Northern Neck Heritage Trail Bicycling Route Network

Connecting People and Places

The Northern Neck Heritage Trail Bicycling Route network is a segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, a developing network of trails between the broad, gently flowing Potomac River as it empties into the Chesapeake Bay and the Allegheny Highlands in western Pennsylvania. The “braided” Trail network offers opportunities for hiking, bicycling, paddling, horseback riding and cross-country skiing. Other segments of the network include the Mount Vernon Trail and various Potomac Heritage Trail routes in Northern Virginia; the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Towpath; a bicycling route in Southern Maryland; and the Great Allegheny Passage.

Places of Interest

Reedville-Colonial Beach Route

Reedville and Reedville Fisherman’s Museum Walk this fisherman’s village and admire the nautical architecture that captures homes. Learn about the Chesapeake Bay “deadrise” fishing boats and sail on an historic skipjack. Enjoy the museum galleries. www.rfmuseum.org

Vir-Mar Beach A small sandy beach on the Potomac offering sunning, relaxing, and birding opportunities. On clear days, the Smith Island Lighthouse can be seen, as well as the shores of Maryland. www.dcr.virginia.gov xvb/servlet/Trail1&loop=CN&site=CN10

Rice’s Hotel / Hughlett’s Tavern Restored 18th century tavern shows how people lived and traveled in this 18th and 19th century. Now operated as a store and restaurant. www.rhthfoundation.org

Stratford Hall (1738) Birthplace of Robert E. Lee and home to two Lee signers of the Declaration of Independence. Visit the Great House, the Mill, and the rare Micocumen cliffs, the last found in only three other places in the world. www.stratfordhall.org

Westmoreland State Park Located on the Potomac, the park includes hiking trails, a variety of campsites (some with water and electricity), fully equipped cabins, water craft rentals and, seasonally, a pool, gift shop and snack bar. www.virgiannatestateparks.gov

George Washington Birthplace National Monument A site managed by the National Park Service, the complex includes a visitors center with a film, a memorial house, a kitchen house, a farm with a colonial herb and flower garden, and hiking trails. www.nps.gov/gewa

James Monroe Birthplace Markers identify the birthplace of James Monroe, 5th President of the United States. There is also a small museum with Monroe artifacts. www.monroefoundation.org


Loop Tours

Belle Isle State Park Located on the Rappahannock River, the park includes hiking trails, campsites (with water and electricity), a modern bath house, a guest house for over-night rental, a camp store, and kayak, canoe, bicycle and motor boat rentals. www.virginiaateastparks.org


Mary Ball Washington Museum & Library Named in honor of Lancaster native and mother of George Washington, the museum features local history exhibits in the old jail, clerks office, and an extensive genealogy research collection. www.mbowm.org

Christ Church (1735) The best preserved and least altered of Virginia’s Colonial parish churches, the church is interpreted along with the life of the builder, Robert “King” Carter. www.christchurch1735.org

Morattico Waterfront Museum Housed in the Morattico General Store building (1901), this local museum focuses on the cultural history of a working waterman’s village. www.morattico.org

Steamboat Era Museum Learn about the romantic and exciting era of steamboats and how they impacted life on the Chesapeake Bay and the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers, which served as primary transportation routes. www.steamboatmuseum.com

Planning Your Visit

This overview map shows a through-route and associated loops within four counties on the Northern Neck of Virginia, a network intended to function as a portal to the communities, history, culture, geology and ecology of the region. The list under “More Information” provides additional information to plan your journey.

Seasons to Visit: The weather is “bicycling friendly” from April to November, although the temperate climate always allows bicycling all year long. Spring and fall are ideal. An occasional summer day can be hot and muggy, but cooling breezes off the rivers mitigate the heat and humidity.

Type of Bicycle: All of the routes are on paved surfaces. Either a road bike or hybrid would be appropriate. Give your bike a check-up and make sure it is in good working order.

Traffic: Most of the routes are on lightly traveled secondary roads that criss-cross the Northern Neck. Some short sections of the routes are on Route 3 and Route 360 – very busy highways. Use caution when traveling on these portions.

Terrain: The terrain is flat to gently rolling. Short hills are encountered when bicycling first down and then up occasional stream valleys.

Camping: There are a dozen campgrounds, including two state parks, scattered throughout the four counties. You are never more than 20 miles from a campground.

Lodging: A variety of options include bed & breakfasts, four-star inns, hotels and marinas. You are never more than 20 miles from overnight accommodations.

For More Information


Virginia Tourism Corporation, www.virginia.org

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Tidal Ponds Access Water Trail Map Set, state parks & preserves 800-933-PASS (8277) (cabin and campground reservations) www.virginia.gov

Northern Neck RiverRide, (last Saturday in September) www.riverride.org

BikeWalk Virginia, www.bikewalkvirginia.org


Virginia Department of Transportation www.virginiadot.org/projectsenglishdefault.asp

Adventure Cycling Association, Tidewater Potomac Heritage Bicycling Route, a loop connecting Smith Point, VA; Washington, D.C.; and Point Lookout State Park, MD http://www.adventurecycling.org/routes/index.cfm


Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, www.potomackids.org

Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail marineroadrentals.com

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Disclaimer of Liability: This map is not intended to convey the opinions or policies of the U.S. Government. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the U.S. Government.

April 2013

Map of Northern Neck Heritage Trail Bicycling Route Network

3.3 Miles

1 Leaptown loop

2 Stratford Hall/Curristan Landing loop

3 Montross/ Neyers Beach/ Warne Loop

4 Kilmalin/Sandy Point loop

5 Heathsville Loop

6 Reedville/ Vir-Mar Beach/ Smith’s Point Loop

7 Lancaster/ Montross/ Belle Isle State Park Loop

8 Kilmalonk/ Irvington/ White Stone/ Windmill Point Loop

Mileage for the Northern Neck Trail Through Route

The route depicted on this map uses public roadways. All bicyclists should wear a helmet; follow all laws and regulations; and use caution, especially on roadways without bicycle lanes. Food and water are available in the towns along the route. This map also shows a few locations where there were convenience stores as of 2013.

Northwest ↔ Southeast

0.0 Colonial Beach

4.9 Smith Point

8.5 Sunnybank Ferry

10.3 Vir-Mar Beach

23.6 Heathsville

35.0 Stratford Hall

53.1 Montross

58.1 Stratford Hall

60.0 Westmoreland State Park

70.9 George Washington Birthplace National Monument

80.1 James Monroe Birthplace

88.1 Colonial Beach

Southwest ↔ Northwest

0.0 Reedville

4.9 Smith Point

8.5 Sunnybank Ferry

10.3 Vir-Mar Beach

23.6 Heathsville

35.0 Stratford Hall

53.1 Montross

58.1 Stratford Hall

60.0 Westmoreland State Park

70.9 George Washington Birthplace National Monument

80.1 James Monroe Birthplace

88.1 Colonial Beach

Terrain

Primary Road

Secondary Road-Paved

Secondary Road-Unpaved

Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail Route

Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail Route (planned)

Local Loops (and Spurs)

Bahrein Railroad Heritage Trail (accessible by permit)