

Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Advisory Council

Summary of October 24, 2012 Meeting

The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail ("The Trail") Advisory Council convened a meeting at 10:00 A.M. on October 24, 2012 at Murphy Hall in Westmoreland State Park, Montross, VA.

In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public.

Council members present:

- Virginia Busby
- Wilton Corkern
- Elizabeth Hughes
- Mary Ann Lisanti
- John Maounis
- Richard Pearsall
- John Reynolds, Chair
- Charlie Stek
- Bill Street
- Ann Swanson

Others present representing absent Advisory Council members:

- Kristin Saunders, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Others present for all, or portions of the meeting were:

- Mary Bruce Batte
- Deanna Beacham, National Park Service
- John Davy, National Park Service
- Jonathan Doherty, National Park Service
- Christine Lucero, National Park Service
- Joanna Ogburn, Chesapeake Conservancy

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

John Reynolds welcomed the Advisory Council members to the meeting. John Reynolds and Superintendent John Maounis, reviewed the agenda and objectives for the meeting.

PROGRESS ON THE TRAIL

Jonathan Doherty gave an update on the trail, segment by segment, using large maps. All in attendance have smaller version copies. The maps show protected lands, existing signs,

locations for new trail kiosks (3 sided), and both existing and potential public access. Jonathan asked the group to look at each map and identify places that were not on the maps; where progress is occurring, whether it be land conservation progress, programming, public access, etc.

The members identified the following:

- Lawrence Lewis, Jr. Park new boat launch development (James)
- Existing signage at Chickahominy Riverfront Park, River's Rest Marina and Rockahock (Chickahominy)
- New soft launch at Old Mill Park in Fredericksburg (Rappahannock)
- New soft launch in Port Royal at the 301 bridge (Rappahannock)
- Nansemond River Preservation Alliance would like to enhance their access and be included in a future connecting trail designation (Elizabeth River.)

Other discussion topics included:

- The USFWS is exploring camping options.
- NPS is planning to initiate the Potomac segment plan, with the extent of the area to be defined. There is already planning underway along the Anacostia.
- Maryland DNR is looking at all public land holdings along the Potomac looking at locations for primitive camping sites, looking for large gaps in access and looking for land acquisition opportunities targeting on the Potomac and the Nanticoke.
- There has been a major upgrade to boat launch in Piscataway Park.
- Along the Patuxent, Sandy Point Park committed significant money to green initiatives and a nature center dedicated to telling the John Smith story.
- Jefferson Patterson Park is exploring the option of rehabilitating the beach house for overnight camping.
- Improvements in Delaware to MD line will become a significant point on the trail. Please report for me that DNREC has acquired a site directly on the Nanticoke approx 6 miles from DE/MD line in the village of Woodland. With future improvements, it will become a vital paddle craft access site & landing stop on the river.
- The Upper Bay-Chester and Sassafras rivers access is well marked with Sultana Projects work along those rivers.
- The Chesapeake Conservancy is partnering with Outward Bound out of Baltimore to take youth to the Sassafras River.
- The Lower Susquehanna Greenway developed a document listing all the capital projects, land acquisition, construction, etc. and its relationship to CAJO. Mary Ann Lisanti will provide in visual form and as a map and planning tool when the document is approved. It includes all the plans from the county level down to the local level, in the upper bay.
- NPS announces the launch of the Chesapeake Explorer app; available for iPhone and Android platforms.

WEROWOCOMOCO OVERVIEW

Dr. Mike Barber from Virginia Department of Historic Resources gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled *Werowocomoco: Past, Present and Future*.

Werowocomoco was the residence of Paramount Chief Powhatan when the English settlers arrived in 1607; it was the capital of the Powhatan Chiefdom; when Captain John Smith was captured on the Chickahominy River, he was taken to Werowocomoco to meet Chief Powhatan; and Werowocomoco is allegedly the location where Pocahontas saved John Smith's life.

Through historic documentation, the possible location of Werowocomoco was determined to be on an area of the York River called Purtan Bay. The property is privately owned by the Ripley Family. In 2003, with the owner's cooperation, the Werowocomoco Research Group and the Werowocomoco

Project Indian Advisory Board embarked on a collaborative archaeology project. Currently the Virginia DHR is seeking an easement for 73 acres of the 250 acre property. The easement would allow for public interpretation and preservation of the area in perpetuity (No future development.) Virginia tribes will have an active role in the future programming.

The Chairman thanked Dr. Barber for his presentation and asked him to please express to Council member Kathleen Kilpatrick, the Director of Virginia DHR that the council appreciates her work and the work of DHR to preserve this global treasure.

TRAIL CONSERVATION

Jonathan Doherty provided the following:

Large Landscape Workshop Update

In August 2012, conservation partners gathered to discuss Large Landscape Conservation

Initiatives in the Chesapeake Watershed; Linking History and Cultural Identity with Landscape Conservation; and Linking Heritage Tourism, Recreation and Public Access to Landscape Conservation. The outcome of this workshop was the following:

- Continue and deepen the conversation:
 - Reconvene in the first half of 2013
 - Facilitate regular information sharing among participants
 - Increase the diversity of participants:
 - Participants committed to build the diversity represented in future gatherings and the community of practice.
- Learn from models of success:
 - Participants wanted to learn from ongoing large landscape conservation efforts in the region. Future gatherings should dive deeply into one or more such efforts, to see what is working, what might not be and why.
- Expand LandScope Chesapeake:
 - Participants spoke of a commitment to engaging in the partnership and sharing their data.

LWCF (Land and Water Conservation Fund) proposal Update

Rivers of the Chesapeake Collaborative was developed in response to putting together state LWCF funds toward certain areas of the country. The FY14 budget proposals have been reviewed and ranked by the Secretary of the Interior and OMB. We will not

know if we received the funding until the President's budget is released in February 2013. The Chesapeake Conservancy secured over 25 letters of support for this project.

REPI (Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative) Challenge Proposal Update

Using a graphic, Jonathan described the REPI area: Stump Neck is the area of land-around Dahlgren, VA to the Atlantic test range-connecting part of the Nanticoke. The proposal is for up to \$5 million in funding. Some of the same areas in the REPI proposal overlap with the areas in the LWCF proposal. REPI is a DoD initiative.

LandScope Chesapeake Demonstration

LandScope Chesapeake is a formal collaboration among NatureServe, Chesapeake Bay watershed states, the National Park Service, the U.S. Geological Survey and many conservation partners. Jonathan demonstrated through screen shots the ability of the user to "tag" on map content, places and dozens of layers of conservation priorities in a variety of different themes. The user can turn on and off layers of interest using existing protected lands data. Users can draw maps, save maps and use the GIS capabilities.

BREAK FOR LUNCH

TRAIL CONSERVATION (CONTINUED)

Jonathan Doherty presented the Draft Trail Conservation Strategy document intended to provide a perspective on the trail for its partners (NGO's, state and local governments, etc.) actively involved in land conservation. Members were provided a draft copy of the document.

Discussion:

- The CMP calls upon the NPS to reevaluate from time to time the defined high-potential route segments. We need to look at other non-high potential route segments, apply the same criteria and determine if the segments that were not initially identified as high-potential, now qualify. The membership asked if this could be a "single topic" meeting at a future date.
- Include the designated connecting trails in an explicit manner in this draft strategy. (The maps also need to reflect the connecting trails.)
- It was suggested that each segment have a hub where visitors can "begin" their journey. The hub would then make a logical starting point for the conservation strategy.
- Citizen knowledge and political/community/local leadership is key to the support of the trail at an "elected" level of service. It was suggested that a white paper be developed to show the economic and other benefits the trails can bring to a community.
- NPS resources for land protection are usually the smallest; lots of other orgs have better ability than us.
- There was concern that areas that have not gone through the segment planning process or are not scheduled to go through the process until next year, may develop into missed opportunities. We need to continue to engage communities even before their segment is "planned."
- Performance measures (miles marked, acres protected, etc.) need to be applied to our efforts.

There was group consensus that many factors of conservation can be brought together through focusing on resource assessment, promoting the economic benefits of the trail and the continued development of signage and segment plans.

SHORT BREAK

PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN

John Davy presented a PowerPoint outlining the Public Access Plan which was developed in response to Executive Order 13508 (Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration) issued by President Obama. It includes a key goal to increase public access to the Bay and its tributaries by adding 300 new public access sites by 2025.

In developing the plan the following occurred: a study area was defined; a definition of Public Access was developed; an inventory of existing sites was conducted and potential new sites were identified.

There was extensive public comment on all aspects of the plan and helped to identify over 316 new sites as potential public access locations. Over half of the suggested locations were on publicly owned land and boat launches were the most requested type of access. Other findings from the development of this plan:

- A high demand for new public access sites is frequently concentrated in and around urban areas.
- A large number potential sites are along existing water trails or national historic trails, which can bring strong community and local support for developing needed sites.
- Members of the paddling public frequently expressed a desire for small primitive campsites, picnic areas, and restrooms at appropriate locations along water trails.

Discussion:

- There was a strong desire to provide trail visitors/users with a tangible trail experience right now. Provide the information in a simple way: “this is where you put in- this is where you take out” creating a start-to-finish piece of the trail on each river segment of the trail.
- Identifying gaps in access is important, but if there was funding is it more important to improve access where people are going already or to develop something new that might never get used?
- The Upper Bay region public access is not accurately represented in the plan. John Davy will follow up.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs has submitted an Endangered Sites nomination to Preservation Maryland. The nomination includes several Indian sites on the Eastern and Western shores that have long standing native habitation; dating back 7000 years through archeology and inhabited up until the 1700's.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm.