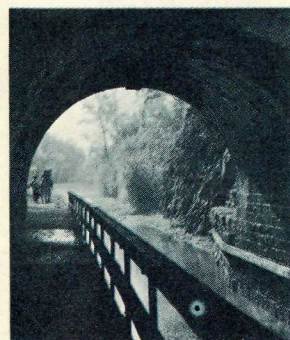
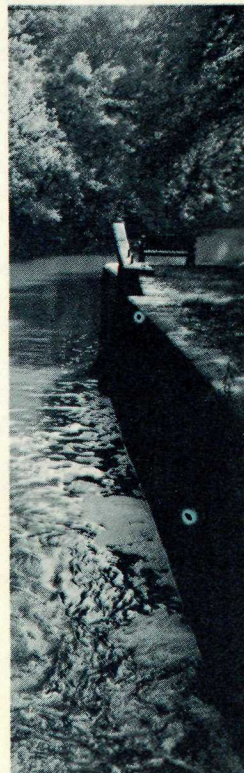
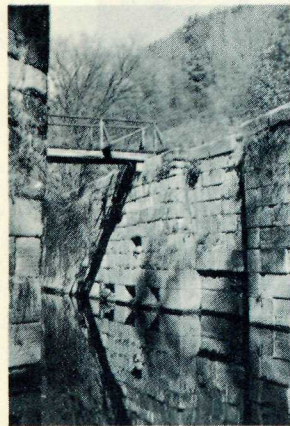


Chesapeake & Ohio Canal

NATIONAL MONUMENT • DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA/MARYLAND

The "Big Ditch" stretching 184.5 miles is maintained for recreationists, nature lovers, and conservationists. Following the Potomac River Valley from Georgetown in the District of Columbia to Cumberland, Md., it is a memento of the days when canals were the chief means of commerce. Built between 1828 and 1850, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal began as a dream to tap the wealth of the west. Plagued by the forces of nature, continuing financial problems, and conflicts with the railroad, it was abandoned in 1924. The rewatered sections of the canal and the numerous remains of lift locks, aqueducts, dams, culverts, and lockhouses, serve as reminders of the days when our young republic was establishing links with the frontier. The communities which sprang up along the canal are rich in history. River crossings used by major armies during the French and Indian, Revolutionary, and Civil Wars may be viewed from many points along the canal. The canal also runs through Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, Fort Frederick State Park, and Antietam National Battlefield Site. Signs along the canal and a museum at Great Falls, Md., open daily, help to tell this story; in summer, conducted walks and programs are offered.



YOU WILL WANT TO KNOW

Extent of Canal Lands. National Park Service lands along the C & O Canal vary in width from less than 20 feet to more than 1,000 feet, averaging about 150 feet in width. These lands extend from the canal to the river for more than one-half the entire distance. It is not practical to indicate the areas included in canal ownership in this folder, but detailed information can be provided upon request. Lands outside the limits of National Park Service administration are owned by private citizens, clubs, and corporations. The use of private land for camping or other activities must be arranged for with the owners.

Park Rangers and U.S. Park Police are the protective force of the canal. They patrol the area regularly and are on duty to help you and to enforce park regulations. Consult them if you are in any difficulty or if you have questions about the canal.

Hiking and Bicycling. The towpath is an elevated trail varying in width to 12 feet, built of earth and stone, treaded in places with shale or crushed stone, but eroded in other places to expose rough fill stone. Much of it is slippery or muddy when wet, but it dries rapidly. Most breaks in the towpath have been refilled; some, however, remain. The path is clear of growth and follows the canal for its entire length. Night travel, especially alone, is not recommended.

Bicyclists and hikers can travel the entire length of the towpath, although the going is difficult in several places. A bicycle path provides a detour around Widewater, and a county road bypass is recommended around the slack water above Dam 4 in the spring when the Potomac River level is high. Catocin Creek Aqueduct is in very poor condition and a detour around it is suggested. Bicycles should be pushed across all aqueducts.

Drinking water is available at most developed areas along the canal.

Canoeing. The water is excellent for canoeing from Georgetown (Lock 4) to Violets Lock (Lock 23) near Seneca. Above Seneca only short and widely separated stretches of canal are watered to support canoes: Lock 34 to Dam 3, Lock 40 to Dam 4, Big Pool, Little Pool, and Town Creek to Oldtown. Canoeing in the Potomac River is feasible only for experienced canoeists. Portages must be made at Dams 2, 3, 4, and 5; at the powerplant dam at Williamsport; and the PPG dam at North Branch.



Camping. Organized scout-camping is available by permit at Carderock, Swains Lock, and Violets Lock. Walk-in or boat-in camp areas are along the canal at Mountain Lock and Antietam Creek; they are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Organized groups, scouts and others must make advance arrangements for campouts. All gear must be carried into these camp areas since there is no direct vehicular access. Parking space is provided on public roads paralleling the canal. Camping with direct vehicular access is available at 15-mile Creek. Only minimum facilities are provided in this area, and there are no accommodations for trailer use.

For the hiker, bicyclist, canoeist, or others, there are day-apart campsites along the canal between Harpers Ferry and Cumberland. These are located at Lock 73; Lock 68; Lock 57; one-half mile downstream from Lock 54; Little Pool; 1 mile downstream from McCoys Ferry; 1½ miles upstream from Conococheague Creek Aqueduct (Pinesburg); Opequon; 1 mile upstream from Taylors Landing; one-half mile upstream from Lock 39; about 1 mile above Dam 3; and at Sandy Hook.

Camping along the canal is prohibited except at designated camping areas.

Picnicking. You are welcome to picnic anywhere along the canal. Please leave the area as tidy as you found it.

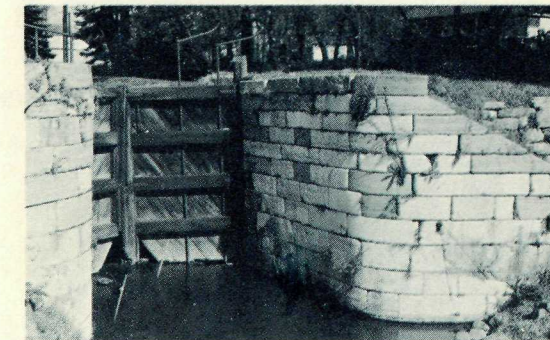
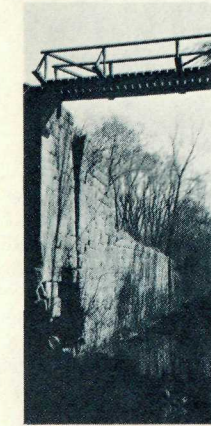
Boating. Only boats without motors are permitted on Big Pool, Little Pool, and the rewatered sections of the Canal at Oldtown, Dam 4 to Lock 40, and Lock 34 level. Boats with or without motors may be used on the Potomac River under Maryland boating regulations. The Potomac River is not part of the Chesapeake and Ohio National Monument and is not patrolled by park personnel. The National Park Service has provided boat launching ramps at Four Locks for access to slack water above Dam 5, and at Shinhan for access to slack water above Dam 3. Four public boat-launching ramps are available through the cooperative effort of the National Park Service, the Maryland Game and Inland Fish Commission, and local conservation organizations. Private boat launching ramps are located along the river on the Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia shores. Fees are usually charged for their use.

Vehicle traffic on towpath. Motor vehicles, including two-wheeled motor vehicles and horse-drawn vehicles, are not permitted on the towpath.

Fishing. Maryland fishing regulations apply to the canal and river, and a Maryland fishing license is required beyond the D.C. line. No license is required to fish within the District of Columbia.

Hunting. Hunting is not allowed within the boundaries of the park. However, hunters may cross canal lands at any point above Swains Lock (Lock 21) by the most direct and shortest route (with firearms unloaded, bows unstrung, and dogs on leash) to reach private lands between the canal and Potomac River or to gain access to the river.

A final note. Regulations common to the National Parks apply within the boundary of the monument. They are summed up in the basic law which established the National Park Service and directed it "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife... to provide for the enjoyment of same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." We are confident that your pride in our national heritage will lead you to leave for others, unimpaired, the things that give you pleasure along the historic C & O Canal.



☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1969-347-048/24

ADMINISTRATION

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Monument is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

For general information about the canal from Georgetown to Seneca, phone (area code 202) 381-7343, or write the Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway, 1111 19th St. North, Arlington, Va. 22209. For information about the canal from Seneca to Cumberland, Md., phone (area code 301) 432-5124, or write the Superintendent, C & O Canal National Monument, Box 158, Sharpsburg, Md. 21782.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service



CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO CANAL

