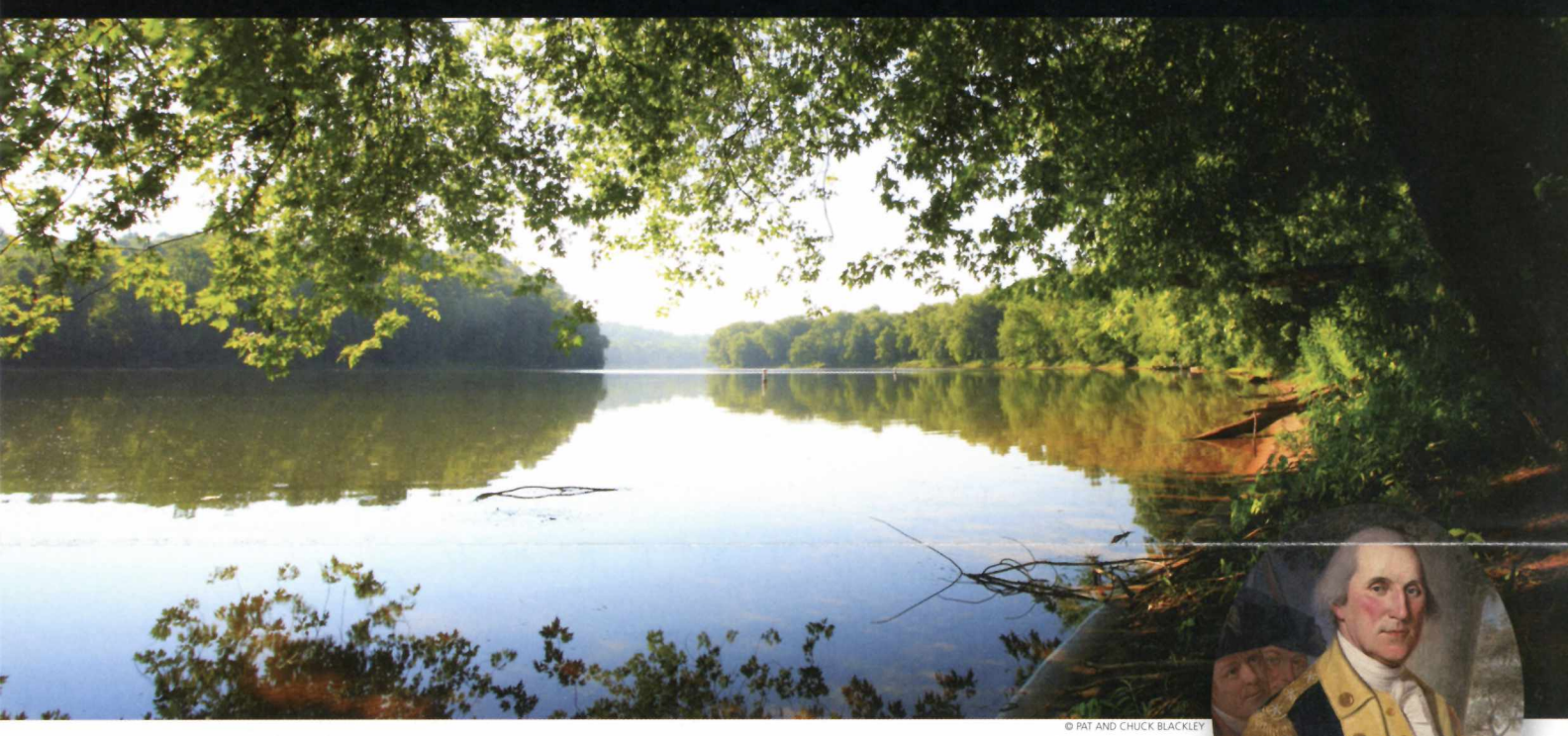
Potomac Heritage

National Scenic Trail
District of Columbia / Maryland / Pennsylvania / Virginia

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



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George Washington
NPS / INDEPENDENCE NHP

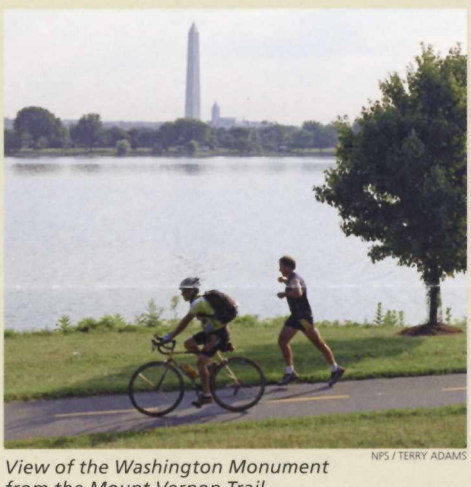
Linking the Potomac and upper Ohio river basins from Chesapeake Bay and Potomac tidewater to the Allegheny Highlands, the national scenic trail network lets you retrace—by foot, bicycle, horse, or boat—the corridor that George Washington considered essential to the nation's development.

A Rich Blend of Outdoor Recreation and Heritage

Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail lets you retrace George Washington's travels via landscapes and waterways that fueled his vision for westward expansion in the mid-1700s. He recognized that Pittsburgh, at the Ohio River, was closer to Georgetown (and a future Washington, DC) than to Philadelphia. Washington's dream—to link the Ohio and Potomac rivers—would tap Midwest agricultural wealth for global trade via Alexandria, VA, and the Chesapeake Bay. In fact, it birthed the region's industry and commerce of the 1800s.

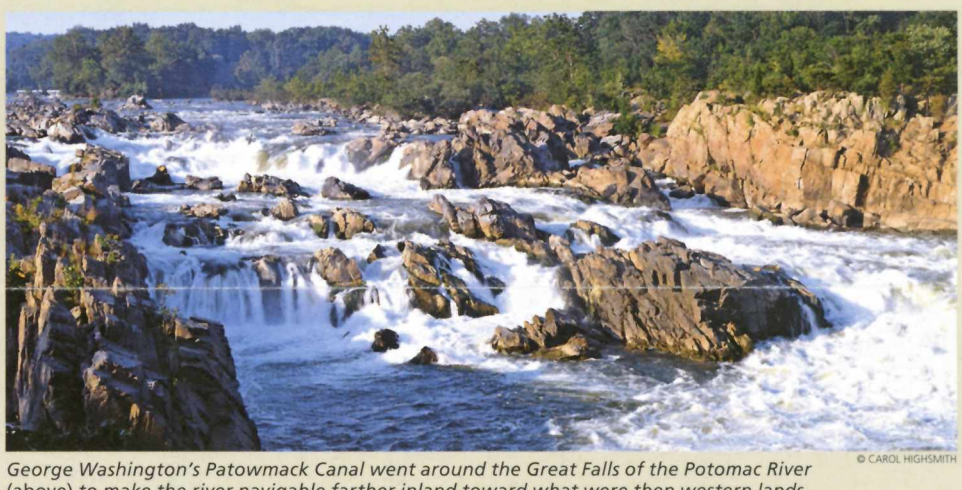
George Washington is everywhere here. From his riverside Mount Vernon estate, Washington foresaw the Potomac's commercial potential as well as sites for a national armory at Harpers Ferry (then in Virginia) and the Nation's Capital. His Patowmack Canal proved short-lived, but his foresight energized the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal that linked Washington, DC, and Cumberland, MD, by the mid-1800s. Steam-powered railroads, unknown in Washington's day, would reach the Ohio River valley by the 1850s. They traveled the upper Potomac valley but delivered payloads for global shipping from Baltimore, MD, not Alexandria, VA, as Washington had wanted. The C&O canalway was preserved, thanks to Justice William O. Douglas and other visionaries, and became a national historical park in 1971.

Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, authorized by Congress in 1983, is an expanding network. It encompasses urban parklands of the Nation's Capital and landscapes from tidewater marshlands to the Piedmont's rolling foothills to mountains and valleys of the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Highlands. We all benefit as communities and organizations—in their practice, planning, and partnerships—rediscover rivers and trails as windows on history, culture, and the natural world. Employing conservation easements, organized watershed advocacy, reclaimed brownfields (former industrial sites), open-space preservation, and community-based heritage tourism, citizens imagine and build an open-space experience that will endure for generations.



NPS / TERRY ADAMS

View of the Washington Monument from the Mount Vernon Trail.



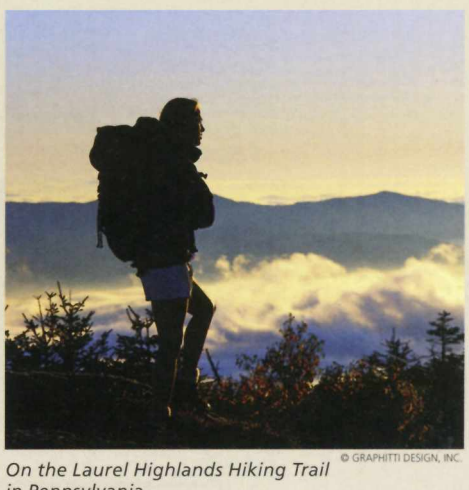
© CAROL HIGHSMITH

George Washington's Patowmack Canal went around the Great Falls of the Potomac River (above) to make the river navigable farther inland toward what were then western lands.



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Bicycling on the C&O Canal towpath in Maryland.



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On the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail in Pennsylvania.

Enjoying a Treasure Trove of Nature and History

Opportunities abound to explore wild nature, historic sites, museums, battlefields, and fortifications. Frederick Gutheim, biographer of the river, wrote that you can discover and enjoy the Potomac's lineage as "fishery, granary, harbor, route, homesite, plantation, hunting ground, mine, power source, factory, swamp, and pleasure ground."

From hiking, biking, or horseback riding to canoeing, kayaking, or fishing, the Trail corridor offers outdoor recreation and avenues for discovery. Watch and listen for pileated woodpeckers, deer, beavers, and foxes. Enjoy wildflowers and fall colors. Or simply relax and enjoy serene moments basking in the solitude beneath a majestic oak, maple, or spreading sycamore.



Chickadee
© STEVE AND DAVE MASLOWSKI PHOTO RESEARCHERS, INC



Pileated woodpecker
© STEVE MASLOWSKI PHOTO RESEARCHERS, INC



Virginia bluebells
© SAMUEL R. MAGLIONE PHOTO RESEARCHERS, INC



Beaver
© ALAN AND SANDY CAREY PHOTO RESEARCHERS, INC

Building Partnerships for Conservation and Recreation

Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail continues to develop into a seamless corridor. Under the National Trails System Act and through formal agreements with land managers, existing and planned routes in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia are recognized as sections of the Trail.

The Trail's network connects modern communities to the the rich natural and cultural heritage of the Potomac and Ohio river basins. Besides restoring waterways to health, many Trail corridor communities pursue conservation and economic development projects that preserve historic landscapes and open space, restore riverscapes, protect bald eagle habitat, and help maintain local food sources. Their work also creates recreation opportunities—hiking, bicycling, boating, crosscountry skiing, and horseback riding.

Accessibility We encourage partners to make facilities, services, and programs accessible to all.

Safety First *Remember, your safety is your responsibility.* • Watch children near stream banks, cliffs, and busy roads. • Beware of poisonous snakes and spiders. • Avoid poison ivy and poison oak. • Observe posted regulations and always wear life vests (PFDs) when on the water.

More Information
Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail Office
National Park Service
PO Box B
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425
www.nps.gov/pohe

The national scenic trail is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks, visit www.nps.gov. The Trail is also part of the National Trails System; for information visit www.nps.gov/nts.

National Park Foundation
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org

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Potomac Heritage Trail Network

From the mouth of the Potomac River at the Chesapeake Bay to the Allegheny Highlands of Pennsylvania, the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail lets us experience a rich variety of historic and natural landscapes.

The national scenic trail incorporates 710 miles of existing and planned trails managed by federal, state, local, and nonprofit entities. This map shows individual trail segments differentiated by color. Detailed information is found at www.nps.gov/pohe.

Trail Extent



0 10 20 30 Kilometers
0 10 20 30 Miles

Existing Heritage Trail
Planned Trail
Other Trails
Selected Amtrak Station
North

PITTSBURGH
Fort Pitt Museum
Allegheny River
McKEESPORT
Youghiogheny River
UNIONTOWN
MORGANTOWN
ALLEGHENY PLATEAU
OHIOPYLE
Ferncliff Peninsula
Ohiopyle State Park Visitor Center
Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail
SEWARD
JOHNSTOWN
Fort Necessity National Battlefield Visitor Center
Laurel Ridge State Park Office
WEST VIRGINIA
CONFLUENCE
Casselman River
ROCKWOOD
Great Allegheny Passage
McHENRY
Deep Creek Lake
Eastern Continental Divide
Garrett County Trail Extensions
MARYLAND
FROSTBURG
North Branch Potomac River
PENNSYLVANIA
CUMBERLAND
Canal Place Visitor Center
VALLEY AND RIDGE
Potomac River
Green Ridge State Forest Trail System
Paw Paw Bends
South Branch Potomac River
HANCOCK
Hancock Visitor Center
Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Towpath
Cacapon River
Tuscarora Trail
Conococheague Creek
Williamsport Visitor Center
WEST VIRGINIA
WINCHESTER
HAGERSTOWN
Antietam National Battlefield
SHEPHERDSTOWN
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Visitor Center
Appalachian National Scenic Trail
FRONT ROYAL
Shenandoah River
HARPERS FERRY
SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK
Brunswick Visitor Center
BRUNSWICK
Monocacy River
BLUE RIDGE
PURCELLVILLE
Washington and Old Dominion Trail
FREDERICK
LEESBURG
Monocacy National Battlefield
Whites Ferry
MARYLAND
Potomac Heritage Trail
Riverbend Park Visitor Center
Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center
VIRGINIA
See Area Detail Below
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BALTIMORE
Prince William Forest Park Visitor Center
FREDERICKSBURG
Government Island
Stafford Visitor Center
George Washington's Ferry Farm
Smallwood State Park
Douglas Point Special Recreation Management Area
COASTAL PLAIN
Thomas Stone National Historic Site
Caledon State Park
ANNAPOLIS
MARYLAND
CHESAPEAKE BAY
Zekiah Swamp
Southern Maryland Potomac Heritage Trail Bicycling Route
George Washington Birthplace National Monument Visitor Center
COLONIAL BEACH
Westmoreland State Park
Saint Clements Island State Park
Stratford Hall
Northern Neck Heritage Trail Bicycling Route
NORTHERN NECK
Historic St. Mary's City (visitor centers and museums)
Rice's Hotel/ Hughlett's Tavern
POINT LOOKOUT
Reedville
SMITH POINT
Rappahannock River

District of Columbia Area Detail

