



Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail

2002 STATE OF THE TRAIL REPORT

Prepared by the
Potomac Trail Council

an alliance of non-profit organizations and local agencies committed to the development, protection,
interpretation and celebration of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail.

Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

2002

- Adventure Cycling Association
- Alexandria Archeology
- Allegheny Trail Alliance
- Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
- American Hiking Society
- Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship
- Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park
- DC Heritage Tourism Coalition
- Fairfax County Dept. of Planning and Zoning
- Fairfax County Park Authority
- Fairfax Non-Motorized Transportation Committee
- Fairfax Trails and Streams
- Fort Necessity National Battlefield
- Fort Washington Park
- Friends of the Potomac
- George Washington Birthplace National Monument
- George Washington Memorial Parkway
- Great Falls Trail Blazers
- Greater Washington National Parks Fund
- Harpers Ferry Center (NPS)
- International Institute of Tourism Studies, George Washington University
- Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin
- Kodak, a Proud Partner of America's National Parks
- Laurel Ridge State Park
- Leesylvania State Park
- Loudoun County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge
- Northern Neck Planning District Commission
- Northern Neck Tourism Council
- Northern Virginia Regional Commission
- Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority
- Oxon Hill Bicycle and Trail Club
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Potomac Appalachian Trail Club
- Potomac Heritage Partnership
- Potomac River Greenways Coalition
- Potomac Trail Council
- Potomac Water Trail Association
- Prince Georges County Bicycle and Trail Advisory Group
- Prince Georges County Division of Transportation
- Prince William County Department of Planning
- Prince William County Park Authority
- Prince William Forest Park
- Regional Trail Corporation
- Southern Prince Georges Trails Coalition
- St. Mary's College of Maryland
- Student Conservation Association
- The Potomac Conservancy
- The Wilderness Society
- Virginia Bicycling Federation
- Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation
- Virginia Trails Association
- Washington Area Bicyclist Association

Introduction

This 2002 State of the Trail Report highlights some of this year's developments involving the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. The report's objectives are:

- to articulate to the community-at-large the status of existing and planned Potomac Heritage Trail segments;
- to convey priorities for advocacy, outreach and fundraising for PHT projects; and
- to promote, to a widening range of local and national stakeholders, a vision for recreation, education and conservation within the Potomac Heritage Trail corridor.

The report was produced by the Potomac Trail Council, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, in consultation with the public agencies, nonprofit organizations and individuals concerned with various projects and programs associated with the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (Potomac Heritage Trail or PHT).



C&O Canal NHP towpath

TRAILS FOR ALL AMERICANS: COMMUNITY-BASED TRAILS LINKING OUR POTOMAC CORRIDOR'S HERITAGE

The importance of the Potomac River and Allegheny Highlands in the development of this nation motivated Congress to amend the National Trails System Act in 1983, designating a corridor for a "Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail" between the Chesapeake Bay and the Laurel Highlands of western Pennsylvania. Today the concept for the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail combines outdoor recreation with educational opportunities, focusing on the national significance of the Trail corridor.

True to the spirit of the historic Potomac route to the Ohio River, at the heart of this trail system, the act enables communities in Virginia, Maryland, the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania to further develop trails and connections that continue to increase access to historic sites and a range of recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities. Local and state government agencies, along with citizen groups and federal agencies, are using the corridor designation to develop a network of routes for non-motorized travel on water and land.

The legislation for the PHT assigns responsibilities for development and management of trail segments outside of federally managed lands to local and state agencies and precludes the designation of trail segments in the State of West Virginia. The National Park Service is responsible for administration of the trail corridor designation and assists various trail interests with coordination and with some technical and funding support.



Indian Head, Charles County, Maryland



Three trails are currently recognized as segments of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail:

- the Mount Vernon Trail;
- the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Towpath; and
- the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail.

Other trails —proposed segments of the National Scenic Trail within the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia — contribute to the concept, including:

- bicycling routes on the Northern Neck (Virginia) and in southern Maryland;
- the Potomac Heritage Trail On-Road Bicycling Route in Prince Georges County, Md.;
- the Alexandria Heritage Trail;
- the Potomac Heritage Trail in George Washington Memorial Parkway;
- the Great Allegheny Passage National Recreation Trail between Cumberland, Md., and Pittsburgh, Penn.; and
- the Potomac River Water Trail between Potomac Park, Md., and the Chesapeake Bay.



In addition, local governments; regional, state and federal agencies; and citizen groups are planning additional trails for hiking, bicycling, horseback riding and paddling. These projects include:

- Potomac Heritage Trail projects in the Northern Virginia counties of Prince William, Fairfax and Loudoun;
- the developing heritage trail network in the District of Columbia.



With publication this year of “Guidelines for Developing an Application Requesting Designation of a Trail as a Segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail,” the list above can now be expanded to include many more trails and related educational gateways to the trail corridor.

The Potomac Trail Council website contains more detailed information about trail-related projects in all counties in the PHNST Corridor. Go to www.potomactrail.org. Please refer to page 16 of this report for more information about PTC.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Trail Enthusiasts:

This has been a very exciting year for the Potomac Heritage Trail. That sounds pretty trite, but it seems to fit the situation. Let me explain.

Up and down the corridor, local governments and citizens' groups are getting together to plan the PHT. It is no longer a question of **if**, but **when**, the trail will be on the ground. People now take it as a given that the trail soon will exist.

We are making major progress in Loudoun, Fairfax and Prince William counties in Virginia, supporting findings in the Virginia Outdoors Plan. Trail planning remains a priority in Prince George's County, Maryland. In the Northern Neck, trail planning is well along. Meanwhile, out west, the Allegheny Trail Alliance is pushing for completion of the last unfinished segments of the Great Allegheny Passage. Construction is near commencement on the Big Savage Tunnel, the biggest barrier to the completion of that trail.

Construction of some trail segments needs to proceed as other segments are planned. We have seen construction in Fairfax County, and hope to begin putting new trail on the ground soon in Loudoun County. This trail is clearly becoming a major recreation resource in the Potomac Basin.



As shown on the following page, more than 117 miles of primary trails have been added to the PHNST corridor during 2002. We must build on this year's progress, so that next year's annual report looks as sunny as does this one.

Tom Johnson, President
Potomac Trail Council

*Site of proposed trail along power line
right-of-way, Northern Neck of Virginia*

Trail Progress in 2002

***MORE THAN 117 MILES OF PRIMARY TRAILS HAVE BEEN
ADDED TO THE PHNST CORRIDOR DURING 2002.***

Primary Trails (in miles)

State County/Region	2001 Report Existing	2002 Report Existing	Existing	Planned	Anticipated	Percent Complete	Increase 2001-02
District of Columbia.....	3.8	3.8	3.8	13	16.8	23%	0
Maryland	205	194.7	194.7	191.1	385.8	50%	10.3
Allegany/Garrett.....			46.5	16.6	63.1	74%	
Frederick.....			16		16	100%	
Montgomery			34		34	100%	
Prince Georges.....			22.2	37	59.2	38%	
Southern Maryland			0	137.5	137.5	0%	
Washington.....			76	0	76	100%	
Western Pennsylvania	106	112	112	32	144	78%	6
Virginia	36	137	137	35.8	112.8	121%	101
City of Alexandria.....			4.3	0	4.3	100%	
Arlington			9	0	9	100%	
Fairfax			21.2	4.8	26	82%	
Fredericksburg Area.....			0	0	0	0%	
Loudoun			4.2	3	7.2	58%	
Prince William.....			38.3	28	66.3	58%	
Northern Neck.....			60	TBD	TBD	TBD	
TOTAL	350.8	447.5					117.3

Trail Priorities in 2003

POTOMAC RIVER WATER TRAIL

The Potomac River Water Trail, considered an integral part of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail concept, offers exciting opportunities to experience the varied landscapes and rich history of the Potomac River. Like a land trail, the Potomac River Water Trail offers users diverse experiences — from short trips to enjoy the sights and sounds of the river—to prolonged excursions to explore a particular natural or historical theme. The National Park Service's PHT office plans to publish a folder in 2003 describing water trail concept in the PHT corridor. The 2000 Chesapeake Bay Agreement recognizes the importance of water trails as important complements to land trails and other green infrastructure. The successful 2002 Potomac Sojourn has stimulated planning efforts for 2003.



Ship graveyard, Mallows Bay, Charles County, Maryland

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation cooperated to produce a Potomac River Water Trail map set, highlighting access points along the southern reaches of the river from Washington, D.C. to the Chesapeake Bay.

In April 2002, a set of five Upper Potomac River Water Trail maps was produced by the Maryland DNR, the National Park Service, the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin and the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. These maps delineate approximately 115 miles of the Potomac River and the C&O Canal between Potomac Park (Cumberland, Maryland) and Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Along this route one can travel through the Paw Paw bends, investigate Big Pool and explore historic river towns.

The Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin provides a set of maps for the middle section of the river.

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Secure funding for and revise a Middle Potomac Water Trail Map Set. Continue research to expand the number of sites. Identify stewardship needs and potential caretakers.

Local Assistance: Continue to foster support for the development, enjoyment, and stewardship of the Potomac River Water Trail and connecting water trails.

Educational and Interpretation: Publicize and distribute Tidal Potomac and Upper Potomac River Water Trail Map Sets. Increase participation in 2003 Potomac Sojourn.

CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

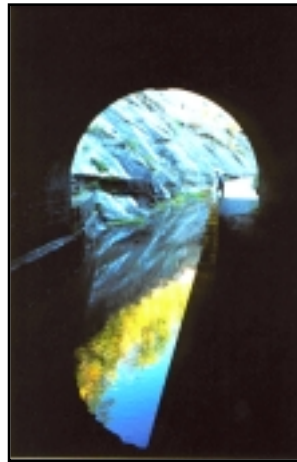
The C&O Canal towpath extends 184.5 miles along the Potomac River between Georgetown in Washington D.C., and Cumberland Maryland. It is recognized as the backbone of the PHT.

PRIORITIES 2003:

Trail Development: While the trail is in place, maintenance/restoration needs are on the rise.

Local Assistance: Work with the C&O Canal Association, NPS and others to address maintenance needs.

Education and Interpretation: Encourage NPS to recognize the PHT on signs along the towpath.



Paw Paw tunnel on C&O Canal NHP towpath, Allegany County, Maryland



C&O Canal towpath in Washington, D.C.

Tidal Potomac

MARYLAND – CHARLES AND SAINT MARY’S COUNTIES

Southern Maryland is surrounded by the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay. Portions of Charles and St. Mary’s counties figure prominently in the Potomac River Water Trail, offering numerous opportunities to explore a varied shoreline.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management recently purchased a property on the Potomac at Douglas Point which could provide a set of trails and connections to the water trail. In addition, the Southern Maryland Regional Trail and Bikeway System (SMRTABS), developed by the Tri-County Council, shows a bicycling route for the PHT, using existing roads, between Point Lookout State Park and Piscataway Park.

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Indicate the “Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail” bicycling route on the Southern Maryland Bicycle Map in Charles and St. Mary’s Counties. Provide land connections/trails to the Potomac River Water Trail at Douglas Point. Construct a connecting trail that follows the Indian Head-White Plains Railway and a branch trail along the upper Mattawoman Creek. Complete phase one of the Three Notch Rail Trail. Plan connecting trails: Marshall Hall Park Trail and Popes Creek Railway Trail.

Local Assistance: Support work of the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland, the St. Mary’s County Division of Tourism, and the Charles County Office of Tourism to capitalize upon the PHT designation.

Education and Interpretation: Publicize and distribute Potomac River Water Trail maps and Southern Maryland Bicycle Maps.



*Horsehead Cliffs,
Westmoreland County,
Virginia*

VIRGINIA – NORTHERN NECK OF VIRGINIA

The Northern Neck of Virginia, between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, contains a wealth of places and stories associated with the history and pre-history of the Potomac River corridor. In 2002 the Northern Neck Tourism Council, with assistance from the Northern Neck Planning District Commission, completed a continuous bicycling route between Reedville and Caledon Natural Area and State Park. This 200-mile “Heritage Tour” through scenic countryside contributes to the PHT concept, as cyclists can discover natural and historic sites as well as restaurants and lodging.

The Northern Neck PDC, with assistance from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and others, is assessing the feasibility of a multi-use trail along all or portions of an 80-mile power line right-of-way down the center of the Northern Neck peninsula. This multi-use trail could connect with the bicycling tour route and lead hikers through all the counties of the Northern Neck.

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Assist local and regional agencies with research and planning of power line right-of-way multi-use trail.

Local Assistance: Demonstrate support for trail development and related experiences on the Northern Neck.

Education and Interpretation: Develop and secure financial support for special events. Develop educational materials and interpretive signage for trail routes on the Northern Neck.



*Stratford Hall, Westmoreland
County, Virginia*

VIRGINIA – FREDERICKSBURG AREA

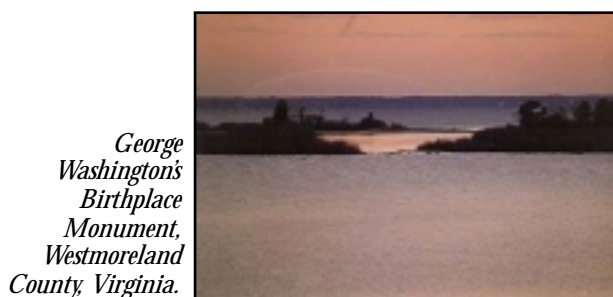
Encompassing Ferry Farm – George Washington's boyhood home – Fredericksburg is poised to become a prominent feature of the PHT network. Ferry Farm is owned and managed by the George Washington's Fredericksburg Foundation and is the subject of a special resource study by the National Park Service. Further discussion is needed to demonstrate a direct connection with the Potomac River, as well as with George Washington Birthplace National Monument, Mount Vernon and the Washington Monument.

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Encourage purchase by a nonprofit or public agency of the abandoned Dahlgren Junction Railroad in Stafford and King George counties; plan and develop a trail along the CSX Railroad right-of-way through Stafford County and the City of Fredericksburg; and plan and develop a trail along the abandoned Virginia Central Railroad right-of-way to connect Fredericksburg with Orange, Virginia.

Local Assistance: Encourage adoption of these trails into Fredericksburg and Stafford County comprehensive plans. Assist Stafford County Historical Society with recognition for the Aquia Creek quarry.

Education and Interpretation: Develop interpretive plan for connecting significant George Washington sites within the PHT corridor.



VIRGINIA – PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

Significant support for the Potomac Heritage Trail concept has grown in Prince William County. Trails are seen as a way to dramatically increase the value of existing parks, historic sites and open spaces by providing non-motorized connections between and among existing amenities (including existing and planned Virginia Railway Express stations).

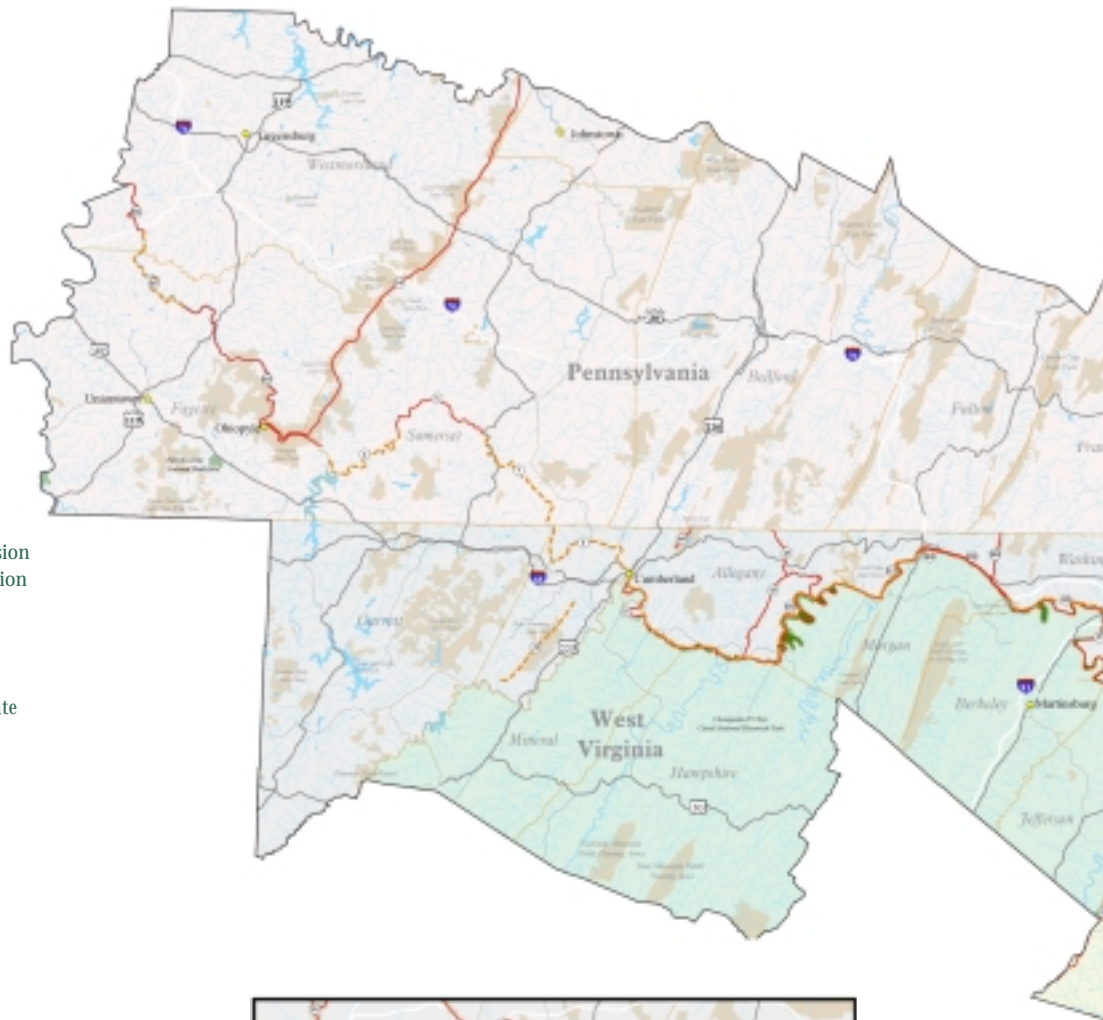
In 2002 the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, on behalf of the county, completed a "Potomac Heritage Trail Implementation Plan" to indicate preferred and alternative alignments for the PHT. A large percentage of the PHT corridor is publicly owned or secured by easements, with existing trails in Mason Neck Refuge Area, Veteran's Memorial Park, Leesylvania State Park and Prince William Forest Park. A small segment of trail between Mason Neck and the county's Veterans Memorial Park, for example, could serve as a future alignment of the PHT. In addition, the PHT is a prominent feature along the shoreline of the Belmont Bay Town Center development. A route for the PHT along the CSX Railroad right-of-way (including bridges) would provide one type of connection between existing trails. However, the shoreline route is complicated by limited public access on the Quantico Marine Corps base.

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Incorporate alignments for the PHT into plans by Prince William County for trails and/or transportation (including plans by VDOT). Secure public access easements. (e.g., Dominion Power right-of-way through Newport Village). Identify sources of funding, in-kind services and volunteer resources to begin trail construction (e.g., Leesylvania Loop Trail).

Local Assistance: Initiate discussions with CSX to reduce trespassing and maintain trail alignments in the railroad right-of-way, including use of existing and/or future train bridges.

Education and Interpretation: Develop interpretive kiosks and signage for completed PHT routes.



1. Accotink Creek Trail
2. Accotink Creek Trail Extension
3. Alexandria Heritage Trail
4. Algonkian Regional Park Trails
5. Allegheny Highlands Trail
6. Allegheny Highlands Trail North Extension
7. Allegheny Highlands Trail South Extension
8. Anacostia River Trail
9. Anacostia Tributary Trail System
10. Appalachian Trail
11. Arlington Blvd. Bike Trail
12. Arlington Cemetery/Pentagon Bike Route
13. Ballenger Creek Trail
14. Balls Bluff Regional Park Trails
15. Battery Kimble Trail
16. Bull Run - Occoquan Trail
17. C & O Canal Towpath
18. Cabin John Creek Trail
19. Caledon Natural Area Trails
20. Canal Park Trail
21. Capital Crescent Trail
22. Capital Crescent Trail Extension
23. Carroll Creek Trail
24. Catoctin Creek Trail
25. Catoctin Trail
26. Catoctin Trail Extension
27. Chaptico Wharf Spur
28. Clarksburg Greenway Trail
29. Cross-Country Trail Connector
30. Custis Trail
31. Dans Mountain Trail
32. Difficult Run Stream Valley Trail
33. Difficult Run Stream Valley Trail Extension
34. Fort Belvoir Trail
35. Fort Circle Route
36. Fort Circle Route Extension
37. Four Mile Run Park Trail
38. Four Mile Run Park Trail & W&OD Trail
39. Gen. Smallwood State Park Trails
40. Glover Archibald Trail
41. Great Falls Park Connecting Trail
42. Great Falls Park Trail
43. Green Ridge Trail
44. H & F Trolley Trail
45. H & F Trolley Trail - Thurmont Segment
46. Henson Creek Trail
47. Henson Creek Trail South Extension
48. Henson Creek Trail North Extension
49. Holmes Run Trail Extension
50. Holmes, Cameron Run Trail Extension
51. I495 to Alexandria
52. Indian Head - White Plains Rail Trail
53. Kingfisher Canoe Trail
54. Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail
55. Leesylvania State Park Trails
56. Little Falls - Fort Smith Bike Trail
57. Maine to Virginia Bicycle Route
57. Maine to Virginia Bicycle Route
58. Maon Neck State Park Trail



Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail Corridor



Map courtesy of National Park Service

59. Maryland Heights Trail
60. Mason Neck Trail Extension
61. Mattawoman Creek Trail
62. Metropolitan Branch Trail
63. Monocacy River Water Trail
64. Mount Vernon Trail
65. Muddy Branch Trail
66. Muddy Branch Trail Connector
67. National Mall
68. Northern Neck Heritage Trail (on-road)
69. Northern Peaks Trail
70. Oxon Cove Trail
71. Oxon Run Trail
72. Oxon Run Trail Extension
73. Pap Paw Connector Trail
74. Pimmit Run Trail
75. Pimmit Run Trail Extension
76. Pohick Bay Regional Park Trails
77. Popes Creek Rail Trail
78. Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail
79. Potomac Heritage On-Road Bike Route
80. Potomac Heritage Trail
81. Potomac Heritage Trail South
82. Potomac Overlook Reg. Park Trail
83. Potomac Park Walks
84. Potomac River Heritage Trail (Multi-use)
85. "Potomac River Water Trail (Potomac Park, Md. - Mouth)"
86. Potomac Yards Linear Trail
87. Powerline Trail
88. Prince William Forest Park Trails
89. Rail-Station - Aquia Landing
90. Railroad Trail
91. Red Rock Wldns. Ovlk. Reg. Park Trails
92. Riverbend Park to NVRPA Properties
93. Riverbend Park Trail
93. Riverbend Park Trail
94. Rock Creek Park Trail
95. Rock Creek Park Trail Connector
96. Rock Creek Trail
97. "Rock Creek Trail, on River"
98. Rock Run Trail
99. Rocky Gap Park Trails
100. Scotts Run Preserve Trail
101. Seneca Ck. Greenway tr. - St. of Md. Seg.
102. Seneca Creek Greenway Trail - MNCPPC
103. Snavelly Ford Trail
104. Sugarland Run Trail
105. Sugarloaf-Little Bennett Trail
106. Suitland Parkway Trail
107. Tunnel Hill Trail
108. Tuscarora Trail
109. Virginia Central RR
110. W&OD Trail
111. W. Maryland Rail Trail E. Extension
112. W. Maryland Rail Trail W. Extension
113. Watts Branch
114. Watts Branch Trail
115. Western Maryland Rail Trail
116. Youghiogheny River Trail North
117. Youghiogheny River Trail North (undeveloped)
118. Youghiogheny River Trail South

District of Columbia Metropolitan Area

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

As the population in the Washington D.C., area grows — from almost 4 million people to an expected 5.6 million in 2020 — development of trails and related amenities becomes increasingly important. Recent projects by the DC Heritage Tourism Coalition and various partners demonstrate the potential for a network of heritage trails in the District.

In 2001, the District of Columbia Office of Planning conducted a study of the opportunities and issues associated with the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. This study, “Opportunity is Knocking,” revealed that the PHT has the potential to be both a set of primary routes – for different kinds of travel between points along the C&O Canal towpath and the Prince George’s County line at Oxon Hill Farm Park – as well as a diverse network of designated heritage trails.



Mount Vernon Trail, Arlington County, Virginia

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Secure funding for the planning and development of a trail below the elevated Whitehurst Freeway to the Georgetown area along Water Street. Further develop plans for a network of heritage trails in D.C.

Local Assistance: Continue to support the Office of Planning and local organizations with identification and nomination of PHT routes in the District.

Education and Interpretation: Develop educational facilities and/or print materials for the PHT and connecting trails in D.C.



Potomac River Water Trail and Capital Crescent Trail, Washington, D.C.

VIRGINIA – ARLINGTON COUNTY

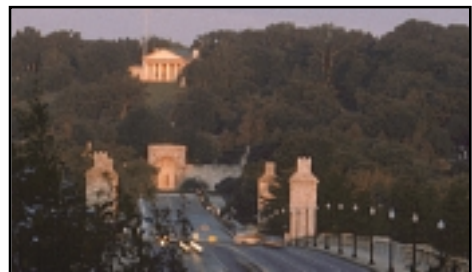
Arlington County has over 36 miles of multi-use trails and 50 miles of connecting bicycle routes. The Mount Vernon Trail, recognized as an official segment of the PHT, and a 10-mile hiking-only trail, appropriately named the Potomac Heritage Trail, connect at Theodore Roosevelt Island to form a continuous riverfront route within Arlington. The Heritage Trail continues upstream to the boundary of the George Washington Memorial Parkway at the American Legion Bridge in Fairfax County.

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Identify and mark bicycle routes for recreation and commuting.

Local Assistance: Advocate for funds to develop and place PHT signage and displays along the Mount Vernon Trail.

Education and Interpretation: Develop and construct PHT signage and interpretive displays along the Mount Vernon Trail and the 10-mile Heritage Trail.



Memorial Bridge and Custis-Lee Mansion at Arlington Cemetery, Arlington County, Virginia

VIRGINIA – FAIRFAX COUNTY

With over sixty percent of the trail complete and a greater part of the northern section secured with easements, the establishment of the PHT in Fairfax County is clearly possible. In 2002 the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, on behalf of Fairfax County, completed a “Potomac Heritage Trail Implementation Plan” to indicate preferred and alternative alignments for the PHT and connections to the Fairfax Cross-County Trail (a “connecting trail”). The Potomac Heritage Trail is recognized in the 2002 Fairfax County County-Wide Trails Plan — a first step toward securing funding for trail construction.

In the northern portion of the county, several community-based efforts have demonstrated the potential to establish the PHT between Great Falls Park and the Loudoun County border, including completion of a bridge over Clark’s Run in Riverbend Park. Great Falls Trail Blazers, a local advocacy group, and the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, along with the support of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority and Fairfax County Park Authority have provided an example of trail construction and maintenance by volunteers.

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Acquire public trail easements to connect existing parklands in northern Fairfax. Continue to examine the development of a safe bicycle/pedestrian crossing of U.S. Route 1. Study the feasibility of constructing a grade-separated trail in the space between I-495 and Live Oak Drive, connecting with an existing parking area for Scotts Run Nature Preserve. Secure proffers for completion of the PHT in the southern portion of the county. Assess I-95 underpass (studying, for example, the Henson Creek Trail under Indian Head Highway in Prince George’s County, Maryland).

Local Assistance: Continue to monitor plans for the former Lorton prison complex to ensure a viable route for the PHT. Resolve routing of the PHT either through or around Fort Belvoir and between Fort Belvoir and Prince William County. Assist with securing easements in northern part of the county. Secure proffers to connect Laurel Hill Greenway with Lorton Town Center. Advocate for grade separated route along U.S. Route 1 through Fort Belvoir.

Education and Interpretation: Develop interpretive kiosks and signage for existing PHT routes in Fairfax County. Produce fact sheet describing priority trail projects in Fairfax County.



Great Falls of the Potomac



Great Falls of the Potomac



*George Washington's Mount Vernon,
Fairfax County, Virginia*

VIRGINIA – CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

Alexandria retains much of the character and charm from its days as a bustling port city. Several of its trails follow city streets, but the parks and stream valleys also have many miles of heavily used trails. The city places a priority on public access to the riverfront, with several connecting and proposed trails that contribute to the concept of the PHT.

The Mount Vernon Trail, recognized as a segment of the PHT, generally follows the Alexandria waterfront between Fairfax and Arlington counties. Alexandria Archaeology, a division of the city government, and the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology, published a guidebook and folder for the Alexandria Heritage Trail — a 22-mile interpretive bicycling and walking loop through the city — which connects with the Mount Vernon Trail. In addition, Virginia and Maryland completed a cooperative designation of the Potomac River Water Trail within the tidal sections of the river, including the Alexandria waterfront. In a recent recreational needs assessment, residents rated trails as the top priority for funding.



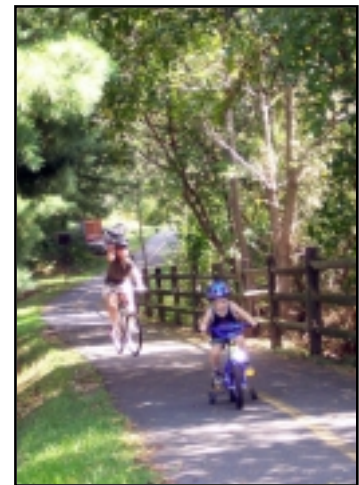
Bald Eagle, Charles County, Maryland

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Encourage the City of Alexandria and the National Park Service to study ways to improve flow through the current on-street alignment of the PHT through Old Town. The redevelopment of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge should be closely monitored to ensure: 1) a continuous, safe route between Old Town and the Mount Vernon Trail, and 2) connections between the Mount Vernon Trail and bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the replacement bridge.

Local Assistance: Seek \$50,000 for interpretive signage and displays along the Mount Vernon Trail in Alexandria.

Education and Interpretation: Develop and construct PHT signage and interpretive displays. Publicize Alexandria Heritage Trail Guide Book.



W&OD Trail, near Purcellville, Loudoun County, Virginia

VIRGINIA – LOUDOUN COUNTY

Bordered by the Blue Ridge and the Potomac, Loudoun County is known for its beautiful scenery and rich history. This rapidly growing region, located just 25 miles from Washington, D.C., has become an international center for technology, communications and transportation. Easements for trails have been established only near the eastern end of the county.

The Northern Virginia Regional Commission, on behalf of Loudoun County, completed a “Potomac Heritage Trail Implementation Plan” to indicate preferred and alternative alignments for the PHT and to outline a plan for development. This plan could be included in Loudoun County’s revised General Plan and the Countywide Transportation Plan, providing a first step in securing funding for trail construction.



Equestrian trail, Fairfax County, Virginia

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Complete construction of Phase 1 of the 12-mile Potomac Heritage Trail (Fairfax County line to Goose Creek). Complete Broad Run bridge crossing.

Local Assistance: Secure funding for trail construction and an orientation kiosk.

Education and Interpretation: Develop interpretive kiosks and signage for completed PHT routes.

MARYLAND – MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Trail and greenway development has been active in Montgomery County since the establishment of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-MCPPC) in the 1920s. Bordering Washington D.C., Montgomery County's land development regulations, demand for recreation and the need for non-motorized transportation and congestion relief have made the establishment of trails a priority.

The C&O National Historical Park extends along the Potomac River, the entire western boundary of the county, making connections between and among numerous stream valley greenways, trails, parks, wildlife management areas, and communities to the north and east. Three major connecting trails the Capital Crescent, Cabin John Creek, and Rock Run — are located in the eastern end of the system while the Seneca Creek Greenway connects in the western half of the county.



Grist mill ruins, Seneca Creek Greenway Trail, Montgomery County, Maryland

Priorities:

Trail Development: Support plans for extensions of existing connecting trails and new connecting trails at Muddy Branch, Watts Branch, and Clarksburg Greenway Trail as well as plans for the Potomac River Water Trail.

Local Assistance: Continue support the work of NPS, the C&O Canal Association, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and M-NCPPC for increased trail connections and non-motorized transportation alternatives through Montgomery County.

Education and Interpretation: Advocate for PHNST signage along the C&O Canal.



Riverbend Park, Montgomery County, Maryland

MARYLAND – PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Interest in and improvements to non-motorized transportation routes have contributed to a positive climate for trail connections among parks, schools, commercial areas, and neighborhoods in Prince George's County. The Potomac River Water Trail has been designated and several connecting land trails are planned. In addition to the Potomac River Water Trail, over one-half of the shoreline is in public ownership, including existing trails within the Oxon Hill, Fort Foote, Fort Washington, and Piscataway national park areas. A major connecting PHT artery is the Henson Creek Trail between Suitland Parkway and Oxon Hill Road.



Montgomery County, Maryland

An on-road Potomac Heritage Trail bicycling route and guide, published by the county in late 2000, is currently being revised and expanded. Additionally, the Prince George's County Bicycle and Trails Advisory Group (BTAG) is studying options for an off-road, multi-use alignment of the PHT.

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Continue planning for an off-road alignment of the PHT that connects parks and historic sites. Plan and construct land connections to the Potomac River Water Trail. Plan for future bicycle-compatible road improvements.

Local Assistance: Monitor plans for a cross-river link on the replacement Woodrow Wilson Bridge to

ensure a continuous and safe connection to the Potomac Heritage Trail.

Education and Interpretation: Create a map of the off-road alignment of the PHT that shows existing trails and potential connections. Interpret the many historic natural and cultural resources along the trail. Place signs along the on-road bike route.

WESTERN MARYLAND

FREDERICK, WASHINGTON, ALLEGANY AND GARRETT COUNTIES

The preserved towpath of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park provides a nearly level, continuous trail through Frederick, Washington, and Allegany Counties. Thirty-nine miles of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail follow the western border of Frederick County. Links and connections to state parks, recreation areas and historical attractions in Western Maryland can add significantly to the myriad of outdoor activities available for residents and visitors. Linking the upper section of the Potomac River with the base of the Allegheny Plateau, the towpath connects to the Allegheny Highlands Trail in Cumberland.



*Rocky Gap Mountain State Park,
Allegany County, Maryland*

Maryland Department of Natural Resources

In 2002 the State of Maryland began developing a section of the Allegheny Highlands Trail, part of the Great Allegheny Passage, between Cumberland and Frostburg along the route of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. The state purchased the remaining segment of the abandoned railroad right of way up to the common border with Pennsylvania. In addition, the existing connecting Green Ridge Trail system in Green Ridge State Forest may be extended to Warrior Mountain Wildlife Management Area along a power line right-of-way.

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development:

Allegany and Garrett Counties

Railroad rights-of-way along the North Branch of the Potomac and the extent of public lands in Garrett County suggest the need to evaluate opportunities for making connections via a linked set of trails and experiences for hiking, equestrian use, mountain bicycling, kayaking and rafting.

Frederick County

Construct the Catoctin Creek Trail, from the Potomac River south of Brunswick to the southern end of the existing Catoctin Trail north of Interstate 70; this trail will reach almost to the Pennsylvania border.

Washington County

Plan and / or construct:

- A proposed 9-mile extension of the Western Maryland Rail Trail from Hancock to Dam 6.
- A second extension of the Western Maryland Rail Trail that parallels the towpath westward into Allegany County, Maryland;
- A trail system within the Indian Springs Wildlife Management Area that could potentially connect to the PHT through construction of the Fort Frederick-Indian Springs Connector;
- A link between the towpath and the Sideling Hill WMA in the western end of Washington County, and possibly north into Pennsylvania. (Sideling Hill Creek is one of the most pristine of all Potomac tributaries and could provide an exceptional opportunity to learn about the conservation of native habitats in the WMA);



Maryland Department of Natural Resources

*Youghiogheny Scenic &
Wild River, Garrett County,
Maryland*

- A connecting water trail in Conococheague Creek;
 - The Sandy Hook Bridge Connector Trail (planned) that will cross the Potomac River on the U.S. 340 bridge and link the C&O Canal towpath to a part off Harpers Ferry National Historical Park located in Loudoun County, Virginia.
 - A bicycle loop on county and state roads providing an important link between Pack Horse Ford along the towpath and Antietam National Battlefield Park in Sharpsburg.
- Local Assistance: Continue to support county and state agencies with the implementation of links to the C&O Canal towpath in Western Maryland.
- Education and Interpretation: Develop educational facilities and/or print materials describing the PHT concept and connecting trails and educational facilities in Western Maryland.

PENNSYLVANIA

SOMERSET, FAYETTE AND WESTMORELAND COUNTIES

The mountains of western Pennsylvania once posed a hindrance to westward travel and commerce – until railroads and railroaders surmounted this barrier to complete a modern commercial route to the Ohio River valley. Today bicyclists and hikers travel through places where conestoga wagons and steam-powered trains once traveled. The authorized corridor for the PHT in this region is between Cumberland, Maryland, and the southern terminus of the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail in Ohiopyle, Pennsylvania.

The nonprofit Allegheny Trail Alliance is the motivating force behind efforts to construct, maintain and promote a multi-use, non-motorized trail system, known as “The Great Allegheny Passage,” between Cumberland, Maryland, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Sixty miles of this trail lie within the authorized PHT corridor, connecting to the 70-mile Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail (recognized in 1986 as a National Recreation Trail and a segment of the PHT) at Ohiopyle, Pennsylvania.

The Great Allegheny Passage, which recently received recognition as a National Recreation Trail, is nearing completion. One hundred continuous miles already are completed between Meyersdale and McKeesport, including 42 miles within the PHT corridor (connecting to the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail).



Laurel Highlands Trail, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania



© Allegheny Trail Alliance



One-hundred mile riders, Great Allegheny Passage, Pennsylvania

2002 State of the Trail Report

In 2002 the first of four interpretive wayside exhibits were installed along the Great Allegheny Passage. With support from the NPS's Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail office, additional exhibits will document the region's place in history, ranging from George Washington's role in the British and French struggle to control the frontier to the coal, steel and transportation industries that powered the country's Industrial Revolution.

Priorities 2003:

Trail Development: Projects underway along the south extension in Pennsylvania — a 12-mile section between Meyersdale and the Big Savage Tunnel, the tunnel rehabilitation, improvements to the Keystone Viaduct — are expected to provide a continuous trail between the state line and McKeesport by the end of 2003. Complete permanent route for the Steel Valley Trail.

Local Assistance: Continue support for trail development and construction. Work with ATA, NPS and Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Recreation to place signs recognizing the Laurel Highlands Trail as a segment of the PHT.

Education and Interpretation: Continue to add additional wayside exhibits along ATA trails and promote the new guidebook.

The Potomac Trail Council has been organized to provide the following public services in support of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail:

- support and encourage efforts to develop, protect, study, interpret, maintain and celebrate the recreation, natural and cultural resources of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail;
- coordinate and encourage cooperation and collaboration among institutions and individuals interested in the trail;
- provide coordinated distribution of public information about access to the Trail and opportunities to participate in trail activities;
- serve as an information network for the Trail and its opportunities among all institutions and people interested in the trail;
- serve as a consolidated voice on matters pertaining to the trail before federal policy making bodies.



Presentations at the annual Potomac Trail Caucus, held each fall and attended by interested groups and individuals from throughout the trail corridor.

POTOMAC TRAIL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 3738
FREDERICK, MD 21705
(888) 223-4093
info@potomactrail.org

IN MEMORIAM

Philip Woodworth Ogilvie, Ph.D., one of the founding directors of the Potomac Trail Council, died on September 4, 2002. Phil was devoted to the conservation of the Potomac watershed and to hiking, bicycling and, especially paddling, in the



Friends of the Potomac

PHT corridor as a way to learn through experiencing this exceptional place. An accomplished scholar on the Potomac region, Phil viewed the PHT as vehicle to explore the nexus of nature, history and outdoor recreation. The National Park Service and the George Washington University International Institute of Tourism Studies will continue to develop Phil's ambitious project, a web-based interactive and interdisciplinary guide to the Potomac River corridor. To recognize Phil's contributions to the PHT, the Greater Washington National Parks Fund has established a memorial fund in his name.

Although he will be missed by all of us who love the Potomac, Phil has left us richer for having known him and learned from him.

The **Potomac Trail Council** is an alliance of community organizations and local agencies committed to the development, protection, interpretation and celebration of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. Our goal is to secure land and water routes in the PHNST corridor for public use, while protecting natural settings and historic landscapes.

In addition, we support the efforts of local organizations working to establish a continuous 425-mile network of trails between the Chesapeake Bay and Allegheny Highlands in Western Pennsylvania. As similar efforts have demonstrated, this goal is clearly attainable through cooperation and information sharing among interested individuals, local agencies and citizen organizations.

The Potomac Trail Council's primary focus is on efforts to protect natural corridors and secure public access to land and water trails along the Potomac and, when encouraged by PTC partners, the Potomac's immediate tributaries.

PTC is designed to be the agent of cooperative and collaborative efforts throughout the entire trail corridor, seeking to encourage and assist partner institutions in their own efforts.

PTC is governed by an all-volunteer, 13- member board elected at meetings open to the public. Interested individuals are encouraged to join our trails, advocacy, outreach and fundraising committees.


PTC welcomes and encourages a broad range of conservation and education activities involving the Potomac River, and invites participation by the many institutions studying and celebrating the Potomac watershed. Our partners share news, information and access to technical resources throughout the PHNST corridor. Join these organizations and become a partner today.

Potomac Trail Council Partners

American Hiking Society
Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship
City of Alexandria, Virginia
Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
C&O Canal Association
Charles County, Maryland, Office of Tourism
Chesapeake Hiking & Outdoor Society (CHAOS)
Fairfax Trails and Streams
George Washington University
International Institute for Tourism Studies
Great Falls Trail Blazers
Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin
Lancaster County, Virginia, Planning and Land Use
Department
Northern Neck Planning District Commission
Northern Neck Tourism Council
Northern Virginia Conservation Trust
Northern Virginia Regional Commission
Partnership for the National Trails System
Prince William Conservation Alliance
Potomac Appalachian Trail Club
Potomac River Greenways Coalition, Inc.
Potomac Water Trail Association
Prince William County Park Authority, Virginia
Southern Prince George's Trails Coalition
The Wilderness Society

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304-535-4014 (recorded info)
www.nps.gov/pohe
phnst@nps.gov