## The Wild Side of the Potomac River

harles County is located in Southern Maryland approximately 18 miles south of Washington, D.C. Charles County features a wealth of natural, cultural and historic treasures, diverse natural landscapes, and an expansive

waterfront which offers numerous opportunities for recreation and water-based activities such as boating, paddling, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

Historically, Charles County's economy was based on agriculture its rural landscapes interspersed with small towns and farming villages. But in the last decade, the county has seen tremendous suburban



expansion. The population has grown steadily from 111,600 in 1995, to 150,000 in 2014. In spite of its growth, the county still has areas with small town characteristics and a diverse variety of agricultural lands, natural areas and protected open space.

#### Natural Resource Features and Conservation

Charles County's environmental assets include an extensive shoreline, broad estuarine rivers, forested areas, vistas of the Potomac, Patuxent and Wicomico Rivers and rural

landscapes. The County's rivers, streams, marshland, forests and shoreline support a wide variety of plant and wildlife communities. These diverse environments contribute to the County's overall beauty, quality of life, and rural character. The

County has: • The largest Blue Heron Rookery on the East Coast, located in Nanjemoy;



• The second largest Bald Eagle population in the State;

• One of the highest populations of breeding Red-Headed Woodpeckers in the State;

• One of the most productive tributaries of the Potomac, Mattawoman Creek, which has a high diversity of fish, and healthy stands of aquatic vegetation; and

• Zekiah Swamp, the largest hardwood swamp in the Maryland, which is recognized by the State for its unique ecological importance and received the highest rating of all natural areas in the Chesapeake Bay region by the Smithsonian Institution.

## The Potomac River and Fisheries



the Chesapeake Bay. With more than 296 miles of Potomac River shoreline, the Lower Potomac River is an important resource for Maryland's commercial and recreational fishing industries.

The Potomac River is the

second largest tributary to

Yellow Perch (Perca flavescens)

The Potomac River provides vital spawning grounds for the 64 documented fish species found in the waters below Washington D.C. The Potomac has eight major tributaries and varies in width from less than 1 mile near Indian Head to over 10 miles at its confluence with the Chesapeake Bay.

Largemouth Bass: Considered the most popular sportfish in the United States, Largemouth Bass like large, slow moving rivers or streams with soft bottoms and clear water. They are found in all waters of Maryland from freshwater to brackish (a

mix of fresh and saltwater) including the Potomac River and the shoreline of Charles County. Largemouth Bass average 2 to 3 lbs. in Potomac tidal waters. Five pound fish are not uncommon and every year a few 7 to 8 pounders are caught. The record for



Largemouth Bass (Micropterus salmoides)

Maryland tidal waters was caught in the Potomac River and was just over 11 pounds. Largemouth Bass spawn as early as March or as late as June, depending on water temperatures. For more information on recreational size and creel limits in Maryland visit the web site http:// dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/regulations/regindex.asp

Anadromous Fish: Anadromous fish are species that live in marine environments and migrate to freshwater to spawn. Many species, such as striped bass, yellow perch, white perch, shad and river herring, have substantial economic benefit for commercial and recreational fisheries. There has been a decline in these species in the Chesapeake Bay system due, in part, to changing environmental conditions and water quality that impact the early life stages of the fish.

Natural Heritage Areas and Endangered Species:

There are several endangered species habitats throughout the County including: Long's Bittercress (Cardamine longii) or the Federal endangered species list, and Sensitive Joint-Vetch (Aeschynomene virginica), which is on Maryland's list of endangered plants.



Long's Bittercress (left) and Joint-Vetch (right)

Communities that contain one or more threatened or endangered species or wildlife

species in need of conservation are designated as Natural Heritage Areas (NHA). These areas contain a unique blend of geological, hydrological, climatological or biological features, and are considered to be among the best statewide examples of its kind. Charles County has four designated Natural Heritage Areas: Allen's Fresh, Chicamuxen Creek, Popes Creek, and Upper Nanjemoy Creek.

## Birding and Wildlife Viewing

Charles County has many lakes, ponds and extensive wetlands. Virtually all forested areas in the county are second-growth, but some are quite old. The varied topography and proximity to water make Charles County a natural destination for wildlife. Paddling Charles County's water trails provides an opportunity to explore and learn

about diverse habitats, and view all kinds of wildlife. Here is a sampling of some of the County's most celebrated natural residents.

The Bald Eagle: Every year, more and more residents and tourists to Charles



Nesting Bald Eagles are common in Charles County.

County are reporting the thrill of watching a Bald Eagle soar over the Potomac River shoreline and hearing its call. The Bald Eagle has made a full recovery throughout Maryland and there are a number of nest sites in Charles County especially along the Potomac River Shoreline.



A Great Blue Heron.

These are sites where water birds, such s herons, egrets, terns and glossy bis, congregate or colonize during he nesting season. These species ave declined dramatically due to abitat loss and human disturbances, particularly during the nesting eason. The Great Blue Heron is the only colonial water bird known to nest in Charles County. The largest Blue Heron rookery on the East Coast, north of Florida, is located in Nanjemoy, and is managed by The Nature Conservancy.

Colonial Water Bird Nesting Sites:

Historic Waterfowl Staging and Concentration Areas:

Waterfowl nest and rear their young in tidal waters, tributary streams, and tidal and non-tidal wetlands. Waterfowl also derive at least part of their food from aquatic plants and animals gathered during migration and throughout the winter season. Examples of waterfowl found in Charles County are Common Goldeneye, Canvas Back, Lesser Scalp, Greater Scalp

Forest Interior Dwelling Birds: There are 19 species of forest interior dwelling birds that are afforded protection in Maryland many of them are neotropical nigrants. To breed successfully many of these birds need large forest tracts of 50 acres or more, or corridors connecting larger forested

tracts. The greatest threat to forest

and Bufflehead ducks.

Colorful Cardinals are among the birds seen in Charles County's forested areas.

For more information on birding in Charles County contact the Maryland Audubon

interior dwelling birds is increased fragmentation of forests due to land development.

Society at 410-558-2473 or 301-375-8522, or see http://somdaudubon.org/articles/ SorzanoBrochure2010.pdf

## Butterflies and Dragons

Maryland is home to about 151 species of butterflies. Of these, 129 species regularly occur in Maryland and 22 others are either irregular vagrants, such as the Gulf Fritillary, or were once a part of our landscape, but have now vanished, such as the Regal Fritillary.

Maryland's butterflies range in size from

the large, showy Giant Swallowtail to

the tiny and easily overlooked Eastern



A Monarch butterfly

Tailed-Blue. Some are relatively camouflaged to blend into their surroundings, like the Tawny Emperor, while others are brilliantly colored to warn potential predators of their poisonous taste, like the Monarch.



Dragonflies are generally larger than Damsels and hold

The dragonfly dates back at least 320 million years, long pefore dinosaurs roamed the earth. Today nearly 5,000 types are known worldwide. Maryland is home to 180 species and 60 percent are considered rare or uncommon, ncluding the treetop emerald, the jewel wing and the

13-miles long and connects the

301 in White Plains. The rail

Town of Indian Head with Route

Dragonflies are actually two closely-related groups of insects: damselflies and true dragonflies. Dragons tend to be larger, more robust and stronger fliers; they typically extend their wings horizontally. Damsels are comparatively small, dainty in appearance and weaker fliers. Their wings are usually lifted vertically and folded together above the body. They feed on a variety of mosquitoes, midges, and black and deer flies. Dragonflies have excellent vision. Their compound eyes contain 28,000 facets, whereas a housefly has only 4,000.

For more information on Maryland's butterflies and dragonflies see www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/Plants Wildlife/mdbutterflies.asp and www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/Plants\_Wildlife/dragonflies.asp.

## Other Points of Interest in the Area

The Indian Head Rail Trail (IHRT) The IHRT is a Rails-to-Trails success story. Charles County converted the abandoned railroad corridor into one of the most popular trails in the region. The trail is



The Indian Head Rail Trail

line was built in 1918 as a supply oute for the Navy's Indian Head 1) Act responsibly. Powder Factory. The trail passes through the scenic and relatively undeveloped Mattawoman Creek tream valley where trail users will ee mature forests, wetlands and wild animals. farms. For more information visit www.charlescountyparks.com

Chicamuxen Wildlife Management Area

This 381-acre property was the site of a Civil War encampment led by Union General Joseph Hooker. Today, it is a protected area with abundant waterfowl and forest interior birds. Bald eagles can often be seen and many hiking trails allow visitors to explore the property. For more information visit www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/ southern/chicamuxen.asp.

Port Tobacco Historic District Port Tobacco is one of the oldest communities on the East Coast. Prior to being colonized by the English

in 1634, the site was home to the Indian settlement, "Potopaco." During the late 1600s, Port Tobacco became a major seaport, and later the county seat. Visitors to the area can tour the reconstructed Port Tobacco Courthouse the restored One Room Schoolhouse built in 1876, and the Thomas Stone National Historic Site - a plantation home that belonged to one of

Port Tobacco marker

the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Historic Port Tobacco Court House is located off of Chapel Point Road near the intersection of Route 6. In 1685, it was a naval port of entry for the Crown.

The town remained a major port through the end of the Revolutionary War.

information on visiting these sites call 301-369-5819. Historic St. Ignatius Church was founded in 1641. It is one of the oldest Catholic Parishes in continuous service in the United States. The manor house and church have served as residence for priests at Chapel Point for more than 300 years. Today, the church is located adjacent to Maryland State Park Property.

Catslide House, Stagg Hall and the Courthouse (1819) are open for tours. For more

#### Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway

America's roots of "toleration" run throughout Southern Maryland, where the original English settlers - Protestant and Catholic - recognized the rights of individuals to hold dissenting religious opinions. Now, such freedoms are celebrated at long established places of worship all over the region.

The Scenic Byway route includes several branches that reach toward the Potomac River and incorporates many of the nation's oldest churches, including the site of the first Roman Catholic Mass held in English speaking America.

Visit the Religious Freedom Scenic Byway web site at www. and click on Byways and Trails to learn more.



The Religious Freedom Scenic Byway features historic churches and cemeteries.

#### Leave No Trace

Please practice the following stewardship principles of Leave No Trace:

#### 1) Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know your route and the limitations of yourself and your group.
- Carry the proper equipment and clothing Notify someone of the time you intend to return. leave no trace
- 2) Stay in Designated Areas
- Keep to designated trails and public areas. • Keep groups small and avoid trampling plants.
- Protect wildlife and your food store rations securely.
- Leave recreation areas and picnic sites cleaner than you found them.

#### 3) Dispose of Waste Properly

- Clean fish at designated areas.
- Pick up litter and dispose of all waste in proper recepticals or take it with you.

#### 4) Leave What You Find and Be Considerate of Other Visitors

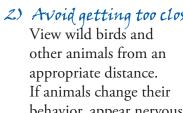
- Respect our natural and cultural heritage leave all items as you found them.
- Keep noise to a minimum enjoy the music of nature. • Respect private property and the privacy of others.

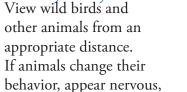
For more information on Leave No Trace ethics visit www.lnt.org, call 1-800-332-4100, or contact your local resource managers for additional guidance.

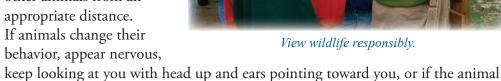
### Wildlife Viewing Ethics

Stay clear of nests, dens and rookeries. Do not touch or feed wild animals. Do not allow pets to interfere with

2) Avoid getting too close. View wild birds and other animals from an







doesn't resume its normal activity, then you are too close.

3) Make your observation brief, then move on. If you are looking at baby birds in a nest, fish in a pond, etc., remember that they can't leave and that you are interrupting normal behavior.

## 4) Don't chase an animal.

Don't chase an animal trying to get a better glimpse or photo. Don't follow animals or behave in any way that might be seen as "harassment." And don't allow your pets to do it either.

## 5) Move quietly and slowly.

At popular viewing sites limit your movement and noise level so you do not distract the wildlife. Loud noises, sudden movements or an unannounced approach can startle and cause stress to animals.

- 6) Do not use calls or whistles, or try to rouse animals in any way. This can interrupt breeding cycles, drive birds from their territories, or make animals "call shy" so they don't respond to the real thing.
- 7) Divide large groups of people into small groups. Small groups of people are less disturbing, usually talk more quietly, and tend to act in a more responsible way than big groups do.

#### Paddling and Boating Safety Tips

Although many Charles County streams and coves are suitable for beginners, there are areas of open water that are subject to tidal influence, high winds and strong currents. Be prepared! Review these guidelines before getting on the water. Those new to the water can take part in group paddle trips offered by the County and more experienced boaters can create their own adventures that can range from a few hours to all day. Be prepared before you get on the water and review these guidelines.

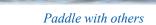
- Wear a properly-fitted, U.S. Coast Guard approved, lifejacket while on the water. (See Maryland Boating Regulations below)
- Boat with others and carry a spare paddle. Boating safety increases with numbers. Leave a copy of your "float plan" with a land-based contact. Know your route and

any potential hazards

protective footwear.

and water temperatures and always wear

along it. Review



maps, river levels, and weather conditions before launching. Be aware of obstacles such as fallen trees, debris, islands and rocks which you

may encounter along the route. Check For more information on paddling streamflow conditions at the USGS and boating safety visit website waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/rt http://cgaux.org or Dress appropriately for the weather, air www.dnr.state.md.us/boating/safety

- Carry a supply of food and water adequate for the length of your trip. Stay hydrated and protected from the sun year-round to minimize the danger of dehydraton and heat exhaustion
- Never paddle farther from shore than you are prepared to swim and stay at least 100 yards away from all moving vessels, piers and other restricted areas.
- Keep your weight centered and as low as possible at all times, especially when entering and exiting a boat. If your boat flips over, remain calm. Hold onto your paddle and the boat if possible. Try to reach a calm, shallow spot or the shoreline, then empty the boat and re-enter.
- Be alert to weather changes. Thunderstorms can be common during the warm weather months and are usually accompanied by temperature drops, increased winds and dark clouds. Get off the water immediately if you see lightning.

#### Maryland Boating and Fishing Regulations

Personal Flotation Devices: Boats propelled by oars or paddles are required to carry one PFD of either Type I, II, III, or V, for each person on board, regardless of length. All motorized craft 16 – 65 feet must carry a Type I, II, III, or V, for each person on board, plus one extra Type IV. Anyone under the age of 13, in a boat less than 21 feet in length, while underway, must

wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket all times. (MD State Law).

Boat Registration: All boats, whether in Maryland if it is: equipped with any kind of primary or auxiliary mechanical propulsion and used in Maryland most in a calendar year. U.S. Coast Guard documented vessels using Maryland waters are NOT exempt from the vessel excise tax. When used principally in Maryland, documented vessels must display a documented use decal. Visit http://dnr. maryland.gov/boating/registration/ for more information.

Fishing Licenses: Maryland's recreational fishing requirements and rules are divided into

Tidal (Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries) and Non-Tidal. A Non-Tidal Fishing License is required for both residents and nonresidents to fish in the Potomac and its tributaries. Annual licenses require a fee for Maryland residents and non-residents, which allows fishing from January 1 through December 31. A 3-day or 5-day license can also be purchased for a reduced fee. For more information visit www.dnr.state.md.us/service/fishing\_license.asp

Wear a Coast Guard approved PFD

## Consider a Shuttle

To enhance your water trail experience along routes that have more than one access point, make plans to shuttle your vessels ahead of time. The idea of a shuttle is to launch your vessel at the upstream point of access and have your vehicle at the downstream destination. This is easily done with two or more vehicles. Employ a friend or hire a professional shuttle service to take you to your starting point.

## For More Information

Charles County Parks Department 1001 Radio Station Road La Plata, MD 20646 phone: 301-932-3470 www.charlescountyparks.com

Charles County Office of Tourism

200 Baltimore Street, P.O. Box 2150

e-mail: tourism@charlescounty.org

www.charlescountymd.gov

In Case of Emergency

phone: 301-259-2500 or 301-369-5819

La Plata, MD 20646





MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Maryland Department of Natural Resources Chesapeake and Coastal Service Public Access and Water Trails Planning Program

580 Taylor Avenue, Suite E-2, Annapolis, MD 21401 DNR coordinates the creation of a statewide system of public water access sites and water trails and provides echnical, planning and design assistance to local overnments and other partners. For more info visit www.dnr.state.md.us/pawt.asp

In case of emergency, contact the Sheriff's Dept. Dispatch at (301) +911 and specify that you are in Charles County,

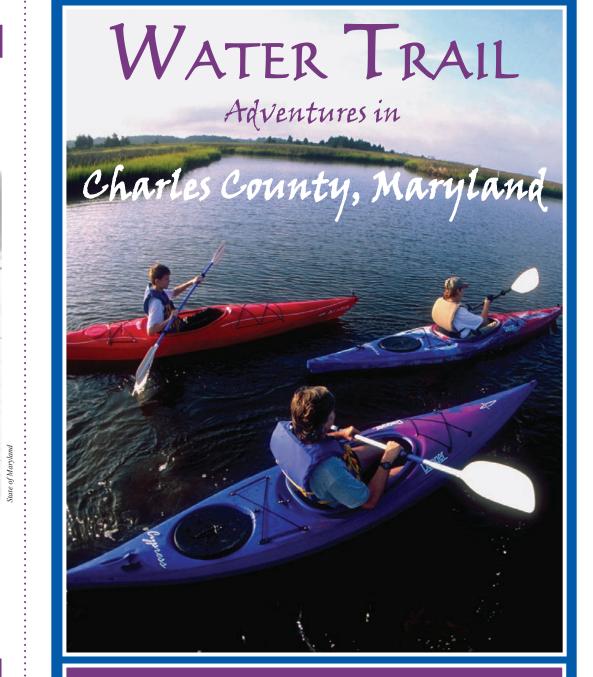
Partnerships and Coordination Project coordination, design and mapping for this publication were provided by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Chesapeake and Coastal Service in partnership with the Charles County Parks Department

Maryland or call the Maryland Natural Resource Police at 410-260-8888.

The facilities and services of the Department of Natural Resources are available to all without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin or physical or mental disability.

Call toll free in Maryland, 1-877-620-8DNR ext. 8780. TTY users call via the Maryland Relay. Accomodations for individuals with disabilities will be provided upon request. Seven days advance notice is requested.

Layout, design and maps by Lisa Gutierrez. Text by DNR and the Charles County Parks Departme



The Wild Side of the Potomac River

Produced through a partnership between the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Charles County Parks Department

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# WATER TRAILS IN CHARLES COUNTY

# Explore The Wild Side of the Potomac River

harles County has paddling routes that range from short 1 to 2 hour trips, to all day excursions with overnight camping options. Miles of undeveloped shoreline offer unparalleled opportunities for fishing, bird and wildlife watching, and exploring the Lower Potomac and its tributaries.

Some of the routes are in sheltered areas with moderate wind and current conditions that provide ideal conditions for novices and families. Other routes, such as those along the mainstem of the Potomac River, are more exposed and offer more challenging opportunities for experienced paddlers.

Water trails in this area support the Potomac River Water Trail, which is a federally designated National Recreation Trail that spans from western Maryland to the Chesapeake Bay. The water trail falls within the corridor of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST). To learn more about the PHNST visit www.nps.gov/pohe.

1 MATTAWOMAN CREEK TRAIL

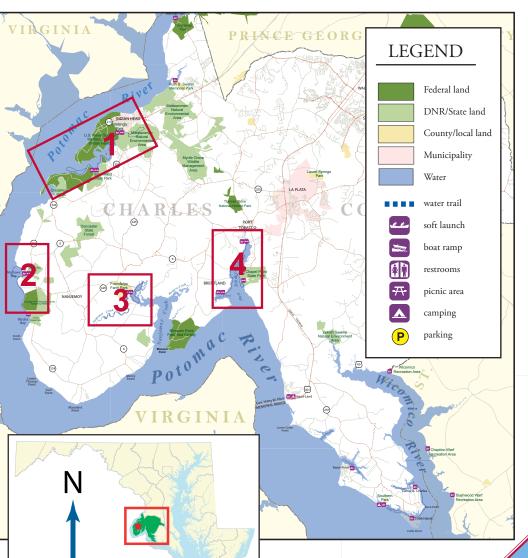
2 MALLOWS BAY TO PURSE STATE PARK (LOWER POTOMAC RIVER)

3 FRIENDSHIP FARM PARK TRAILS / NANJEMOY CREEK

4 PORT TOBACCO RIVER TRAIL

These maps are meant to be used as a reference for existing public boating access sites and facilities. It is strongly recommended that you consult a range of other detailed maps, charts and supplemental information geared to your specific needs when planning for or undertaking extended excursions.

#### All boat launch and access site fees listed here are subject to change.



## Respect Private Property - Do Not Trespass

The water access sites on this map welcome the public but be aware that there are extensive privately-owned lands along each of the water trails. Please respect private property - don't trespass.

#### **ATTENTION BOATERS**

Boats propelled by oars or paddles are required to carry one personal flotation device (PFD) of either Type I, II, III, or V, for each person on board, regardless of length. All motorized craft 16-65 feet must carry a Type I, II, III, or V, for each person on board, plus one extra Type IV. Persons under age 13 must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD at all times in any boat under 21 feet. (MD State Law).

Before you get on the water be sure to check Weather, Tides and River Conditions

Recreating on the water involves risks so safety and planning is of utmost importance. Even if the water looks calm, conditions on waterways are subject to rapidly changing conditions due to tides, wind and weather. Be sure to check river levels before launching. For more information call the National Weather Service at 703-996-2200.

Mattawoman Creek Trail

Mattawoman Creek Tran Mattingly Park, Sweden Point and the Potomac River

There are many ways to explore the Mattawoman Creek trail. Launch from Mattingly Park and head north to the Mattawoman Natural Environment Area (NEA). The sheltered creek is good for paddlers of all levels, and the riparian forest habitat is excellent for birdwatching. Paddlers can also follow the creek south past the U.S. Naval Surface Warfare Center to Smallwood State Park or continue on to the Potomac River. The distance from Mattingly Park downstream to Smallwood State Park, is approximately 4.5 miles and from the Park to the mouth of the Potomac River is and additional 2.25 miles. Keep in mind that the section of the trail below Smallwood is open water which is subject to wind, tide fluctuations, and variable weather conditions and is suitable for experienced paddlers only.

#### Mattingly Park Boat Ramp

GPS Location: 38°35'24.90"N 77°9'38.86"W Managed by: The Town of Indian Head (301) 743-5511

Amenities: Two lane boat ramp with boarding piers, portable toilet, picnic tables, fishing piers and trails. The large paved parking lot has spaces for cars and trailers. This access point is located along deep water in Mattawoman Creek and is most often frequented by bass boaters and other small boats.

Hours and fee: \$5 access fee (pay at ramp-side honor box) Directions: Follow Indian Head Highway/Rt. 210 south approximately 18 miles from the Capital Beltway (I-95). Turn left onto Mattingly Avenue and follow to the end of road.

#### Sweden Point Marina and Smallwood State Park

GPS Location: 38°33'30.76"N 77°11'19.62"W

Managed by: Maryland Department of Natural Resources (301) 743-7613 Amenities: The marina has a six-lane boat ramp, restrooms, picnic and fishing areas, campsites, trails, a seasonal concession stand and small boat rentals. Transient docking and annual leases are available for slips that can accommodate boats up to 36 feet. The parking lot is large and paved with room for 140 cars and trailers. The 628-acre park borders Mattawoman Creek less than a mile from its confluence with the Potomac River. The park is named after General William Smallwood, the fourth Governor of Maryland and a Revolutionary War officer. The plantation home is open on Sundays with limited hours. For more information visit the Park website at

http://dnr2.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/southern/smallwood.aspx Hours and fees: Smallwood State Park is open year-round (April through October) from 5 a.m. to sunset, and (November through March) from 7 a.m. to sunset. The daily boat ramp fee is \$10 or \$60 for a seasonal pass. Day use service charges are \$3 per person on weekends and holidays, April through October; \$3 per vehicle weekdays and weekends year round (honor system in effect when toll booth is not staffed). Out-of-state residents add \$2 to all day use service charges. Headquarters Office hours (November 1, 2012 -March 31, 2013) are Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Directions: Route 225 south from Indian Head to right on Route 224 (Chicamuxen Road)

at Mason Springs. The Park is on the right, 4 miles south of Mason Springs.

Mallows Bay to Purse State Park Trail Mallows Bay to Purse State Park Trail
Mallows Bay and the Lower Potomac River

This trail is part of the larger Lower Potomac River Water Trail, which runs from Washington, D.C., to Chesapeake Bay. Access points are few and far between here, but experienced paddlers and those who are willing to portage will be rewarded by the beautiful views and variety of habitats. Start your paddle by launching at Mallows Bay.

Mallows Bay features one of the largest "sunken ship graveyards" in North America, with vessels dating from the period of the American Revolution The area is home to over 100 wooden ships from of the U.S. Shipping Board Emergency Fleet, intended to carry troops and supplies to Europe during World War I.

Over time, many of the

ships have become small

The sunken ships in Mallows Bay serve as habitat for wildlife.

islands with their own mini-ecosystems and have converted the Bay into an area of natural and historic wonder. By law, the state owns any historic artifacts in tidal waters. State and federal officials are dedicated to preserving and protecting these resources. The loop trail around Mallows Bay is approximately 1.5 miles long.

Those interested in an extended and more challenging paddle can head south on the Potomac River from Mallows Bay to Purse State Park. This route is approximately 3 miles long and requires paddling on open water that is subject to tides, wind and waves. Along the way, paddlers can explore the Douglas Point Recreation Area / Nanejemoy Natural Resource Management Area (NRMA), which is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). BLM allows beach access and day-use along the shoreline which makes it an ideal resting spot for paddlers. Driftwood from the river often collects in this area so use caution when landing and exploring. Climb the bluff near the beach to see beautiful views of the river and Virginia shoreline. This 1900-acre site is contiguous to Purse State Park and Maryland Route 224. It has been labeled one of the most ecologically and culturally significant landscapes in Maryland. Migratory waterfowl, wading birds and Bald Eagles are common sights.

#### Mallows Bay Park Boat Ramp and Soft Launch GPS Location: 38°28'8.77"N 77°15'49.31"W

Managed by: Charles County Parks Deptartment (301) 932-3470

Amenities: Boat ramp, soft launch, and portable toilet. The paved parking lot has space for 16 cars, 15 trailers, and 3 ADA accessible spaces. The park also has hiking trails, interpretive signs, and picnic areas.

Hours and fee: Open year-round from 5:30 a.m to Dusk

Directions: From MD Rt. 210 head south on Rt. 225 to Rt. 224 (Chicamuxen Road). Continue south on Rt. 224 which becomes Riverside Road. Turn left onto Wilson Landing Road and follow it to the end. Address: 1440 Wilson Landing Road, Nanjemoy, MD 20662

#### Douglas Point Recreation Area / Nanjemov NRMA

GPS Location: 38°26'58.76"N 77°15'45.65"W

Managed by: U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Lower Potomac Field Station (703) 339-8009

Amenities: Beach access, trails, picnic area and wildlife viewing. There is a small gravel lot for this site along Rt. 224. This site has 3 miles of land trails for hiking, horse riding, and mountain biking, 548 acres of hardwood forest and marshes, picnic areas, and a universally accessible, historical interpretative walk and a hunting blind.

Hours and fee: Open seven days a week year-round, from sunrise to sunset. No fee. Directions: From MD Rt. 210 head south on Rt. 225 to Rt. 224 (Chicamuxen Road) Continue south on Rt. 224 which becomes Riverside Road. The parking area is on the right (west side of Route 224) approximately 1 mile past Liverpool Point Road.

#### Purse State Park

GPS Location: 38°25'57.54" N 77°15'24.13" W

Managed by: Maryland Department of Natural Resources (301) 743-7613 Amenities: Access to the water at this site requires a 1/4-mile portage along a wooded, natural surface trail. Visitors should check tides before visiting, as there is very little beach area at high tide. Parking is provided at the small gravel lot on Rt. 224, which has room for approximately 8 vehicles. Other activities at the park include beachcombing, fishing,

land trails, hunting, and bird watching. The park is a 90-acre reserve located on Wades Bay, off the Potomac River and has high quality forest, marshlands and pools surrounded by moss-covered rock walls. This is an excellent place for wildlife viewing as eagles, ospreys and Great Blue Herons can be seen here. Forest interior nesting birds such as acadian flycatchers, wood thrushes, northern parula warblers, ovenbirds, hooded warblers,



Wades Bay at Purse State Park

scarlet tanagers and the uncommon worm-eating warbler have been seen in the park and at other nearby places along Rt. 224.

Hours and fee: Open year-round from sunrise to sunset. No fee. Directions: Follow Rt. 225 south from Indian Head and take a right onto Rt. 224

(Chicamuxen Road) at Mason Springs. Continue for approximately 13.5 miles. The parking lot is on left (east side of Route 224), 1.8 miles south of Liverpool Point Road. Address: 2750 Sweden Point Road, Maurbury, MD 20658

Douglas Pt. Recreation Are Nanjemov I Wades

0.9 0 0.15 0.3 Port Tobacco River Trail
Port Tobacco Marina to Chapel Point and Goose Creek

This trail is remote but very scenic. Start your trip at Port Tobacco Marina. This small,

privately-operated marina is located in the quiet headwaters of the Port Tobacco River.

From the boat ramp head south along the river. Follow the shoreline and be aware of

larger motorized boats that travel the main channel and can create waves in their wake.

Cross the river to reach Fourth Point, which is the prominent outcropping that marks the

northwest corner of Chapel Point State Park. Follow the park shoreline south to reach the

earthen boat ramp. The distance from Port Tobacco Marina to the Chanel Point launch is

and returning. The northern loop is a distance of approximately 1.5 miles and the southern

experience can launch from Chapel Point and head south, crossing the river at Deep Point,

to reach the western shore of the Port Tobacco River and continuing to Goose Bay Marina

and Campground. The distance from Chapel Point boat ramp to Goose Bay Marina and

Amenities: This site has restrooms, a concrete boat ramp, vehicle and trailer parking is in

a small grass lot (on the hill). This site can get very busy on weekends during the boating

Hours and fee: Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily during the boating season. Winter hours are

Directions: From the Town of La Plata, go west on MD Rt. 6 (Port Tobacco Road) to

limited. There is a \$5 fee to launch from the boat ramp. All visitors must go to the office to

loop is approximately 2 miles. Those wanting a longer, more challenging paddling

Scenic view from Chapel Point State Park

Friendship Farm Park Trails Nanjemoy Creek, Hilltop Fork and Church Creek

These trails provide options for for paddlers of all skill levels that range from leisurely to more challenging paddling experiences. The creeks in this area feature open water and scenic marshes, abundant with wildlife, marsh plants and several species of dragonflies. Please note that all of the paddle routes here are loop trails which start and end at the boat ramp and/or kayak launch.

Hilltop Fork and Church Creek: To paddle these routes, launch and take a left (heading northeast). Follow the shoreline to your left to enter Church Creek. This route is a good choice for less experienced paddlers or those wanting a leisurely experience since the high banks provide a more sheltered area where paddlers are protected from extreme winds and rough water. The Church Creek route is approximately 2 miles round-trip. To reach Hilltop Fork continue northeast past Church Creek following the shoreline to your left. Hilltop Fork has several fingers which end in shallow waters. The round-trip route is about 4

Nanjemoy Creek: To explore the meandering headwaters of Nanjemoy Creek, launch and take a right (heading southwest). This is another route that is relatively sheltered. It winds through low marshes and forested areas. The waterway is accessible for several miles but there are no support facilities or designated rest areas so paddlers need to monitor their distance. This is a loop trail so plan for your return to the launch site. Those seeking a more challenging paddle

experience can head straight out from the launch into the open waters of Nanjemoy Creek and the Potomac River. It is 5 miles one-way from the launch site to the Potomac River. This distance should only be attempted by experienced

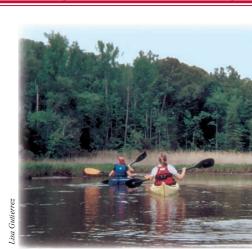
The boat ramp and dock area are designated as "Free Fishing Zones," meaning that no fishing license is required in this area. The park also has opportunities for wildlife viewing and over seven miles of recreational trails which feature interpretive signs, benches and

Friendship Farm Park Boat Ramp and Soft Launch

GPS Location: 38°27'14.81" N 77°9'1.17" W Managed by: Charles County Parks Department (301) 932-3470 Amenities: Boat ramp, fishing pier, primitive campsite, portable toilet, picnic areas,

land trails and wildlife observation decks. The parking lot is paved with space for approximately 14 vehicles and one ADA accessible space. The park is 382 acres. Hours and fee: Open year-round from dawn to dusk. No fee. Directions: From La Plata, take MD Rt 6 (Port Tobacco Road) west to Durham Church Road. Turn left onto Durham Church Road, which becomes Rt. 425 (Ironsides Road.) Turn left onto Friendshi Landing Road which will end at the boat ramp parking lot. Address: 4750 Friendship Landing Road, Nanjemov, MD 20662

0.25 /0.5



#### Chapel Point State Park

GPS Location: 38°28'14.58"N 77°1'53.37"W

Managed by: Maryland Department of Natural Resources at 301-743-7613 Amenities: Portable toilet, picnic area, fishing, trails and a primitive paddle-in campsite (available by permit only). Parking at the small gravel lot is limited. The 828-acre park is located on the Port Tobacco River and is mostly natural areas with a rich diversity of forest, field, and tidal wetland habitats. Four permanent waterfowl blinds are available for observation or hunting use. The area has a small sand and gravel launch that is suitable for small boats, canoes and kayaks, and personal watercraft. Consult tide charts before visiting this area since there is almost no beach at high tide. The waterfront offers excellent fishing. Hours and fee: Open year-round from sunrise to sunset. No fee.

Directions: Chapel Point is located 5 miles south of La Plata. From the MD Rt. 6 and Rt. 301 intersection, follow Rt. 301 south to Chapel Point Road. Follow Chapel Point Road west for approximately 2.3 miles to the park entrance, and follow signs to the ramp.

## Goose Bay Marina and Campground

Managed by: Goose Bay Marina and Campground (301) 932-0885

Amenities: Goose Bay is a large privately-operated marina and campground located on the Port Tobacco River near the confluence with the Potomac River. The marina has restrooms, a three-lane concrete boat ramp that can be accessed between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m., and a large parking area. The campground has both RV and tent camping sites. Campers have access to bathhouses, the picnic pavilion,

playground and swimming pool.



This facility is very busy on weekends during the boating season, so plan ahead. Hours and fees: Seasonal hours are 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. Winter hours are limited. There is an \$8 boat launching fee and a \$3 parking fee if you wish to park an additional vehicle. Directions: Follow US 301 south to the Intersection of US 301 & Rt. 6 (La Plata, MD), turn right on Rt. 6 (West) continue on Rt. 6 approx. 5.5 miles, turning left on Blossom Point Road (Goose Bay sign on roadway). Follow Blossom Point Road 1.6 miles, turning left on Brentland Road. Continue on Brentland Road 1 mile, then turn right on Goose Bay Lane. Follow Goose Bay Lane to the store (on left). Be careful, there are speed bumps on this road. For more information see www.goosebaymarina.com. Address: Goose Bay Lane, Welcome, MD 20693

**Chapel Point** State Park 0 0.2 0.4 0.8 1.2

approximately 2.5 miles.

The quiet and secluded shoreline of

Chapel Point State Park is ideal for

Point has a paddle-in campsite that

is available seasonally and by permit

only. Call 301-743-7613 for permit

exploring in canoes and kayaks. Chapel

information. Short trips can be made by

heading either north or south from the

boat ramp, making a loop in the coves,

Campground is approximately 2.25 miles.

season so plan ahead and visit accordingly.

pay the launch fee and receive a receipt.

Shirley Blvd. and follow the signs to the marina.

Address: 7610 Shirley Blvd., Port Tobacco, MD 20677

GPS Location: 38°29'49.29"N 77° 1'34.86"W

Managed by: Port Tobacco Marina (301) 870-3133

Port Tobacco Marina