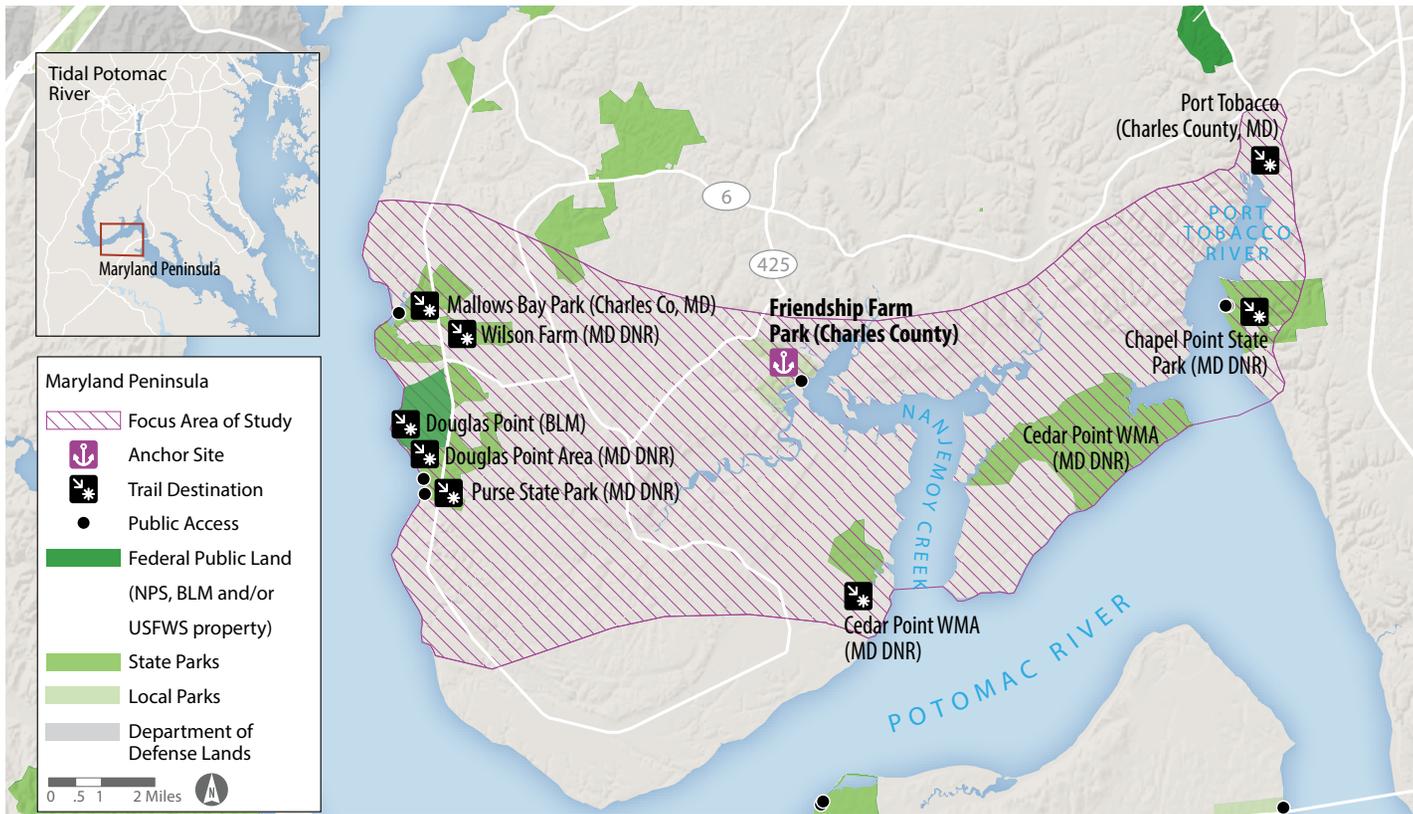
Trail components are existing publicly accessible lands that have been identified to support strategic planning relative to CAJO, STSP and POHE within this river section. The focus areas described below each contain one anchor site, which are viewed as first tier locations for trail development efforts as they already contain significant visitor support facilities. The next level of development would include additional trail components such as destinations and linking routes; enhancements would occur as resources and opportunities become available.

Focus Areas

- **Focus Area #1:** Indian Head, MD to Douglas Point Special Recreation Management Area
- **Focus Area #2:** Friendship Farm Park to Chapel Point State Park

Anchor Sites

- Proposed anchor site for Focus Area #1 is Smallwood State Park.
- **Smallwood State Park (MD DNR)** offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities, including camping, boating, fishing, hiking and picnicking. A visitor center, nature center, community art studio, museum and a marina are available.



Anchor Sites

Proposed anchor site for Focus Area #2 is Friendship Farm Park.

- **Friendship Farm Park** (Charles County) offers a large range of recreational opportunities including horseback riding, boating, fishing, hiking and picnicking. Sport fields and pavilions are additional facilities located on site.

Trail Destinations

- Chapman State Park; Ruth B. Swann Regional Park; Chapel Point State Park; Purse State Park; Mattawoman State Natural Environmental Area; Nanjemoy Natural Resource Management Area; Douglas Point Recreation Area; Mallows Bay Park; Cedar Point Wildlife Management Area; Mattingly Avenue Park; Port Tobacco Village; Thomas Stone National Historic Site

Linking Routes

- The Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail includes a biking trail (Southern Maryland Tidewater Potomac Heritage Bicycle Route) and a hiking trail connecting significant sites and communities within the region. These primarily follow highways and local roads and connect to trail networks and public landings in adjacent river sections.
- The Indian Head Rail Trail is a 13-mile non-vehicular trail between Indian Head, MD and Route 301 in White Plains, MD. Cyclists, hikers and nature enthusiasts can experience the surroundings of mature forests, natural wetlands and occasional farmland.
- Several area paddling tours and cruising boat itineraries have been described in the CAJO Boaters’ Guide.
- Public transit options are limited to commuter bus service to/from the Washington, D.C. Metro area; there are no known public bus or bike share programs in this river section.



Top: Mallows Bay (photo credit: Don Shomette Bay Journal article)

Bottom: Douglas Point (photo credit: Glen Brewster)



Linking Routes (continued)

Other trails or connecting routes within the region include:

- Maryland Religious Freedom Byway (200 miles from Port Tobacco to Point Lookout)
- John Wilkes Booth Trail <http://www.civilwartraveler.com/EAST/MD/booth.html>
- The Southern Maryland Arts, Culture and Agricultural trails <http://www.somdtrails.com/index.html>
- Maryland Indian Heritage Trail (under development)
- Water Trails in Charles County – Mattawoman Creek Water Trail; Lower Potomac River Water Trail; Friendship Farm Park Water Trail; Port Tobacco River Trail http://www.charlescounty.org/webdocs/tourism/publications/CC_Water_Trail_Map.pdf
- Several area paddling tours and cruising boat itineraries have been described in the CAJO Boaters' Guide.

Support Services

- The towns of Indian Head and La Plata have the highest concentration of commercial services. With close proximity to many of the parks and public land unit entrances, these towns offer a variety of restaurants, retail operations, lodging options and gas stations.

Top: Chapel Point State Park shoreline (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Bottom: Mattawoman State Natural Area site that appears to be used for informal paddle craft launching (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Top right: Friendship Farm Park in Charles County, MD (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Key Stories and Associated Resources

The following key stories associated with CAJO, STSP and POHE themes are relevant to the various trail components in this river section:



Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT

(Smith's explorations, American Indian cultures, natural history of Bay)

- Smith mapped the town of Potopaco here, but recorded no stories of interaction with the Indians or other adventures.
- Areas along the waterways of present-day Maryland were inhabited for thousands of years by various cultures of distinct indigenous peoples. At the time of European exploration, this coastal area along the Port Tobacco River was the territory of the Potopaco, whose settlement was mapped by John Smith. Overall, the largest tribe on the north side of the Potomac River was the Piscataway, which later absorbed some of the smaller tribes of the area.
- Research on the identification and mapping of Indigenous Cultural Landscapes (ICLs) as mentioned in the CMP have begun on the Maryland Peninsula. It is anticipated that high probable areas of ICL resources will be identified.

Features that support these stories include: evocative landscapes including Indigenous Cultural Landscapes; American Indian archeological findings in areas along the river; Mattawoman Creek; Nanjemoy Creek



Star-Spangled Banner NHT

(military events, individual contributors, Bay region as hub, icons of war)

- Battle of Indian Head (September 5-6, 1814)
- Mustering sites and camps for American Troops at Port Tobacco
- Observation posts atop a 90 foot hill near Chapel Point established by the U.S. Navy to observe British ship movements on the Potomac

Features that support these stories include: Indian Head Gun Battery Site, Chapel Point State Park, St. Ignatius Catholic Church; St. Thomas Manor; Port Tobacco Village



Potomac Heritage NST

(meeting ground of conservation ideas and practices, five physiographic regions, crossroads of opportunity, development of U.S. Republic)

- Port Tobacco Village, established in 1685 as a naval port for the British, is home to the Historic Port Tobacco Court House. The town remained a major port through the end of the Revolutionary War and is the original location of the Potopaco natives.
- Sweden Point Marina (at Smallwood State Park) was not always known as Sweden Point. It was once referred to as Sweetman's Landing. The area that is referred to as Grinder's Wharf (which is only a few exposed pilings today) was built on a naturally deep water channel in the Mattawoman Creek. The Grinder family was one of the major brick manufacturers in the Chicamuxen area. They in turn used Grinders Wharf to ship their brick out to the wholesalers. In the mid-1800s the wharf was used by the Washington Steamship Lines on the Potomac. The steamers would pick up water on their journey south to the Chesapeake Bay.
- Mallows Bay has the largest assemblage of historic shipwrecks in the US and is home to the largest "ghost fleet" of WWI wooden steamships - part of a massive national wartime program. Its archaeological and cultural resources cover centuries of history from the earliest Native American presence in the region to the roles that this area played in the Revolutionary, Civil and two World Wars, as well as in successive regimes of Potomac River fishing industries. In recognition of the ecologic, historic and cultural significance of this area, Mallows Bay is currently being considered for designation in the National Historical Register of Places (NHRP) and as a National Marine Sanctuary.
- Mount Aventine manor house, one of Charles County's most important antebellum houses, is located at Chapman State Park. The manor is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), was used as a signal point for Federal troops during the Civil War and retains its original patent boundaries from 1673.
- The Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway (NSB) exhibits offer self-guided interpretation of religious tolerance and separation of church and state at many of the nation's oldest churches and at significant sites within the river section.

Features that support these stories include: Port Tobacco Village; Mallows Bay Park; Chiles Homesite; Christ Episcopal Church Durham; Douglas Point Recreation Area, Thomas Stone National Historic Site; Smallwood State Park; Mattawoman SNEA



Top: Osprey at Mallows Bay (photo credit: Christopher A Koberg)

Proposed Trail Enhancements and Implementation Strategies

In addition to the cross cutting strategies which apply to all river sections, this river section provides or has near-term potential to provide a wide variety of desired visitor experiences for different types of trail users. Providing optimal trail-related visitor experiences in a way that highlights this area's resources, primary features and key stories could best be achieved as follows:

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area #1 - Indian Head to Douglas Point SRMA			
Smallwood State Park	 Anchor Site	Install Interpretive Kiosk	Consideration could be given to the potential installation of a three-panel kiosk installed at an area of congregation with CAJO, STSP and POHE panels to orient users to the Trails in a larger context and identify key trail spots along the Potomac River specifically within the Southern Maryland river section. The POHE panel on the exhibit could describe the military history of the site. CAJO and STSP panels could also relate site-specific information and also identify Trail sites to be seen further along the river to encourage visitors to explore beyond their immediate area and to understand where they are located in context to the entire Trail routes.
		Enhance Trail-Specific Interpretive Programs	Consider expanding, as resources allow, existing visitor programs, events and guided tours to include trail-specific information.
		Develop Watermen Heritage Tours	Explore potential to work with watermen in this area that may be interested in participating in the Watermen Heritage Tourism Training Program. Share NPS/approved written scripts to develop custom Watermen Heritage Tours if appropriate.
		Develop Paddle Itineraries	Launching from Smallwood State Park paddle itineraries could be developed that take people on Mattawoman Creek. Other tours, covering evocative landscapes, could potentially be developed which could connect with Friendship Farm Park, Chapel Point State Park, and/or Port Tobacco Marina.
		Expand Ferry Route	Smallwood State Park has a large marina that is within range of Mount Vernon and National Harbor. An evaluation could be made of the feasibility of extending the charter boat service and ferry south to Smallwood State Park from the Mount Vernon to National Harbor ferry route.
		Expand Water Craft Rentals	As staffing and funding permit, the possibility of providing seasonal canoe and kayak rentals could be considered.
		Provide Interpretation for Non-accessible DOD Lands	NSF Indian Head is visible from Smallwood State Park. Consideration could be given to the possible installation of interpretive panels at the park which could tell the story of the Posey Archeological Site, the Navy Proving Grounds and Powder Factory at Indian Head. This facility may not have the shoreline restrictions that other military institutions enforce, interpretation of the 5 historic districts reflective of important American Indian history could be explored.
Chapman State Park	 Trail Destination	Enhance Interpretive Signage/Information	Consideration could be given to the potential installation of Interpretive panels showing each of the parks in this river section giving context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as referring visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Provide Camping Opportunities	When staffing and funding allow, consideration could be given to providing water-to-land primitive permit-only camping and related visitor facilities or improving an existing structure for overnight use.
Ruth B. Swann Regional Park	 Trail Destination	Enhance Interpretive Signage/Information	At trailheads, consideration could be given to interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section giving context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be expanded/developed to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
Mallows Bay Park	 Trail Destination	Enhance Interpretive Signage/Information	Consideration could be given to the potential of installing interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section giving context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Expand Camping Opportunities	If staffing and funding permit, consideration to incorporate water-to-land primitive permit-only campsites and related visitor facilities could be explored.
		Enhance POHE Interpretation	At Mallows Bay, the sunken wooden transport ships from the World War I era provide an exciting itinerary to explore shipwrecks and ecologic succession turning the wooden boats into habitat in the shallows of the Potomac shoreline. The potential of installing interpretive panels connecting these features to POHE and orienting the visitor to the larger trail-routes could be considered.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description	
Focus Area #1 - Indian Head to Douglas Point SRMA				
Douglas Point Special Recreation Management Area		Trail	Enhance Interpretive Signage/Information	
		Destination	Consideration could be given to the potential installation of interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section giving context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.	
			Provide Wayfinding Signs	BLM is exploring installation of a wayfinding sign(s) for POHE bicycling routes and other uses such as the water-to-land soft landing at Douglas Point SRMA.
			Expand Camping Opportunities	Consideration, as staffing and funding allow, to incorporate water-to-land primitive permit-only campsites and related visitor facilities could be explored.
		Add Geocaching Site	BLM could consider the addition of a geocaching site as a way to introduce visitors to trail destinations.	
Mattawoman State Natural Environmental Area		Trail Destination	Enhance Public Access	
			An informal canoe/kayak launch at the end of Mattawoman Creek Road is currently being used for trips in and around Mattawoman Creek. The feasibility, as resources allow, of developing a formal launch site could be explored at this site to support additional paddling destination in the area such as Smallwood State Park and Mattingly Avenue Park.	
Mattingly Avenue Park		Trail Destination	Enhance Interpretive Signage/Information	
			Consideration could be given to the potential installation of interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section giving context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.	
Indian Head Rail Trail		Linking Route	Trail Enhancements and Interpretation	
			Consideration could be given to providing signage at the trail head to tell the story of the White Plains Railroad. Appropriate signage on the trail could potentially help to show connections and provide interpretation and orientation for POHE, CAJO and STSP.	
Maryland Indian Heritage Trail		Linking Route	Trail Development and Interpretation	
			Opportunity to tell the correct American Indian story at key sites and link with other trail(s) resources. Interpret history of what was happening prior to Smith and European contact.	
Private Outfitters		Linking Route	Expand Public Transportation Service	
			Expansion of water taxi service could be considered to connect Smallwood to Piscataway and/or Fort Washington to the north, along with routes further south to Fairview Beach or Dahlgren Wayside Park in Virginia.	
Private Development		Support Services	Expand Trails Related Information	
			Mattingly Avenue Park, Sweden Point Marina, Aqualand Marina, Captain Billy's Crab House, Gilligan's Pier, Crabby Dick's and Port Tobacco Marina are areas where the public currently access the Potomac River via boat ramps, restaurants and marine-related service. Installing signage and giving the restaurants rack cards or paper menus with trail-specific park and significant site locations in close proximity to their establishment could be an effective way to reach a larger audience of existing Potomac river users.	
Focus Area #2 - Friendship Farm Park to Chapel Point State Park				
Friendship Farm Park		Anchor Site	Enhanced Facility Development	
			Charles County is implementing a development concept to expand services offered at this site. Elements include constructing a nature/interpretive center, events barn, amphitheater, hiking trails, boat and kayak launch, wedding venue, picnic and playground areas. Communication with the County is recommended to determine if they would be eligible to apply for future NPS Financial Assistance awards to strengthen the bonds between the County Park and national trails.	
			Add Interpretive Kiosk and Other Interpretive Panels	Consideration could be given to the potential installation of a three-panel kiosk installed at an area of congregation with CAJO, STSP and POHE panels to orient users to the Trails in a larger context and identify key trail spots along the Potomac River specifically within the Southern Maryland river section. The POHE panel on the exhibit could describe the military history of the site. CAJO and STSP panels could also relate site-specific information and also identify Trail sites to be seen further along the river to encourage visitors to explore beyond their immediate area and to understand where they are located in context to the entire Trail routes. Other interpretive signage could be considered on trail locations as appropriate.
			New Camping Opportunities	Consideration could be given to incorporate water-to-land primitive campsites, permit-only, and overnight car and RV campsites and related visitor facilities at this site.
			Expand Boat Launch Parking	The feasibility of expanding the existing parking capacity at the boat launch area or in close proximity to it to allow for more users could be explored.
		Provide Water Craft Rentals	As staffing and funding permit, opportunities to offer seasonal boat, canoe and kayak rentals could be considered.	

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description	
Focus Area #2 - Friendship Farm Park to Chapel Point State Park				
Chapel Point State Park		Trail	Enhance Public Access	When future plans for this site are considered, expanding visitor services to include new or improved universally accessible canoe and kayak launches, fishing piers and/or stabilized shoreline fishing areas could be explored.
		Destination	Provide Camping Opportunities	If applicable in future park management strategy, consideration to incorporate water-to-land primitive permit-only campsites and related visitor facilities could be explored.
			Enhance Interpretive Signage/Information	Consideration could be given to the potential installation of interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section giving context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
Cedar Point Wildlife Management Area		Trail	Enhance Public Use	When future plans for this site are considered, the potential may exist to explore a universally accessible canoe/kayak launch, shore fishing areas, new wildlife viewing sites and the feasibility of primitive water-to-land permit-only campsites.
Chicamuxen Wildlife Management Area		Trail	Enhance Public Access	As staffing and funding allow, the potential of improving the existing paddle craft soft launch and primitive campsite could be explored. An appropriate toilet facility is needed for the site.
Port Tobacco Village		Trail	Enhance Interpretive Signage/Information	Consideration could be given to the potential installation of Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section giving context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Destination	Expand Trail System	Consideration to connect the existing trail system at the Village to new hiking trails leading to the water and marshes of Port Tobacco River could be explored.
Thomas Stone National Historic Site		Trail	Enhance Interpretive Signage/Information	Consideration could be given to the potential installation of Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section giving context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
Potomac Heritage Trail		Linking Route	Trail Enhancements	Consider consolidating and unifying the variety of different trails in this river section - specifically the signage along the roadways and sites along the highways - to offer a clear message to visitors about POHE. Civil War stories, historic slavery stories, Naval history, oldest active ordinance facility, steamboat era and Potomac as transportation corridor could be considered for incorporation into POHE interpretation in this section of the river.
Maryland Religious Freedom Byway		Linking Route	Trail Linkage and Signage	Consideration to consolidate and unify the variety of different trails in this river section - specifically the signage along the roadways and sites along the highways - to offer a clear message to visitors could be explored. Incorporation of action items highlighted in the Common Interpretive Strategy document published in October 2014 will be applied as appropriate.
Multi-Agency Trail Potential		Linking Route	Develop Linking Trail System	Coordination between Charles County, BLM, and MD DNR could potentially result in a multi-agency effort to connect existing trails within Douglas Point NRMA, Douglas Point SRMA, Mallows Bay Park, Purse State Park and Wilson Farm. This could potentially, as funds and resources allow, create a non-motorized trail route from Mallows Bay to Douglas Point SRMA and include themes and interpretation related to the national trails.
Three Notch Trail		Linking Route	Trail Enhancements	Efforts to expand Three Notch Trail are currently on-going; there is a long term goal to connect to the Indian Head Rail Trail. Work to support these efforts and include Trail-specific themes where applicable could be considered.
Maryland Indian Heritage Trail		Linking Route	Develop New Trail Linkage and Access	Planning efforts to connect CAJO trail resources, specifically American Indian historic resources and present-day sites of cultural significance, to the Maryland Indian Heritage Trail should be coordinated. Inclusion of pre-Colonial or pre-history American Indian stories before John Smith's era could be interpreted through this connection.
Private Campgrounds		Support Services	Develop New Public Campgrounds	Consideration to incorporate or expand water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and overnight car and RV campsites and related visitor facilities could be explored at private marinas such as Aqualand Marina, Goose Bay Marina and Camp Merrick.

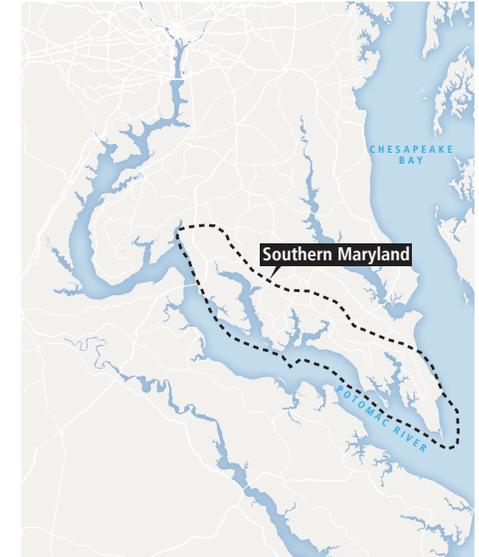
River Section 6 – Southern Maryland



Overview

This river section includes the sites and resources located east of the Highway 301 Bridge, including Zekiah Swamp Natural Environment Area to the southernmost tip of Maryland's western shore Point Lookout State Park. The area is rich in conserved natural landscapes, American Indian influence, Captain John Smith-related history, War of 1812 British Fleet activity and American defenses, and Colonial America settlement stories.

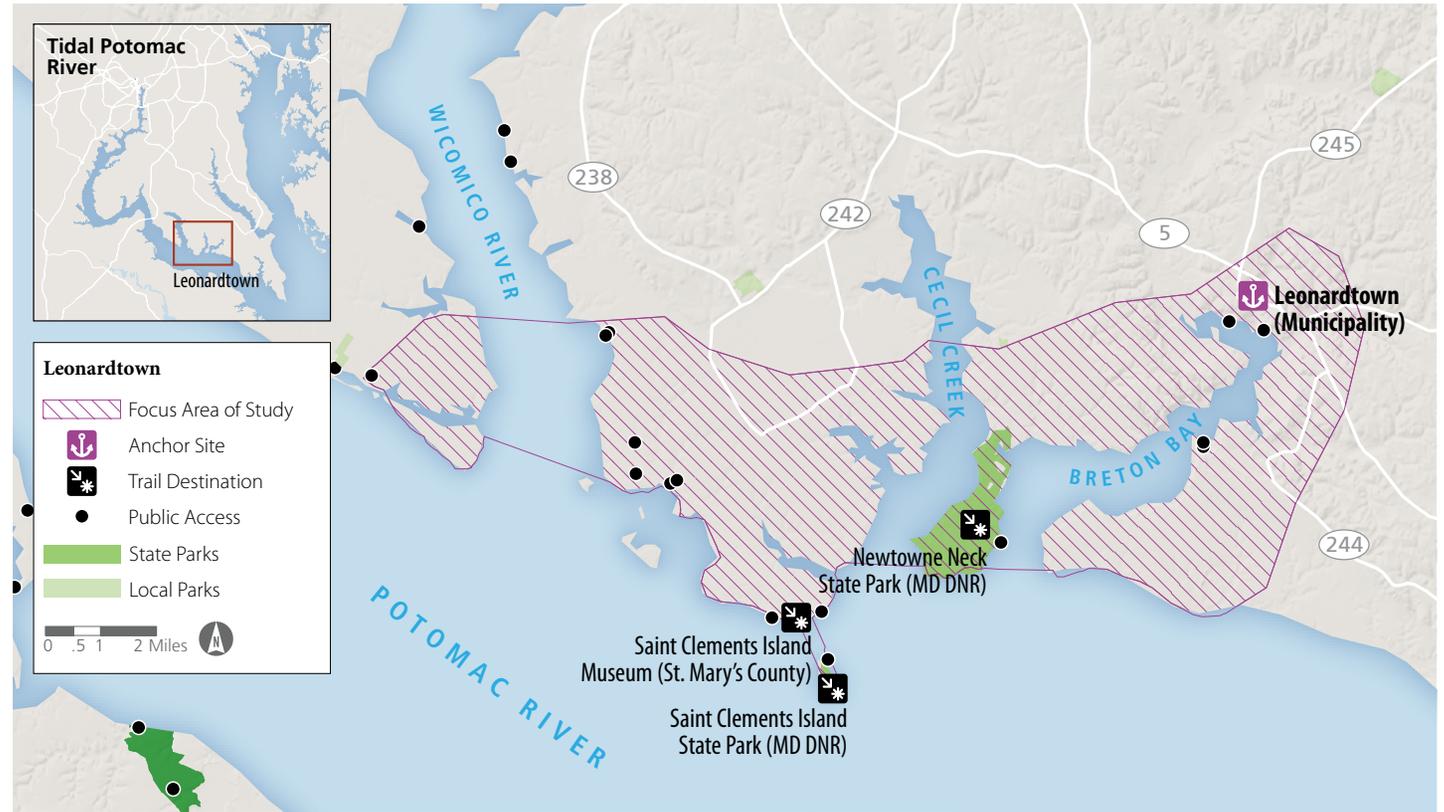
Southern Maryland is characterized by a largely rural landscape, with a matrix of forest and farmland, punctuated by some low-density development. As the DC metro region continues to expand, development is pushing southward into this region, which currently maintains its historic character. St. Mary's City and Leonardtown offer glimpses into colonial life in southern Maryland, while Point Lookout State Park and Piney Point Lighthouse, Museum and Historic Park share the stories of maritime culture. The region's rich natural resources have been preserved at Zekiah Swamp Natural Environment Area (part of a 65,000 acre greenway running through Charles County) and St. Inigoes State Forest – both reveal historical tales dating to the early 1600s.



This page: Tidal Marsh
(photo credit: Deanna Beacham)

Facilities within this river section include:

- Point Lookout State Park (MD DNR)
- Town of Leonardtown (waterfront community and parks)
- Historic St. Mary's City Museum (Historic St. Mary's City Commission/ HSMCC)
- Chancellor's Point Natural History Area (HSMCC)
- Port of Leonardtown Public Park (Town of Leonardtown)
- St. Clement's Island State Park (MD DNR)
- St. Clement's Island Museum (St. Mary's County Museum Division)
- Newtowne Neck State Park (MD DNR)
- Piney Point Lighthouse, Museum and Historic Park (St. Mary's County Museum Division)
- Zekiah Swamp Natural Environmental Area (MD DNR)
- St. Ingoes State Forest (MD Forest Service)
- St. Ingoes Landing (St. Mary's County Recreation and Parks)



Trail Components

The following trail components have been identified to support strategic planning within this river section. The two focus areas described below each contain one anchor site; these sites are viewed as first tier locations for trail development efforts as they already contain significant visitor support facilities. The next level of development would include additional trail components such as destinations, linking routes and trail towns; enhancements would occur as resources and opportunities become available.

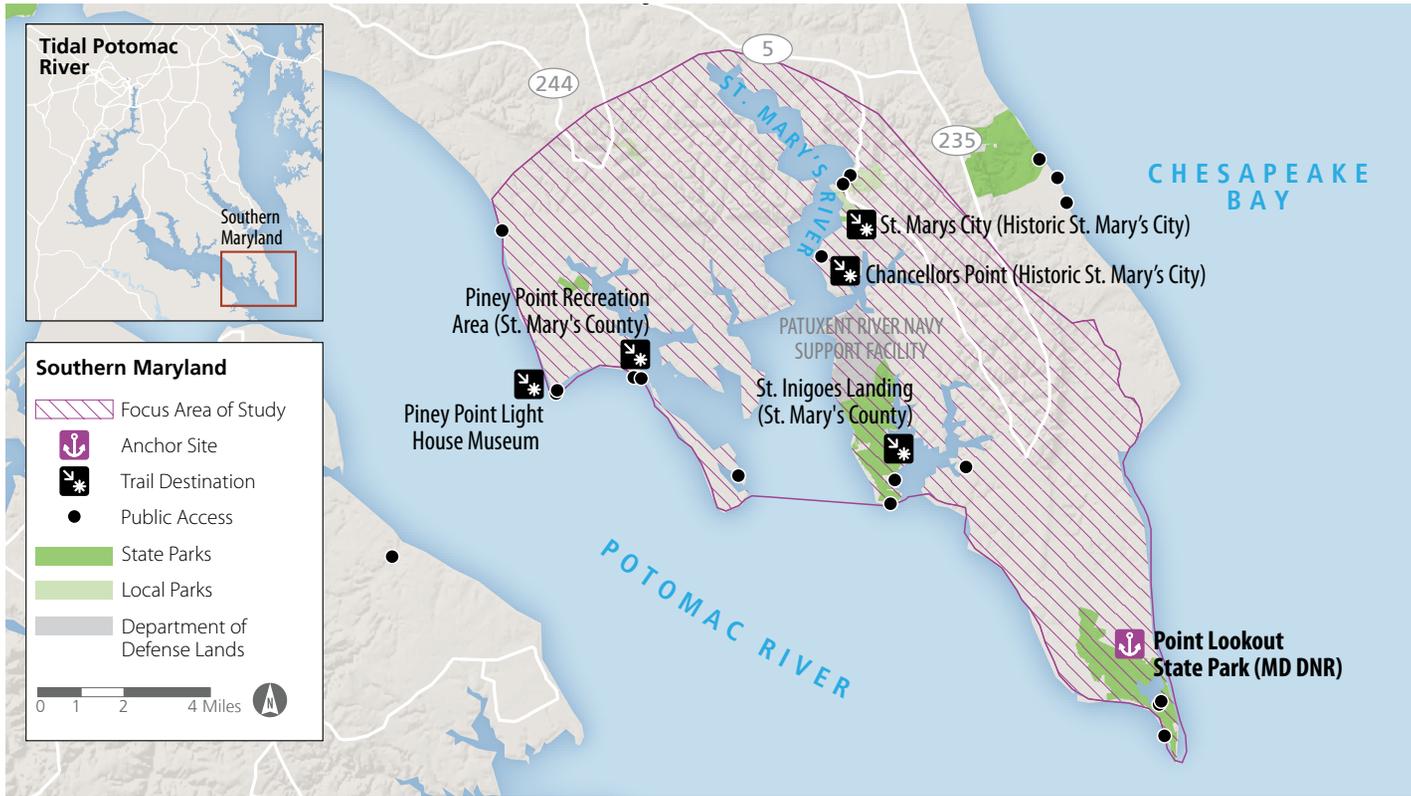
Focus Areas

- **Focus Area #1:** St. Clements Island State Park to Leonardtown
- **Focus Area #2:** Piney Point Lighthouse Museum & Historic Park to Point Lookout State Park

Anchor Sites

For Focus Area #1, the proposed anchor site is Leonardtown.

- **Leonardtown** downtown area and waterfront (Town of Leonardtown) offers a variety of cultural and recreational opportunities, including a self-guided walking tour (with an associated brochure and a podcast), a geocache trail, waterfront parks and a winery. A three-mile water trail extends from one waterfront park to another; canoe/kayak rentals and a shuttle service are available locally. Picnic shelters, galleries, retail shops and an array of restaurants are available.



Anchor Sites (continued)

For Focus Area #2, the proposed anchor site is Point Lookout State Park.

- **Point Lookout State Park** (DNR) offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities including camping, boating, fishing, hiking and picnicking. The park features a boat launch, boat rentals, a camping area, camp store, hiking trails, hunting areas, a swimming beach, picnic areas, a museum and a staffed visitor center.

Trail Destinations

- Point Lookout Lighthouse and Civil War Museum; St. Mary’s City Historic Park; Chancellor’s Point Natural History Area; Port of Leonardtown Public Park; St. Clements Island State Park; St. Clements Island Museum; Newtowne Neck State Park; Straits Point Park/St. George Beach (boat launch along route 249 under bridge to St. George Island); Piney Point Lighthouse, Museum and Historic Park; St. Inigoes State

Forest; St. Inigoes Landing; Point Lookout Confederate Cemetery; St. Francis Xavier Church; Tudor Hall

Linking Routes

- The Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail has identified a biking trail (Southern Maryland Tidewater Potomac Heritage Bicycle Route) and a hiking trail (Southern Maryland) that provide a connection to significant sites and communities within the region. These primarily follow highways and local roads and connect to trail networks in adjacent river sections.
- Three Notch Trail is a non-motorized asphalt trail that is constructed on County railroad right-of-way. Presently, four completed phases exist and five additional phases are planned to provide a 10’-wide hiking and biking trail connection. When completed, the trail will link the developed and rural areas from southern Charles County (Hughesville, MD) to the Patuxent River Naval Air Station at Lexington Park, MD in Saint Mary’s County.

Top: Beach at Point Lookout State Park (photo credit: Bethesda magazine website)

Bottom: Leonardtown Wharf Park (photo credit: NPS archive)



Top: Beach at Chancellor's Point along the St. Mary's River (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Bottom: Piney Point Lighthouse (photo credit: NPS archive)

Other trails or connecting routes within the region include:

- Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway (200 miles from Port Tobacco to Point Lookout)
- John Wilkes Booth Trail
- The Southern Maryland Arts, Culture and Agricultural trails
- Maryland Indian Heritage Trail (under development)
- Water Trails: Western St. Mary's Water Trail; Leonardtown Water Trail and Winery; Point Lookout Water Trail
- St. Clements Island Museum and St. Clements Island are both within easy access to the Newtowne Neck property (to the south) and Cobb Island (to the north); one or both sites could help bridge a continuous water trail along the Potomac
- St. Clements Island Water Taxi (pedestrian only, seasonal operation)

Note: Public transit options are limited to commuter bus service to/from the Washington, D.C. Metro area; there are no known public bus or bike share programs in this river section.

Support Services

Leonardtown and Lexington Park have the highest concentration of commercial services in this river section. Within close proximity to many of the parks and entrances to public land units, these towns offer a variety of restaurants, retail stores, lodging establishments and gas stations.

Key Trail Stories and Associated Resources

The following key stories associated with CAJO, STSP and POHE themes are relevant to the various trail components in this river section:



Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT

(Smith's explorations, American Indian cultures, natural history of Bay)

- Many stories regarding Indigenous American Indians in the area, including the Chaptico and many others, could potentially be used to interpret the history of the land and cultures many years before John Smith arrived.
- Smith and his crew spent about a month exploring the Potomac ("the River Patowomeck"). Smith reported seeing no native inhabitants for the first thirty miles. (Later explorers met the Yaocomaco up the St. Mary's River.)

- Smith mapped St. Clements Bay and noted (but did not discuss in his writings) one Indian town on the north side of the river.
- On his 1612 map, Smith identified today's Point Lookout as Sparkes Point, presumably after his 1624 publisher, Michael Sparkes. [Adapted from Haile]
- Publication of Smith's map drew settlers to the Chesapeake and, in particular, the Potomac River. In 1634, Governor Leonard Calvert landed in Southern Maryland on the "Ark" and the "Dove". After being warned that the Piscataway, further up the Potomac, would not be hospitable to him and his crew he chose to settle up the St. Mary's River where the Yaocomaco Indians lived. Calvert exchanged goods for land that became St. Mary's City, the fourth permanent settlement in British North America.
- Like other upriver tribes, the Yaocomaco probably collected oysters and fish at the mouth of the river, working from seasonal camps.
- Recent archaeological findings of remains of pottery mixed with glass trade beads, arrowheads fashioned from English brass, gun parts and a silver belt hanger for an English sword have revealed the location of Zekiah Fort, located in the Zekiah Swamp between the Port Tobacco and Wicomico Rivers. The Piscataway and other Southern Maryland tribes had been plagued by Iroquoian-speaking raiders from Pennsylvania and New York. They quickly saw that the English newcomers and their guns might help them fend off their enemies, who bore French arms. The Piscataways left the fort in 1692. Some remained in Maryland, while others dispersed into Virginia and Pennsylvania. The existence of the fort, the complex diplomacy, skirmishes and killings in the area during the years the Piscataways sheltered there — including one atrocity involving George Washington's grandfather — are known from Colonial records.
- In 2011, archaeologists from St. Mary's College of Maryland, in partnership with the College of Southern Maryland and local businessman Michael Sullivan, found the Piscataway Indian Fort (Zekiah Fort) in Zekiah Swamp.
- Newtowne Neck was home to Piscataway Indians prior to colonization. It ultimately became the second colonial settlement in Maryland, after St. Mary's City.

Features that support these stories include: evocative landscapes; Zekiah Swamp Natural Environmental Area, American Indian archeological findings ; Point Lookout State Park; St. Inigoes State Forest; Newtowne Neck State Park; St. Clements Island; Western St. Mary's County Water Trail system (with portions along the Wicomico River and Breton Bay)



Star-Spangled Banner NHT

(military events, individual contributors, Bay region as hub, icons of war)

- During the war of 1812, Point Lookout served as an observation post to monitor British activity on the Bay and was also the site of a British encampment.
- About 1,500 British soldiers attacked Leonardtown, the St. Mary's County seat, on July 19, 1814. Advancing from the east, west, and by water – landing at the Leonardtown Wharf – the British took the town without opposition.
- During a British raid in Chaptico, the Christ Episcopal Church organ was smashed and grave vaults were desecrated. The church was built in the 1730s and several members of Francis Scott Key's family are buried there.
- To distract Americans during the raid of Washington DC, the British fleet executed maneuvers around St. Clements Island. Additional British fleet activity during this time included the occupation of islands near Piney Point, including St. George's Island. During the War, the US Navy established an observation post at St. Ignatius Catholic Church-St. Thomas Manor, which is located on a hill at Chapel Point overlooking the confluence of the Port Tobacco and the Potomac Rivers. This strategic location allowed citizens to see the British squadron as they advanced up the Potomac in August 1814 to threaten Alexandria, VA.

Features that support these stories include: Point Lookout State Park; Leonardtown Public Wharf Park; Christ Episcopal Church in Chaptico; St. Ignatius Catholic Church (the oldest continuously active Catholic parish in America with one of America's oldest cemeteries); St. Thomas Manor (a Jesuit residence); Chapel Point State Park.



Potomac Heritage NST

(meeting ground of conservation ideas and practices, five physiographic regions, crossroads of opportunity, development of U.S. Republic)

- St. Mary's City was the fourth permanent settlement in British North America. It is often referred to as "the birthplace of religious freedom," as the colony passed the Maryland Toleration Act of 1649.
- Point Lookout was included in King Charles I's grant to George Calvert, Lord Baltimore. Calvert's younger son, Leonard (Maryland's first governor), claimed the Point for his personal manor in 1634.
- In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, a sophisticated plantation society developed in what became Southern Maryland and the Northern Neck of Virginia. In Maryland, the Brents and Lancasters put down deep roots that endure today.
- The Point Lookout Lighthouse was constructed in 1830 and still stands today, though it is no longer in use.
- During the Civil War, Point Lookout Hammond Hospital was constructed at the tip of the point after General George B. McClellan's unsuccessful campaign to capture Richmond. After the Battle of Gettysburg, a prisoner of war camp was established at the site. The site once served as a prison camp, housing more than 52,000 Confederate soldiers during the Civil War. Over 4,000 imprisoned Confederate soldiers died there, due to exposure, disease and starvation. Federal Army units serving as guards at the site included African-American soldiers of the U.S.C.T. Regiments (United States Colored Troops). After the war, the facilities were quickly dismantled.
- In the 1700s, Leonardtown served as a place where local residents conducted official colonial business and shipped farm products through the port. During the Civil War era, the town continued to be a center of commerce with its busy port and steamboat landings.
- Zekiah Swamp is considered one of the most significant ecological areas in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. It is the primary headwaters of the Wicomico River and the largest hardwood swamp in Maryland. It is thought to have significant cultural importance to Indigenous American Indians and was used as a retreat for Lord Baltimore in the late 17th century.

(continued on next page)



Top: Potomac Beach in Southern Maryland (photo credit: NPS archive)



Potomac Heritage NST (continued)

(meeting ground of conservation ideas and practices, five physiographic regions, crossroads of opportunity, development of U.S. Republic)

- Newtowne Neck is an early Jesuit farm and site of a 1662 chapel, the oldest continually used cemetery in Maryland, and the oldest frame Catholic church in Maryland (St. Francis Xavier, 1731). It is also the location of an impressive 1789 century brick manor house. During WWII, Newtowne Neck was leased from the Jesuits by the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab. It was known as the Newtowne Neck Proving Ground and was used for the testing and development of the highly classified proximity fuse. This was a very important innovation that helped win the War. Most of Newtowne Neck was sold to the State by the Jesuits and is now known as Newtowne Neck State Park (one of the Province Properties).
- In the late 17th century, the Yaocomaco sold their land to the Maryland Colony and moved across the Potomac to what is now known as the Yeocomico River.
- In 1680, the Piscataway moved to Zekiah Manor for protection from raids by northern Indian groups and English encroachment by Charles Calvert. There, they built a fort surrounded by small communities. Archaeologists estimate that between 90 and 300 Indians lived in the vicinity until the mid-1690s.

- Various stories related to Webster Field, located on present-day Naval Air Station Patuxent River, include:
 - The Jesuits were significant in the founding of the MD colony, and St. Inigoes Manor was the home farm where the Jesuits built a succession of manor houses, beginning in the 1630s with St. Inigoes House. The Jesuits' occupation is evident through numerous important archaeological sites (on the base) including cemeteries, slave sites, tenant sites, manor house sites and a chapel site. Numerous National Register-eligible historic archaeological sites exist here, including American Indian archaeological sites, an archaeological site dating from the Late Archaic to the Late Woodland (possibly Contact Period), and early-17th through mid-20th century sites associated with the 300-year-long ownership of the property by the Jesuits.
 - Part of Webster Field is an area historically known as Fort Point, believed to be the site of the Maryland colony's 17th century St. Inigoes Fort. In the 19th century, a number of 17th-century cannons were removed from just offshore in the St. Mary's River.
 - The third St. Inigoes Manor house (built ca. 1750) stood on Priest Point during the War of 1812. It was looted in 1814 by the British in a well-documented raid. Portions of the house still survive as ruins on Webster Field.
 - Webster Field was built during WWII as an outlying field to NAS Patuxent River. Webster Field has a National Register-eligible historic district composed of Navy buildings and structures where significant defense activities were carried out during the Cold War Period.
 - The British raided St. George's Island, which is just across St. Mary's River from Webster Field, during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. During WWII, the Navy built the Torpedo Test Range at Piney Point. Some of the houses and buildings remain, and the site is now largely occupied by the Paul Hall Center (Seafarers Union School) and the Petroleum Tank Farm (Steuart or Mirant) where the airfield still exists.

Features that support these stories include: St. Mary's City; Point Lookout State Park and Point Lookout Lighthouse; the site of Point Lookout Hammond Hospital; Leonardtown Public Wharf Park; St. Inigoes State Forest; Zekiah Swamp (not actively managed for recreation)

Top: Newtowne Neck State Park (photo credit: MD DNR)

Bottom: St. Clement's Island (photo credit: NPS archive)

Proposed Trail Enhancements and Implementation Strategies

In addition to the cross cutting strategies which apply to all river sections, this river section provides or has near-term potential to provide a wide variety of desired visitor experiences for different types of trail users. Providing optimal trail-related visitor experiences in a way that highlights this area’s resources, primary features and key stories could best be achieved as follows:

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area #1 - St. Clements Island to Leonardtown			
Point Lookout State Park	 Anchor Site	Enhance Interpretive Signage	An existing STSP sign is located on site and a CAJO sign is planned for installation. Inclusion of a POHE sign panel, specifically describing the military history of the site, could be considered. Trail wayfinding could be incorporated into the potential installation to show each of the parks in this river section, giving context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as referring visitors to additional significant sites in the area.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Many existing water trails are already utilized by the general public, outfitters, summer camps and paddling club members via the launch sites at Point Lookout State Park. Tour guides currently providing paddling tours could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE stories into their trip itineraries. NPS staff could assist tour leader staff in becoming “Certified Trail Ambassadors” to ensure the trail-related information being shared is accurate and of high quality.
		Develop Boating Guide and Itineraries	This section of the Potomac can be challenging for power boaters to navigate due to shallow water, underwater obstructions and no-wake zones. A users’ map and guide could be developed to assist motor boating enthusiasts in exploring specific river stretches and destinations further upstream.
		Develop Trail Itineraries	Consideration to expand or revise the existing Point Lookout self-guided walking tours and various canoe/kayak trails (approximately three miles each) to include trail-related stories could be explored.
		Develop New Trail Linkage and Interpretation	Work with MD DNR on their plans to develop a half-mile to mile-long hiking and bicycling trail from the park entrance to the end of the peninsula. Potential to include interpretive signage.
		Develop Paddle Itineraries	Itineraries could be developed or expanded for both guided and self-guided paddling trips along adjacent creeks and coves. Trail-specific information and significant sites or features along the itinerary could be incorporated into the paddling information.
		Expand Fishing Opportunities	Consideration of expanding and/or improving fishing facilities could be explored.
		Water Craft and Bike Rentals	Consideration of bike and boat rental options could be explored.
		Interpretive Opportunity	Point Lookout Park frequently hosts a living history weekend throughout the year. Tying in trail-specific themes of CAJO, STSP and POHE to the festival could bring more attention to the trail.
Historic St. Mary's City	 Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Potential also to highlight stories related to Webster Field Annex (located on present-day Naval Air Station Patuxent River) that include American Indian archaeological sites, 17th century Fort history, ruins of the third St. Inigoes Manor house (built ca. 1750), and defense related history and structures.
		Develop Trail Itineraries	Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Interpretive Opportunity	St. Mary's City frequently hosts school field trips and events celebrating the region's colonial history throughout the year. Tying in trail-specific themes of CAJO, STSP and POHE to the walks and any curriculum distributed to the students could bring more attention to the trail.
		New Access Site	Consideration to provide a canoe/kayak access at the sandy beach at the Dove Dock could be explored.
		Develop New Trails Brochures	Consideration to revise existing trails brochure so that it better highlights recreational opportunities and shares information on the Trails could be explored.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area #1 - St. Clements Island to Leonardtown			
Chancellor's Point Natural History Area		Develop Paddle Itineraries	Itineraries could be developed or expanded for both guided and self-guided paddling trips along adjacent creeks and coves. Trail-specific information and significant sites or features along the itinerary could be incorporated into the paddling information.
		Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panel highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area.
		Develop Primitive Camping	Consideration to incorporate water-to-land primitive campsites could be explored.
		New Access Site	Consideration to provide a canoe/kayak access could be explored.
Piney Point Lighthouse, Museum and Historic Park		Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panel highlighting the trail in relation to each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area.
		Develop Trail Itineraries	Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest through a variety of media (web-based, brochures, etc.).
		Develop Primitive Camping	While St. Mary's County currently has a policy restricting overnight camping in county parks, consideration to request special-use permits or a waiver to this policy to incorporate water-to-land primitive campsites could be explored.
		Develop Paddle Itineraries	Itineraries could be developed or expanded for both guided and self-guided paddling trips along adjacent creeks and coves. Trail-specific information and significant sites or features along the itinerary could be incorporated into the paddling information.
St. George's Island		Develop New Trail Linkage and Access	Consideration to expand or enhance wildlife observation, trailhead access, hiking trails and fishing facilities could be explored.
St. Inigoes State Forest		Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Potential also to highlight stories related to Webster Field Annex (located on present-day Naval Air Station Patuxent River) that include American Indian archaeological sites, 17th century Fort history, ruins of the third St. Inigoes Manor house (built ca. 1750), and defense-related history and structures.
		Develop Trail Itineraries	Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Develop Camping	Consideration to incorporate or expand water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and/or overnight car and RV campsites and related visitor facilities could be explored if determined to be feasible.
		Develop New Trail Linkage and Access	Consideration to expand or enhance wildlife observation, trailhead access, hiking trails and fishing facilities could be explored.
		Develop Paddle Itineraries	Itineraries could be developed or expanded for both guided and self-guided paddling trips along adjacent creeks and coves. Trail-specific information and significant sites or features along the itinerary could be incorporated into the paddling information.
Private outfitters		Connecting Trails to Other Major Properties	Existing water taxi and ferry routes presently do not extend south past Mount Vernon. Consideration to add routes to additional sites such as Point Lookout could be explored.
Private Development		Increase Trail Visibility	Work with St. Mary's County tourism officials, Chambers of Commerce, local organizations and private developers could expand visibility for the trails and interpretive programs offered at area parks. Opportunities to leverage funding for new public access projects or include physical trail enhancements (bike lanes, trail markers, signage) within infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate the proposed development could be explored.
		Interpretive Opportunity	The existing ferry service from Point Lookout to Smith Island and Crisfield, MD (Smith Island Cruises) could be interpreted as part of POHE trail. Signage could be located at both sides of the ferry route to convey the history of the ferry and to provide information regarding other nearby trail sites. NPS staff could assist tour leader staff in becoming "Certified Trail Ambassadors" to ensure the trail-related information being shared is accurate and of high quality.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area #2 - Piney Point Lighthouse Museum & Historic Park to Point Lookout State Park			
Leonardtown Waterfront	 Anchor Site	Provide Interpretive Panels	An existing STSP sign is located on waterfront. CAJO and POHE panels could be considered for installation to provide additional interpretation and orient users to the Trails in a larger context by identifying key trail spots along the Potomac River specifically within the Southern Maryland river section. The POHE panel on the exhibit could describe the tobacco heritage and agricultural history of the site.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Private outfitters currently offer boating and paddling tours along the various trails in this area. NPS staff could assist the leaders of these sites/organizations to become "Certified Trail Ambassadors" to ensure the trail-related information being shared is accurate and of high quality.
		Provide Training for Watermen Tours	Explore potential to work with watermen in this area that may be interested in participating in the Watermen Heritage Tourism Training Program. Share NPS/approved written scripts to develop custom Watermen Heritage Tours if appropriate.
		Develop Trail Itineraries	Consideration to create a new Leonardtown self-guided walking tour to include trail-related stories could be explored.
		Develop New Paddling Guides	Consideration to revise the three-mile canoe/kayak trail brochure to include trail-related themes. Consider also installing informational markers along the water trail itself to share both the historical and ecological significance of the area.
		Develop New Trail Linkage and Interpretation	There have been discussions to extend the boardwalk at the waterfront to the Leonardtown Winery located a few miles away. This would present additional biking and local trail opportunities, as well. Work to support these efforts and include Trail-specific themes where applicable could be considered.
		Develop New Trail Linkage and Interpretation	Consideration of creating more off-highway bike trails, particularly around Leonardtown (specifically along the Tudor Farm property – parcel east of Wharf) may be explored.
		Expand Wildlife Viewing Opportunities	Consideration to enhance wildlife observation opportunities and related interpretive materials at Port of Leonardtown Public Park and Leonardtown Wharf Public Park could be explored.
St. Clements Island State Park and/or Museum	 Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panel at the St. Clements Island Museum highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Consider expanding signage to include the story of Chaptico.
		Develop Trail Itineraries	Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Develop Primitive Camping	Consideration to incorporate water-to-land primitive campsites could be explored [group, permit-only camping for groups doing service projects is currently allowed].
		New Access Site	Consideration to provide an advanced-level canoe/kayak access to St. Clements Island could be explored [currently, only a sandy beach exists for paddlers].
		Develop New Trail Linkage	Consideration to develop a formal driving tour leading from St. Clements Island Museum to the town of Chaptico and ultimately to Zekiah Swamp could be explored.
		Expand Fishing Opportunities	Consideration of expanding and/or improving fishing facilities could be explored.
		Develop New Trail Linkage	St. Clements Island Museum supports access to and interpretation of St. Clements Island and both sites are within easy access to the Newtowne Neck property to the south and Cobb Island to the north. One or both sites could help bridge a continuous trail along the Potomac.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description	
Focus Area #2 - Piney Point Lighthouse Museum & Historic Park to Point Lookout State Park				
Newtowne Neck State Park		Trail	Interpretive panels highlighting the trail in relation to each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Interpretation of natural and cultural resources could also be included as appropriate.	
		Destination		
		New Access Site	Consideration to provide one or more canoe/kayak launch sites could be considered.	
		Develop Trails and Itineraries	Potential exists at this site to develop hiking trails, shoreline fishing, and swimming areas. Once realized, touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.	
		Develop Paddle Itineraries	Itineraries could be developed or expanded for both guided and self-guided paddling trips along adjacent creeks and coves. Trail-specific information and significant sites or features along the itinerary could be incorporated into the paddling information.	
		Develop Primitive Camping	Consideration to incorporate water-to-land primitive campsites could be explored, as staffing and funding permit.	
		Water Craft and Bike Rentals	Consideration of seasonal bike and boat rental options could be explored, as staffing and funding permit.	
Zekiah Swamp Natural Environmental Area		Trail Destination	Develop New Trail Linkage, Access, and Interpretation	Consideration to expand or enhance wildlife observation, trailhead access, hiking trails and fishing facilities could be considered. Installation of trail-specific signage could be considered if any improvements are proposed; consideration to expand signage to tell the story of Zekiah Fort.
Potomac Heritage Trail		Linking Route	Trail Linkage and Signage	Consideration to consolidate and unify the variety of different trails in this river section - specifically the signage along the roadways and sites along the highways - to offer a clear message to visitors could be explored. Civil War stories and historic slavery stories could be considered for incorporation into POHE interpretation in this section of the river.
Religious Freedom Byway		Linking Route	Trail Linkage and Signage	Consideration to consolidate and unify the variety of different trails in this river section - specifically the signage along the roadways and sites along the highways - to offer a clear message to visitors could be explored. Incorporation of action items highlighted in the Common Interpretive Strategy document published in October 2014 will be applied as appropriate.
Three Notch Trail		Linking Route	Develop New Trail Linkage and Access	Efforts to expand Three Notch Trail are currently on-going; there is a long term goal to connect to the Indian Head Rail Trail. Work to support these efforts and include Trail-specific themes where applicable could be considered.
Maryland Indian Heritage Trail		Linking Route	Develop New Trail Linkage and Access	Planning efforts to connect CAJO trail resources, specifically American Indian historic resources and present-day sites of cultural significance, to the Maryland Indian Heritage Trail should be coordinated. Inclusion of pre-Colonial or pre-history American Indian stories before John Smith's era could be interpreted through this connection.
Private Bus tours		Linking Route	Create Shuttle Service to Connect Sites	Consideration to develop a shuttle service in Southern Maryland and have local B&Bs and/or wineries - as well as significant sites in the area - serve as stops along the shuttle route could be explored.
			Water Craft and Bike Rentals	Consideration of seasonal bike and boat rental options could be explored, as staffing and funding permit.
Private Marinas		Support Services	Provide Interpretive Panels	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as referring visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
			Increase Trail Visibility	Consideration to provide waterfront restaurants with trail-specific information, such as menu placemats, rack cards, or permanent signage that showcase trail-specific themes, identify the site location within the great context of the trail route and highlight significant trail sites in the area could be explored.
			Expand Outfitters	Opportunities to offer or expand boat, canoe and kayak rentals could be considered.
Private Campgrounds		Support Services	Develop Camping	Consideration to incorporate or expand water-to-land primitive, group permit-only and overnight car and RV campsites and related visitor facilities could be explored at private marinas such as Dennis Point Marina and Campground, Camp Merrylande, Camp Riverview -(Scotland, MD), Seaside View Recreation Park, Cedar Point (Morgantown, MD), Swan Point (near Swan Point Golf Course), Camp St. Charles and St. Catherine's Island.

River Section 7 – Northern Neck



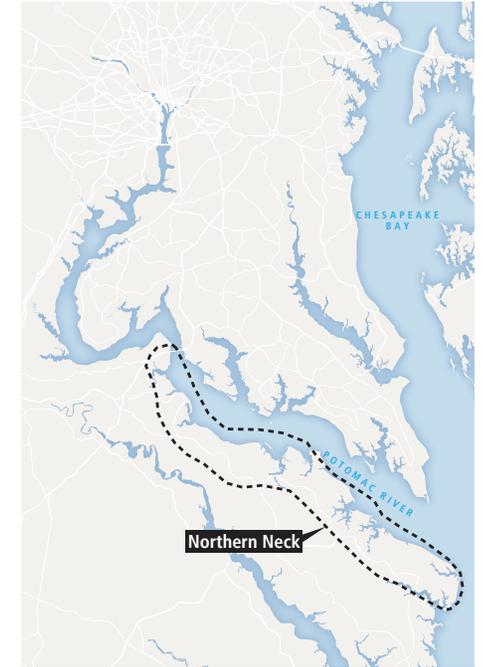
Overview

This river section includes sites and resources along the Virginia side of the tidal Potomac from approximately the Governor Harry W. Nice (Route 301) Bridge (King George County) east to the mouth of the Little Wicomico River at Smith Point (Northumberland County). All three national trails intersect with this section of the river, with CAJO reflecting Captain John Smith's landfalls at the mouths of the Coan River and Nomini Creek. The area provides opportunities to learn about American Indian cultures, the explorations of John Smith, George Washington's legacies, the War of 1812, the Civil War, Robert E. Lee and the Lee family, river-based transportation, and the rise and decline of a major seafood industry.

The Potomac is wide in this area, approaching seven miles in some places. Numerous smaller rivers and bays feed into it including Machodoc Creek, Monroe Bay, Popes Creek, Nomini Bay, Yeocomico River, Coan River and Little Wicomico River. These places offer serene settings and some contain landscapes evocative of the 17th century. The main river corridor is well-suited for larger power or sail craft along with sea and touring kayaks, while the creeks, bays and smaller rivers depending on depth can accommodate a range of power craft and accommodate nearly any type of paddle craft.

This area is predominantly rural with agriculture as the primary industry. While commercial seafood harvesting has declined, some commercial fishing exists and the area boasts significant blue crab harvests. Recreational fishing is extremely popular and notable for the variety of fish that “run” the river during different seasons. Key features include the Horsehead, Stratford Hall and Nomini Cliffs (situated between Westmoreland State Park and Haulover Point) and the sharks' teeth and other marine fossils found within the cliffs or on the adjoining beaches.

While the Northern Neck consists primarily of large holdings of agriculture/forested lands, many of the waterfront areas have been developed into summer communities. According to 2010 Census figures, 24.3 % of homes in Colonial Beach are for seasonal, recreational and/or occasional use. (Such use in Westmoreland County is 20.2 %, far exceeding the state average of 2.4 %.) There are few parks and recreation departments or facilities in this region. Communities depend primarily on the Northern Neck Tourism Commission and local chambers of commerce to promote the area, organize and advertise community events, and support local businesses. (Note: There are efforts underway to seek National Heritage Area designation for the Northern Neck.)



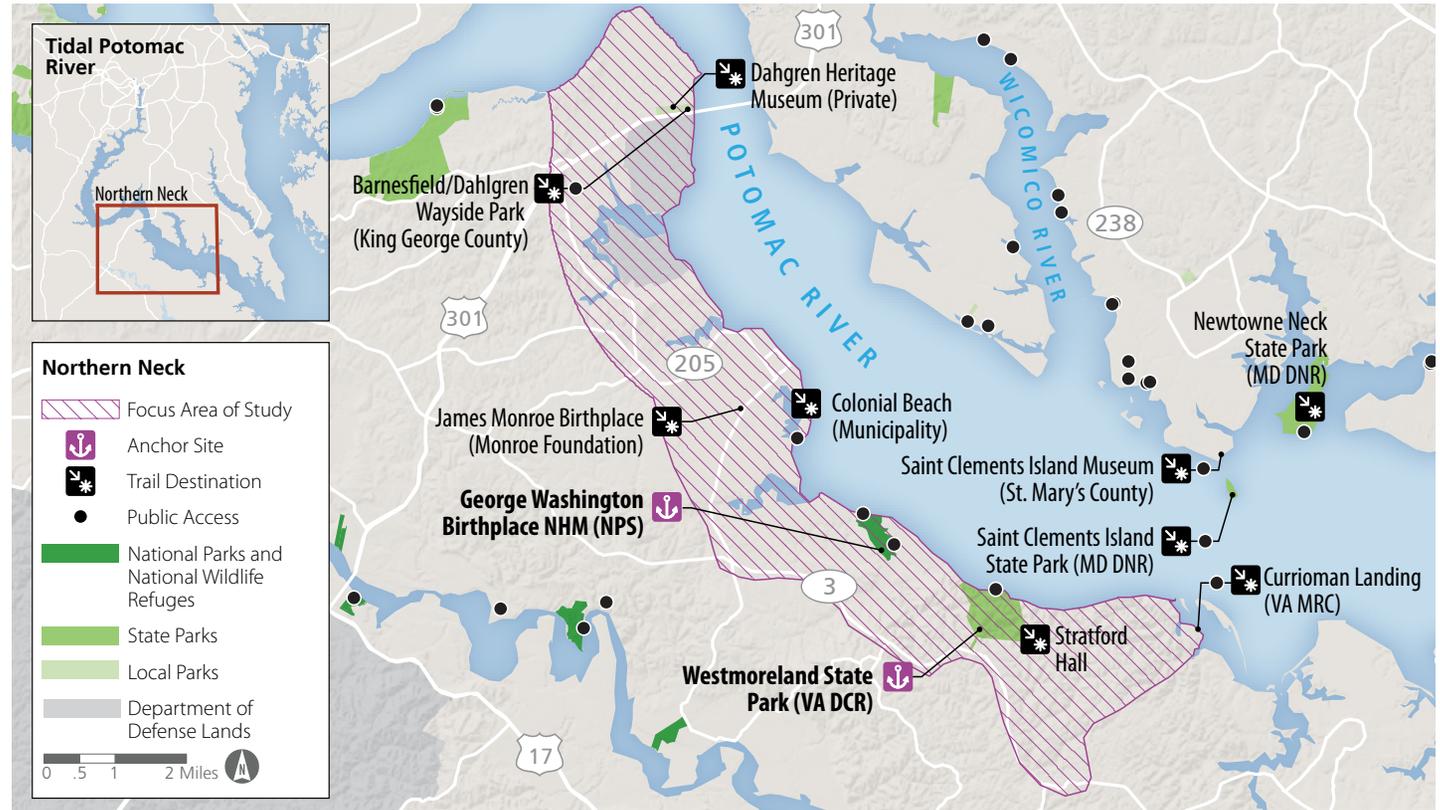
Bottom: George Washington Birthplace National Historic Monument (photo credit: NPS Chesapeake Bay Office)

Facilities within this river section include:

- Barnesfield/Wayside Park (King George County)
- George Washington's Birthplace National Monument (NPS)
- Westmoreland State Park (VA DCR)
- Stratford Hall (privately funded birthplace of Robert E. Lee)
- Rice's Hotel/Hughlett's Tavern (private)
- Hull Springs Farm (Longwood University)
- Westmoreland Co. Museum (Westmoreland Co.)
- James Monroe Birthplace (James Monroe Memorial Foundation)
- Kinsale Museum (Kinsale Foundation)
- Public beaches in the Town of Colonial Beach
- Vir-Mar Beach



Bottom: Kayak along beach near Westmoreland State Park (photo credit: NPS archive)



Trail Components

The following trail components have been identified to support strategic planning within this river section. The focus area described below contains two anchor sites, which are viewed as first tier locations for trail development efforts as they already contain significant visitor support facilities. The next level of development would include additional trail components such as destinations and linking routes; enhancements would occur as resources and opportunities become available.

Focus Area

The Focus Area for the Northern Neck extends from Barnesfield/Wayside Park to Nomini Creek. While there are many trail resources and partner sites southeast of this boundary, they are relatively small, isolated from each other and are identified as Trail Destinations. As enhancements occur in this area and as the Trails evolve, new anchor sites and focus areas could be identified and developed.

Anchor Sites

Proposed anchor sites for the Focus Area include George Washington Birthplace National Monument and Westmoreland State Park. Both facilities are staffed year round, operate visitor centers and feature stories related to the three national trails. The sites receive heavy use and the combination of partners offer an array of amenities and support facilities.

- **George Washington Birthplace National Monument (NPS)** was home to generations of the Washington family from 1658 to 1815. George Washington was born at the site in 1732. The 550-acre facility includes archeological resources, a replicated 17th-century homestead, the family burial ground, a visitor center, a picnic pavilion/area, a beach with hand carry launch for paddle craft, and an interpretive trail system.

Anchor Sites (continued)

- **Westmoreland State Park** (VA DCR) offers 1,300 acres of parkland, access to Horsehead Cliffs, opportunities for hiking (six miles of trails), fishing, boating and swimming, and year round overnight accommodations via campgrounds and cabins.

Trail Destinations

- Barnesfield/Wayside Park, James Monroe Birthplace, Stratford Hall, Currioman Landing, Nomini Creek, Hull Springs Farm, Coles Point Marina, Bonum Creek Landing, Kinsale Museum, Lodge Landing, Lewisetta Marina, Coan Wharf Landing, Rowes Landing; Forrest Landing, Rice’s Hotel/Hughlett’s Tavern (Heathsville), Northern Neck Farm Museum, Vir-Mar Beach, Sunnybank Ferry, Smith Point Marina, Fisherman’s Museum (Reedville)

Linking Routes

- State Routes 3 and 360 serve as the primary connector roadways. Many segments of the Potomac Heritage Scenic Trail are located on various road networks in the region. Additional biking “local loops and spurs” are identified on the Northern Neck Heritage Trail Bicycling Route Network and some provide water views. Route 202 is a key bicycling part of the POHE trail in this region
- Existing paddling trails (including the Potomac Water Trail) provide dozens of routes for canoes and kayaks. A paddling guide for Northumberland County was created by the Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship and is available online (http://napsva.org/paddlers_guide.html). Several new water trail routes for Westmoreland County have been created by the Northern Neck Planning District Commission (see the Northern Neck Tourism Commission’s website <http://www.northernneck.org/NNTC-PAGES/recreation.htm#watertrails>).

Support Services

- The Town of Colonial Beach, which includes a variety of visitor amenities and services, is located approximately 10 miles from the George Washington/Westmoreland/Stratford complex. Lewisetta, Coles Point, Kinsale and Reedville offer support services (Reedville features an historic district and services including restaurants, lodging, retail shops and gas stations. In addition a seasonal passenger ferry offers connections to Tangier Island and Smith Point.)

Key Trail Stories and Associated Resources

The following key stories associated with CAJO, STSP and POHE themes are relevant to the various trail components in this river section:



Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT

(Smith’s explorations, American Indian cultures, natural history of Bay)

- During his explorations, Smith interacted with American Indians in this area. He visited the Onawmanient on what is now called Nomini Bay and the Cekakawon on what is now called the Coan River. He described being initially repulsed by both tribes in response to his intrusion (his detailed accounts of these interactions have subsequently been discounted by many scholars). Neither of these independent nations has an identified descendant community, although the Rappahannock tribe’s aboriginal territory included some of the southern portion of the Northern Neck.
- The Indians here would have followed a typical Chesapeake Bay indigenous lifestyle based on agriculture, fishing and shell fishing, and hunting. Oyster shell middens dating back for centuries before Smith’s explorations demonstrate evidence of the ancient habitation along this shore. Archaeologists have excavated several of these shell midden sites on Machodoc Creek, Currioman Bay, Nomini Creek and Donum Creek. The Indians traded with other groups located along the river and likely across the Bay as well. They existed well beyond the influence of Indian leader Powhatan (based to the south).

Features that support these stories include: cliffs along the shores of Stratford Hall and the shell middens located near Nomini Creek.



Top: Stratford Hall
(photo credit: NPS archive)

Bottom: Sunnybank Ferry near Smith Point, and Ophelia, VA (photo credit: Donald E Briggs)



Star-Spangled Banner NHT

(military events, individual contributors, Bay region as hub, icons of war)

- The British were active along this stretch of the Potomac in 1813 and 1814. Enemy troops raided Lower Machodoc Creek (burning six schooners) and were engaged in skirmishes with American defenders near the Coan and Yeocomico Rivers, and Rosier, Mattox and Nomini Creeks. One of the fiercest engagements occurred on the Yeocomico River on July 14, 1813, involving the American schooner Asp and resulting in numerous casualties on both sides.
- There is a War of 1812 historical marker about the impressment of Americans into British service at the intersection of Hampton Hall Road (Route 202) and Munday Point Road (Route 621).
- The burning of Kinsale in Westmoreland County is one of the more well-known attacks that occurred in the Northern Neck during the War of 1812. Captain Henderson of the Northumberland militia was forced to retreat in early August 1814, when the British landed, and the enemy “pursued and burned every house in route along the way until finally reaching Henderson’s own home.” (<http://www.stratfordhall.org/educational-resources/war-of-1812-exhibit-introduction/war-of-1812-stratford-and-westmoreland-county/>)

Features that support these stories include: Yeocomico Church; Kinsale Museum; Stratford Hall; Nomini Church; Bushfield Manor; Nomini Hall Plantation; ferry terminal at Nomini Creek.



Potomac Heritage NST

(meeting ground of conservation ideas and practices, five physiographic regions, crossroads of opportunity, development of U.S. Republic)

- This river section includes superb examples of tidal Potomac ecology and ecosystem conservation and restoration activities. From the marine fossils found in the shores of Stratford Hall and Westmoreland State Park to the migratory bird population at Vir-Mar Beach, the relatively undeveloped landscape within the Northern Neck generally surrounds the public access sites. Hull Springs Farm, owned by the Longwood University Foundation on Aimes Creek off the Lower Machodoc, is involved in ecosystem restoration and education from living shorelines to restoring wetlands. See <http://longwood.edu/hullspringsfarm/>
- Steamboats played an important role in the development of the Northern Neck and were the means of transportation before the 1930s. In that era, the Northern Neck was more connected to Baltimore and Norfolk (via steamboat routes) than it is to Fredericksburg or Richmond today via land-based highways. The sinking of the Wawaset just upriver from Colonial Beach on August 8, 1873 was one of the worst maritime disasters on the Chesapeake Bay during the steamboat era. Many previous steamboat landing sites remain at ports that continue to be used today in towns like Kinsale and Lewisetta.
- The region geographically and politically represents the evolution of the United States; stories here are associated with the Colonial period, George Washington’s early years and his family.
- Livelihoods here have been/are dependent on the lands and waters—tobacco farming, historically; contemporary farming and viticulture practices; forestry; along with commercial sport fishing and seafood industries related to crabs, oysters and menhaden. (Many small towns provide the backdrop for local stories related to the evolution of the seafood industry.)

Features that support these stories include: George Washington’s Birthplace National Monument; Westmoreland State Park, Nomini Cliffs, Stratford Cliffs, Horsehead Cliffs, Northern Neck Farm Museum; Colonial Beach; James Monroe Birthplace; Hull Springs Farm, Reedville Fishermen’s Museum; Rice’s Hotel/Hughlett’s Tavern

Top: Northern Neck beach (photo credit: NPS archive)

Bottom: Tangier Island Ferry (photo credit: NPS archive)

Proposed Trail Enhancements and Implementation Strategies

In addition to the cross cutting strategies which apply to all river sections, this river section provides or has near-term potential to provide a wide variety of desired visitor experiences for different types of trail users. Providing optimal trail-related visitor experiences in a way that highlights this area’s resources, primary features and key stories could best be achieved as follows:

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Colonial Beach/Monroe Bay to Nomini Creek			
George Washington Birthplace National Monument (GEWA)	 Anchor Site	Install interpretive Kiosk	Effective visitor orientation here might include a three-panel kiosk installed at an area of congregation with CAJO, STSP and POHE panels to orient users to the Trails in a larger context and identify key trail spots along the Potomac River. CAJO and STSP panels could relate site-specific information and also identify Trail sites to be seen further along the river to encourage visitors to explore beyond their immediate area and to understand where they are located in context to the entire Trail routes.
		Visitor Center Exhibit	Potential exists to develop an updated exhibit at the existing visitor center related to or interpreting resources of the three national trails. The Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon could be useful to provide images and other resources for use.
		Develop Guided Paddle Tours and itineraries	The site offers the opportunity for guided paddle trips in both Popes Creek and the Potomac River. Itineraries could also be developed connecting the park to Westmoreland State Park and the Town of Colonial Beach. Tours could potentially be conducted by seasonal park staff from either NPS or Westmoreland State Park.
		New Access	A new foot trail could be developed to connect the picnic grounds with the beach on the Potomac River. This could be a potential multi-year project using labor through the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) program.
		Establish Connection with Related Sites on the River	Presently there is no formal connection between George Washington Birthplace NM and George Washington’s Mount Vernon. Communication between both organizational management staff has indicated an interest to discuss possibilities that could best interpret the connection while maintaining each site’s individual mission. National trails along the Potomac could potentially support this connection through historic/cultural interpretation and recreational opportunities.
		Bike, Canoe and/or Kayak Rentals	Consideration could be given to the provision of paddle craft or bike rentals from GEWA. This could possibly be either a park handled operation or through a concession, permit or cooperative program as appropriate. Trip itineraries for both paddle craft and bikes featuring the trails could be developed.
		Feature Trails Related Material at Park Events	The NPS recently hosted a Native American Indian heritage event at George Washington Birthplace National Monument that set an attendance record. Trail-related promotional materials and/or activities could augment these types of venues at the park.
Westmoreland State Park	 Anchor Site	Develop Itineraries, Update Kiosks and Add Exhibits to Visitor Center	In the recent past, two three-sided kiosks have been installed at the park highlighting CAJO and STSP trails. These panels include orientation, trail overview and site specific stories. Inclusion of POHE information on an updated orientation panel could be considered. Additionally, the existing visitor center could consider an exhibit featuring all three Trails. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Enhance Paddling Tours	Outfitters, summer camps and paddling club members could provide paddling tours utilizing the launch sites at Westmoreland and could incorporate CAJO, STSP and POHE stories into their trip itineraries. NPS staff could assist tour leader staff in becoming “Certified Trail Ambassadors” to ensure the trail-related information being shared is accurate and of high quality.
		New Itineraries for Stand Up Paddle Board Users	Stand-up paddle-boarding (SUP) activity has increased greatly in this region of the river. SUP-related paddling itineraries could be developed or current kayak/canoe itineraries could be modified to capitalize on the increasing number of SUP enthusiasts.
		Add Paddle-in Campsites	Consideration is being given to the development of water-to-land boat-in campsites in the park. These would likely be handled under a permit/reservation system.
		Power Boaters Map and Guide	A users’ map and guide could be developed to assist motor boating enthusiasts in exploring specific river stretches and destinations further up and downstream.
		Enhance Guided Walking Tours with Trail Themes	Guided walking tours could be expanded or developed to include CAJO, STSP and POHE trail themes.
		Develop Watermen Tours from the Park	Explore working with watermen who have participated in the Watermen Heritage Tourism Training Program and share NPS/approved written scripts to develop custom Watermen Heritage Tours.
		Link Park via Trail with Other Key Areas	There is less than a half mile of improvements needed to connect the park to bicycle friendly roads adjacent to park land. Long term plans call for connecting the park to GEWA and other areas via a dedicated non-motorized trail, another good opportunity for interpretation once developed.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Colonial Beach/Monroe Bay to Nomini Creek			
Stratford Hall	 Trail Destination	Guided Trails Tour	Guided walking tours could be expanded or developed to include CAJO, STSP and POHE trail themes.
		Feature Trails-related Material at Events	Stratford Hall hosts an annual Wine and Oyster Festival, typically in mid- to late September. Trail-related promotional materials and/or activities could augment these existing events.
		Participate in the Itinerary for "Inn to Inn" Tour	Drafting an itinerary for an "inn-to-inn" tour along the Tidewater Potomac Heritage Bicycling Route with associated paddling excursions could support guided and self-guided tours by bicycle. Activities, including kayaking and wine tasting, could provide an intimate and exceptional experience of the resources associated with the significance of the corridor. Stratford could be an important stop along this trail.
James Monroe Birthplace	 Trail Destination	Development of New Kayak Launch, Parking and New Trails	Plans call for the development of a new canoe/kayak launch with parking at the site on Monroe Bay. The potential exists for trails to be added to connect this site to Colonial Beach in the future. Interpretive/orientation signage on the trails could be added to this site. Touring itineraries could be developed which feature the trails and guide visitors to other points of interest.
Village of Kinsale	 Trail Destination	Add Interpretive Signage and Develop Itineraries	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Develop Guided Walking Tours	Guided walking tours could be expanded or developed to include CAJO, STSP and POHE trail themes. It may be possible to tie them in with the existing tours of Historic Kinsale.
		Expand Boat Rentals	Opportunities to offer or expand boat, canoe and kayak rentals could be considered.
		Develop Working Waterfront Interpretation	Work with VA Coastal Zone Management Program to develop historical narratives emphasizing the value of working waterfronts on the Potomac and describe the era when fishing and shellfishing were major industries in the Northern Neck and what is being done to restore that industry.
Town of Colonial Beach	 Trail Destination	Expand Trails-related Information on Charter Boat Tours	Work with those providing charter boat tours from the town to incorporate trails-related information. Could include such things as the "oyster wars", Smith's voyages, use of resources by American Indians, river commerce, fishing, watermen's heritage, and wildlife. On-water watermen's heritage tours could be associated with the Colonial Beach Museum.
		Interpretive Signage/ Kiosks	There are excellent locations along the Town's waterfront for the installation of interpretive signage to orient people to the trails and trail opportunities. Good locations to consider include the Town Pier and areas along the public beach.
		Interpretive Opportunity	The visitor center, museum and town pier complex offer an excellent opportunity for trail-related information, exhibits, and interpretation.
		Paddle Craft Rentals	The Colonial Beach Yacht Center currently offers paddle craft rentals and tours. Rentals could be packaged with guided tours or printed itineraries with information related to the trails. There may be additional opportunities for other rental locations within the Town.
		Interpretive Information	Work with Northern Neck Planning District Commission, the VA Coastal Zone Management Program and the Town of Colonial Beach to develop historical narratives emphasizing the value of working waterfronts on the Potomac and describe the era when steamboats were the main transportation link to the outside world from the Northern Neck.
		Feature Trails-related Material at Town Events	The Town of Colonial Beach holds a major Potomac River Festival each June and other events during the course of each summer. Trail-related promotional materials and/or activities could augment these existing events.
		Provide Information on Trails at Restaurants.	Explore providing waterfront restaurants with trail-specific information such as menu placemats or rack cards that showcase trail-specific themes, identify the site location within the great context of the trail route and highlight significant trail sites in the area.
Barnesfield/Wayside Park	 Trail Destination	Park Enhancements	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest. The informal hand carry site at Wayside Park could be converted to a formal paddle craft access.

Site	Trail Component	Action	Description
Focus Area - Colonial Beach/Monroe Bay to Nomini Creek			
Village of Reedville	 Trail Destination	Walking and Paddle Tours	Opportunities exist to provide walking tours with trails-related information in the Town as well as develop paddling tours and itineraries.
		Enhance Interpretive Information for Charter Boat Tours	Charter boat tours that currently operate from Reedville could offer new and expanded narratives related to American Indian uses of resources, Captain John Smith's explorations, the War of 1812, river commerce and fishing, watermen's heritage, the "oyster wars," and the river's natural features and wildlife.
Bonum Creek Landing	 Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Information	This landing near the Oyster Company could be interpreted as part of the POHE trail and feature information on watermen's heritage.
Sunnybank Ferry	 Trail Destination	Provide Interpretive Information	The existing Sunnybank ferry service could be interpreted as part of POHE trail. Trailblazer signage could be located at the ferry route to convey the history of the ferry and to provide information regarding other nearby trail sites. Could co-locate a CAJO trail blazer sign with POHE sign.
Hull Spring Farm	 Trail Destination	Develop Paddle Craft Access and Signage	Hull Springs Farm owned by Longwood University is considering providing an accessible paddle craft access. This would make an excellent access site for paddle craft to the Trails on the Potomac River from lower Machodoc Creek. Would also be a good site for an orientation panel to the Trails.
		Provide Primitive Paddle-in Campsites	Consideration is being given to the development of paddle in primitive campsites off Glebe Creek on Southern side of property. These could potentially be developed by Longwood University's Outing Club, offering an excellent opportunity for a paddle itinerary featuring the trails.
Private Bus tours	 Linking Route	Offer Shuttle Service	Consideration to develop a shuttle service in Northern Neck and have local B&Bs and/or wineries - as well as significant sites in the area - serve as stops along the shuttle route could be explored. The Town of Colonial Beach currently offers a seasonal bus service.
Water Trails	 Linking Route	Develop Trails-related Tours/Itineraries for Existing Water Trails	Work with the Northern Neck PDC and VA Coastal Zone Management Program to incorporate trail-related tour itineraries on existing designated water trails and on those under development in Westmoreland County. This could include the Monroe Bay Water Trail, Currioman Bay Water Trail, Lower Machodoc Creek Water Trail and the Bonum Creek Water Trail.
Potomac Heritage Trail	 Linking Route	Improve Wayfinding Signage	Work with Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) to improve wayfinding signage to existing boat ramps and cartop launch sites.
		Develop Additional Water Access Opportunities	Work with VDOT to evaluate potential water access sites at bridges. The potential exists to provide a soft landing site at the Route 205 crossing of Maddox Creek now under construction.
		Develop "Inn-to-Inn" Touring Itineraries	Drafting an itinerary for an "Inn-to-Inn" tour along the Tidewater Potomac Heritage Bicycling Route, with associated paddling excursions, could support guided and self-guided tours by bicycle. Activities including kayaking and wine tasting could provide an intimate and exceptional experience of the resources associated with the significance of the corridor.
Private Marinas	 Support Services	Provide Interpretive Panels at Marina Locations	Interpretive panels highlighting each of the parks in this river section could give context to how the individual sites fit into the larger stories of CAJO, STSP and POHE, as well as refer visitors to additional significant sites in the area. Touring itineraries could be developed or expanded to help visitors reach key park sites, river access points, and other trail-related points of interest.
		Develop Stories Related to the Trails	Explore providing waterfront restaurants with trail-specific information such as menu placemats or rack cards that showcase trail-specific themes, identify the site location within the great context of the trail route and highlight significant trail sites in the area.
		Consider Boat-in Primitive Camping	Consider incorporating or expanding water-to-land primitive campsites where feasible. Marinas which may be willing to consider such use would be Coles Point Marina, Coan River Marina and Smith Point Marina.
Private Campgrounds	 Support Services	Provide Paddle-in Campsites	Monroe Bay campground near Colonial Beach could consider expanding paddle-in campsites.



Top: Boat docks at Point Lookout State Park (photo credit: Sarah Rogers)

Chapter 4

Coordination and Implementation Strategies

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Coordination and Implementation Strategies

"The most exciting, powerful and enduring way to engage people in stewardship of precious landscapes such as Piscataway Park is to share its stories, old and new, and nurture personal connections to this land."

-Lisa Hayes, Accokeek Foundation
(from Accokeek Foundation FY13 Annual Report)



Coordination Strategy

The National Park Service is responsible for administration of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the Star-Spangled National Historic Trail and the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. In this role, the Park Service collaborates with a wide range of partners at site-specific, local, state, regional and federal levels.

Federal partners include the Department of Defense, USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and the US Fish & Wildlife Service. At the state level, agencies associated with parks, wildlife management, historic resources, tourism and transportation are typically the managing authorities. Regional, county, district and city parks also play active roles in managing public lands identified in the plan.

Non-government partners or supporting parties that do not manage lands include non-profits, park "friends-of" groups, community advocates, privately owned companies, conservation organizations, local community boards and many others.

It is this group of partners that will ultimately be responsible for bringing to fruition any of the hundreds of opportunities articulated within the segment plan.

Building Partnerships

The collaborating partners for this segment plan will serve as a steering group for the implementation of the action items identified in the plan. The core planning team includes representatives from: the National Park Service (both the Chesapeake Bay office, Fort McHenry and POHE office), the Potomac Conservancy, the Chesapeake Conservancy, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the State of Maryland.

The steering group will focus on the following set of functions:

- Support and coordinate implementation of commitments made by specific partners and the actions identified for key locations;
- Help advance a list of top priorities that can be completed in the near term;
- Detail how additional actions outlined in the plan will be implemented; and
- Determine a strategy for long-term segment coordination and management.



The steering group will focus on the following top priorities over the coming year. Each is critical to raising awareness of the national trails and making the trails more “real” to visitors.

- Provide clear, consistent trail orientation signage at key locations.
- Assist in and promote development of guided tours and prescribed itineraries to help visitors use the trails and engage in trail-related stories.
- Promote and assist in development of interpretive programs that explicitly convey trail themes and highlight trail-related resources at key locations.
- Work towards an effective, collaborative marketing campaign for the trails that dovetails with other marketing efforts; emphasis in initial stages will be placed on linking with and expanding electronic media opportunities.
- Help create additional physical linkages between trail segments and sites to establish connectivity within trail corridors.
- Work to enhance public access opportunities/facilities at feasible sites, with an emphasis on water access and paddle-in camping accommodations.

While the steering group has key roles, trail implementation is even more dependent on leadership from the many organizations managing sites and resources along Potomac River that can contribute to visitor's experience of the three national trails. The real action takes place on the ground at these locales and will compliment individual site management goals. The role of NPS will be to encourage river-wide continuity of site-specific land protection goals and visitor experience enhancements beyond jurisdictional boundaries to reveal Trail experiences at partner sites and along the national trail routes that follow the Tidal Potomac River.

"The Potomac runs deep through the nation's history and the hearts of all Americans. As a nation, and a region, we can look to the beauty of the Potomac and declare that we are unwilling to deprive future generations of clean air, clean water, wild places; all vital for health, happiness and fuel for the soul."

-Joel Dunn, President and CEO,
Chesapeake Conservancy

Bottom: Accessible
kayak launch (photo
credit: NPS archive)



Management and Implementation

Chapter 3 highlighted potential enhancement actions within each of the seven river sections. (These actions were presented in grids based on geographic areas.)

Many of these actions are relatively low in cost and have the potential to be implemented quickly if funds are available. These are the actions trail partners and the steering group will seek to advance as quickly as is feasible. Other actions – such as development of new access sites – will require more site-specific assessment and additional resources to implement.

Potential Trail Development Funding Sources

NPS Chesapeake Financial Assistance Program

- The NPS Chesapeake Bay Financial Assistance Program is an annual program dedicated to providing technical assistance and financial support to promote public access projects along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. The program offers award amounts for public access projects that range from \$10,000 to \$125,000 but must be matched by an equal (1:1) or greater amount of non-Federal support. <http://www.nps.gov/chba/learn/management/financial-assistance-for-partners.htm>

NPS Project Management Information Systems (PMIS)

- Individual NPS parks and units can submit program funding requests to the Project Management Information Systems. PMIS is a National Park Service-wide application within the NPS to manage information about requests for project funding. It enables parks and NPS offices to submit project proposals to be reviewed, approved and prioritized at park units, regional directorates and the Washington Office (WASO). In response to a budget call for a particular NPS program for a specific fiscal year (FY), project proposals are submitted, reviewed, approved, prioritized and then formulated under an available funding source by utilizing PMIS. During formulation process for a budget call, a program manager at WASO or a budget officer at a regional directorate determines which project funding requests meet the eligibility criteria for the call to be considered as part of the NPS Budget for a specific FY.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

- This 1965 act established a federal reimbursement program for the acquisition and/or development of public outdoor recreation areas. The LWCF is a 50/50 matching reimbursement program that provides funding nationwide for federal and state land acquisition
- <http://www.lwcfcoalition.org/>

Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)

- FLAP, funded by contract authority from the Highway Trust Fund, was established to improve transportation facilities that provide access to, or are located within Federal lands. The Access Program supplements State and local resources for public roads, transit systems, and other transportation facilities, with an emphasis on high-use recreation sites and economic generators. <http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/>

Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI)

- Through the REPI program, the Department of Defense (DOD) funds cost-sharing partnerships among the Military Departments, private conservation groups, and state and local governments. These partnerships support military readiness by protecting compatible land uses and preserving natural habitat on non-DOD lands. The partnerships help avoid or reduce restrictions that may inhibit the use of existing DOD facilities for training, testing, and operating by preventing these lands from being developed or converted to other incompatible uses. http://www.repi.mil/Portals/44/Documents/Primers/Primer_REPIBufferPartnerships.pdf

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

- The RTP provides funds to States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The RTP is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/
- RTP contacts by state: <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/fedfund/RTPcontacts.html>

Top: Youth engaged in fishing (photo credit: Sultana Education Instagram feed)

National Park Foundation (NPF)

- NPF provides stewardship grants and conservation funding. The approaching 2016 NPS Centennial has provided a catalyst for NPS leadership, NPF and Friends Groups to assess what the highest priority needs are for the coming years and to determine where philanthropic support can best assist. Centennial priority projects have been identified, and these will be the focus of all NPF fundraising efforts moving forward. As a result of this transition to a new method of delivering impact, NPF will be moving away from the traditional "RFP" model for funding projects and programs. The conduits for the Centennial projects are the regional offices, Centennial coordinators and WASO Centennial and Partnership offices. You can find the list of those contacts here:
- <http://www.nationalparks.org/our-work/grant-applications>

Maryland State Highway Administration Recreational Trails Program

- This program funds the development of community-based, motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects. Administered by the State Highway Administration (SHA), this program matches federal funds with local funds or in-kind contributions to implement trail projects. Projects can be sponsored by a county or municipal government, a private non-profit agency, a community group or an individual (non-governmental agencies must secure an appropriate government agency as a cosponsor).
- <http://sha.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?PageId=98>

Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Grants and Loans Center

- DNR provides a number of direct grant, project grant programs as well as reimbursement programs and low interest and no interest loans. Some are federal funds matched by state dollars and some are state funds often matched by local dollars. This section will review DNR Grants and Loans programs.
- <http://dnr.maryland.gov/land/grantsandloans/grants.asp>

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF)

- The Virginia DGIF provides grants to Virginia counties, cities and towns for public boating access facilities for new development or the renovation or improvements to existing public boating access facilities.
- <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/boating/access/grants/>

Virginia Land Conservation Fund (VLCF)

- The VLCF provides state funding to conserve four categories of special land. Those categories are open spaces and parks, natural areas, historic areas, and farmland and forest preservation. A portion of the fund may be used for matching grants to localities, other public bodies and nonprofit organizations, and for grants to state agencies to purchase land or conservation easements.
- http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/virginia_land_conservation_foundation/

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

- Virginia offers a variety of state and federal grant opportunities http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/land_conservation_tools02g.shtml

American Trails – Supporting Trails Advocacy

- General information on trail advocacy including news, funding opportunities and shared resources.
- <http://www.americantrails.org/support.html>

Additional potential sources of funding:

- Local/state conservation agencies
- State outdoors plans
- Heritage tourism grants



Top: Capital Bikeshare rental bicycle along the Potomac River (photo credit: Overthebarsinmilwaukee wordpress blog)

Legacy of the Segment Plan

The Potomac Segment Plan is intended to be a living document, dynamic in adding new content and updating progress over the next two to five years. It is the goal of the steering group that the implementation of the action items identified in the plan will create momentum along the Trails and spur additional conservation, interpretation and public access development at partner sites along the river.

Updates to Focus Area boundaries, newly identified Anchor Sites and additional trail destinations are anticipated to be released in future years as the plan is continuously evaluated for opportunities to better engage, protect and honor the trail resources located along the tidal Potomac River.

Outreach to new stakeholders will be ongoing. Publications regarding the progress of implementing Action Items from the plan will be extended by the steering group to stakeholders and trail partners. Regular communication and tracking the overall success of the plan's efforts are crucial to strengthening the network between the National Park Service and the trail partners that support the three national trails along the Tidal Potomac River.

"We need to work together in creative new ways to make sure we protect what we have against weather emergencies, climate effects or over-development, we have a lot of work to do."

-Senator Tim Kaine (D), Virginia
(from Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve competitive grant award announcement, November 1, 2013)

Bottom: Recreational enthusiast (photo credit: Sylvan Sport)



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2015