Recreational Guide by Milepost

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal 2018 Park Planner

Explore the Park

Biking
The Canal Towpath provides 184.5 miles of gravel path for biking:
• Ride single file
• Bells and helmets are recommended
• Stay to the right except when passing
• Yield right of way to all pedestrians and horses
• Children must wear bike helmets
• Walk bike across aqueducts

Boating and Fishing
Non-motorized boats are allowed in watered sections of the canal, motorized vessels are prohibited.
• Boat ramp access to the Potomac River can be found on the park map
• Personal Flotation Devices are required by the State of Maryland

Hiking (cont’d)
• Trail maps are available at visitor centers
• Bring water
• Wear sturdy footwear
• Be prepared for changing weather conditions

Horseback Riding
Horses are permitted on the towpath from Swains Lock (mile 16.6) upstream to Candoc/Oiffut Street (mile 181.8). Horses are NOT allowed at the following locations:
• Georgetown (mile 0) to Swains Lock (mile 16.6)
• Candoc/Oiffut Street (mile 181.8) to Cumberland Terminus (mile 184.5)
• Paw Paw Tunnel
• Drive-in/walk-in campgrounds
• Picnic areas
• All other hiking areas

Group Picnicking
Group picnicking is available at the Carderock Pavilion. Accommodations for up to 200 people are available. An advanced permit is required and a fee is charged. Reservations can be obtained by visiting www.recreation.gov. Call 301-767-3703 for more information.

Swimming
Swimming is not permitted in the canal, or in the Potomac River bordering the District of Columbia and Montgomery County, MD. Swimming is not recommended in other areas of the river.

Firearms Regulations
Federal law allows people who can legally possess firearms under applicable federal, state, and local laws to carry firearms in this park. Federal law prohibits firearms in certain facilities in the park. Those places are marked with signs at all public entrances and include visitor centers and lockhouses.

Firewood Restriction
Due to an infestation by the emerald ashborrer beetle, a park-wide ban is in effect on bringing in your own firewood. Campers may collect dead and down wood in the park.

Leave No Trace Principles
For a complete listing of park rules and regulations please visit the Superintendent’s Compendium: www.nps.gov/choh/parkmgmt

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park
Park Headquarters
1850 Dual Highway
Suit 100
Hagerstown, MD 21740
301-739-4200
www.nps.gov/choh

Group Campsites
Marsten Tract, McCoy’s Ferry, Fifteenmile Creek, Paw Paw Tunnel, and Spring Gap. Sites are reservation only. Permits can be obtained at www.recreation.gov. $40 per night peak season, $20 non-peak season. 35 people maximum per site.

Hiker-Biker Campsites
Located along the towpath every 5-7 miles. No fee. Overnight stays are limited to one night. All sites include a chemical toilet, picnic table, grill, and drinking water. (water available mid-April through mid-November).

Drive-in Car Camping
Antietam Creek, McCoy’s Ferry, Fifteenmile Creek, Paw Paw Tunnel, and Spring Gap. Sites are reservation only. Permits can be obtained at www.recreation.gov. $20 per night. 4 people maximum per site.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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http://www.candocanal.org

Park Visitor Center
Food
Canal Quarters
Hiking opportunities available parkwide
Commercial services are subject to change at any time.
Visitor Center Hours and Locations

- **George-town**: 1057 Thomas Jefferson St., NW, Washington, DC 20007
  - Currently closed

- **Great Falls Tavern**: 1170 MacArthur Blvd., Potomac, MD 20854, (301) 767-3774
  - Hours: Wednesday-Sunday 9:00-4:30

- **Brunswick**: 40 West Potomac Street Brunswick, MD 21716, (301) 834-7100
  - Hours: Thursday and Friday, 10:00-2:00; Saturday 10:00-4:00; and Sunday 1:00-4:00

- **Ferry Hill**: 1600 Shepherdstown Pike, Sharpsburg, MD 21782
  - Hours: Saturday-Sunday 11:30 - 3:30, Memorial Day weekend - Labor Day

- **Williamsport**: 205 W. Potomac Williamsport, MD 21795, (301) 582-0831
  - Hours: Wednesday - Sunday, 9:00-4:30, March-November

**Hancock**

- 439 East Main Street, Hancock, MD 21750
- Hours: Wednesday - Sunday, 9:00-4:30, March-November

**Cumberland**

- Western Maryland Railway Station, 13 Canal St., Room 100, Cumberland, MD 21502, (301) 722-8226
- Hours: Daily, 9:00-5:00

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Explore a Lockhouse

- **Riley's Lockhouse**: Late April - early June & early September - early December
  - For hours of operation please call (301)582-0831

- **Lockhouse 44**: For hours of operation please call (301)582-0831

- **Lockhouse 70**: For hours of operation please call (301)582-0831

Summer Ranger Programs

For other programs, please check with the visitor centers

**Canal Boat Programs**

- **Great Falls**: Experience living history travelling the canal on the mule-drawn replica passenger boat while also locking through a lift lock. $8/adults, $6/ seniors, $5/children
  - Weekly: April-October
  - Fri-Summer only
  - 11am, 1:30pm, 3pm
- **Williamsport**: Enjoy life on the canal with a replica canal launch boat program. This program includes a short walk, boat ride, tour of Lock House 44, and a lock demonstration. FREE
  - Thursday through Sunday
  - Memorial Day-Labor Day weekends
  - 11am, 1:30pm, 3pm

**Trails & Rails Program on the Capitol Limited**

- As you ride the Amtrak train, explore the scenery and history with a guided program. Cumberland-Washington, DC-Cumberland. Amtrak Ticket Required. Visit Amtrak.com

- **Saturday**
  - April-September
  - Thursday June-August
  - Vary
  - 3 hours each way

- **Cumberland**
  - 301-722-8226

**Other Ways to Enjoy the Park**

**Bike Loaner Program**: This FREE program is offered on weekends at the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center, weather permitting and daily when the Williamsport Visitor Center is open.

**Family Backpack Activity**: Stop by the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center and "check out" one of our family backpacks full of activities and gear to help children and adults enjoy the park.

**Junior Ranger Program**: Ask for an activity booklet at any of our Visitor Centers.

**Education Programs**: Field Trips are currently offered at our Cumberland, Williamsport, and Great Falls locations. Please call 301-714-2213 or email cocanaleducation@nps.gov for more information.

**Featured Hiking Trails**

For a complete list of hiking trails in your area visit the nearest visitor center

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trail Name</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Distance One-way</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Olmsted Island Bridges to Great Falls Overlook</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>0.2 miles</td>
<td>Great Falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy Goat Trail Section C</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1.6 miles</td>
<td>Carderock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford Mine Trail</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>2.1 miles</td>
<td>Great Falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlook Trail</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>0.4 miles</td>
<td>Great Falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy Goat Trail Section A</td>
<td>Strenuous</td>
<td>1.7 miles</td>
<td>Great Falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paw Paw Tunnel Hill Trail</td>
<td>Strenuous</td>
<td>2 miles</td>
<td>Paw Paw Tunnel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wildlife Viewing Locations**

- **Monumental Island**: White-tailed deer, groundhogs, muskrat, raccoon, beaver, and a variety of birds.
- **Wildflower Area**: Located near the Visitor Center, and features a diversity of wildflowers.
- **Overlook Trail**: Scenic river views and a small waterfall are encountered on this trail. Excellent wildflower and birding area.

**History and Culture**

- **Olmsted Island Bridges to Great Falls Overlook**: Paved trail over a series of bridges and boardwalks across the river ending at the Great Falls overlook. Spectacular view of the Falls and the head of Mather Gorge. Handicap Accessible. Dogs are not permitted.
- **Billy Goat Trail Section C**: Scenic river views and a small waterfall are encountered on this trail. Excellent wildflower and birding area.
- **Ford Mine Trail**: Woodland trail leads over streams and across hills to remains of historic gold mining operations, dating 1880’s through 1921.
- **Overlook Trail**: Begin at the Lock 19 trailhead, located near the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center. Take the Lock 19 Trail and bear right at the first intersection onto the Overlook Trail. This trail connects to the Gold Mine Spur.
- **Billy Goat Trail Section A**: Be prepared for this trail. See cautions. It is a very physically demanding trail. Scrambling over angled rocks, boulders and climbing is required.
- **Paw Paw Tunnel Hill Trail**: Hike over the top of the Paw Paw Tunnel. Interpretive signage points out resources along the way. Views of the Paw Paw Bends.

Connect with the C&O by visiting the following:

- www.nps.gov/choh
- www.chohvip.org
- choh.toursphere.com
- Mobile Canal Tour
- www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/calendar.htm

Throughout the year, the Canal hosts a variety of special events! Visit http://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/calendar.htm for dates and details.