

Chesapeake Bay Gateways

Map And Guide



Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network
www.baygateways.net

National Park Service &
Chesapeake Bay Program



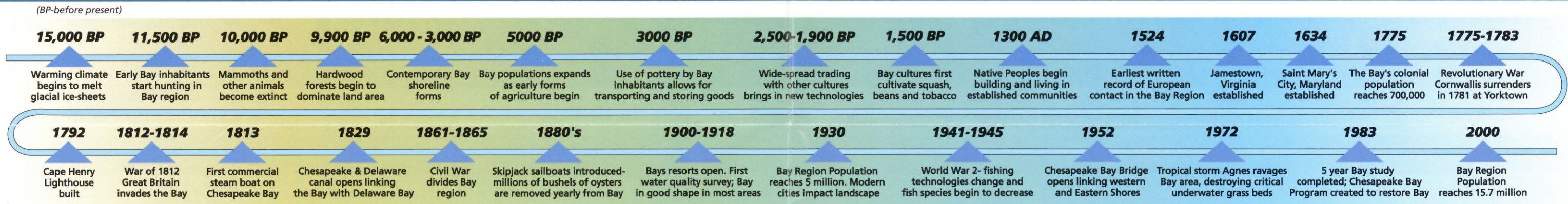
A fleet of skipjacks sets sail for oyster beds (1921). Photo courtesy of the Mariners' Museum, Newport News, VA

The Chesapeake Bay is a vast area of extraordinary beauty, biological diversity, and human history. It has inspired, challenged, and tested those who have sailed its waters or traversed its lands.

For thousands of years the Bay has defined traditions and cultures. Few places provide such a unique sense of place or have collected such a rich library of natural and human stories as the Chesapeake Bay.

Chesapeake Bay Gateways link you to those places and stories. By visiting Bay Gateways you have the opportunity to experience, learn, and play in one of the most unique estuaries on Earth.

As you come to know the mystery and wonders of the Chesapeake Bay you become part of its environment and unique character. Take an active role in conserving its resources and make a difference in the Bay's future.

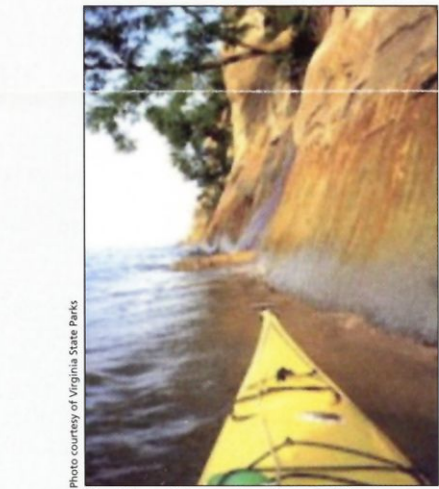


Like pieces of a puzzle the Bay story begins to emerge. Gateways tell stories through places, with each one adding to the whole.



The Chesapeake Bay holds a boundless supply of stories. In the Gateways Network, travelers encounter these stories at every turn—while touring picturesque lighthouses, paddling winding creeks, sailing old skipjacks, strolling wooded trails, visiting historical sites and savoring local traditions.

The stories of the Bay stretch back in time some 15,000 years. That's when the immense Wisconsin ice sheet, more than a mile thick, melted and flooded the ancient Susquehanna River valley.



A moderate climate, essential wetlands and a varied ecosystem make the Bay one of the most diverse habitats for wildlife in the United States.

They arrived as nomadic hunters, but over the course of centuries came to adopt a more agrarian lifestyle. They farmed the Bay's shores and fished its waters, settling into stable villages with growing populations.



Many of their tribal names remain closely linked with the Bay and its rivers today: the Potomacs, the Susquehannocks, the Pocomokes, the Nanticokes, Rappahannocks and others.

In 1607 English colonists entered the Chesapeake Bay and founded Jamestown. Under the leadership of Captain John Smith, they became the first Europeans to explore the whole of the Bay.



Stories of colonial life are told at Historic Saint Mary's City, Jamestown, and other Gateways.

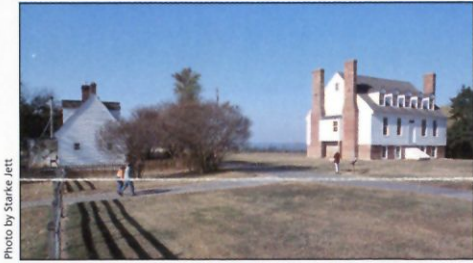


Gateways like the Pride of Baltimore II can take you back to the days when "Privateers" roamed the Chesapeake.

Like the Indians before them, European settlers saw the potential of this vast inland sea, with its fertile shores and navigable rivers. Another Chesapeake settlement soon arose at St. Mary's City, Maryland.

Ships loaded with corn and tobacco were soon headed down on rivers and through the Bay to coastal ports. From there, goods were shipped across the Atlantic to European markets.

The combination of American Indians, Africans, and Europeans created new cultures centered in the Chesapeake.



The maritime and plantation cultures that took shape on the Bay during colonial times were centered on the Bay's abundant resources and convenient shipping routes.

After the Revolution, the Bay's waterways became a haven for "privateers," pirates who used schooners specially designed to zip around river bends, squeeze into snug harbors and outrun blockades.

These vessels were the forerunners of the swift merchant ships known as Baltimore Clippers, one famous example of the Bay-bred ingenuity Chesapeake craftsmen have shown over the centuries.

Ongoing tensions with Great Britain erupted into war again in 1812. The British soon advanced up the Bay, marched into Washington, D.C. and burned the White House.



For the next hundred years, new technologies and transportation routes fueled the growing Bay economy. New canals opened up markets to Chesapeake merchants shipping goods up and down Bay tributaries.

The Bay's economy stalled when the Civil War broke out, disrupting the flow of commerce and the markets for trade. Just as it did in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, the Bay played a strategic role in the conflict.

By the late 19th century the Bay's landscape was changing as never before. Most of the region's old-growth forests were cut down, and farmers cleared more than 40 percent of the land for crops, especially wheat, corn and tobacco.

New technologies and vessels helped, but it was the backbreaking work of harvesting the Chesapeake that welded the people of the Bay together.



Watermen harvest the Bay's rich bounty of crabs, oysters and fish. This way of life is a distinctive part of the Bay story, told at many Gateways.

Just as new technologies helped expand commerce in the region, so did a new breed of fishing vessels boost the harvests of fish and shellfish from the Bay. Those who make their living from the waters of the Bay are known as "watermen," a term unique to the Chesapeake.

Bay markets stretching from Norfolk to Baltimore counted on the watermen's harvest. In 1879 alone, more than 17 million bushels of oysters were taken from the Bay.

By 1900 more than 3 million people lived in the Bay region. Its economy continued to boom, with railroads now carrying the bounty of the Bay to previously inaccessible inland markets.

The Bay now became a place people also traveled in search of recreation and renewal. The first generation of Bay-side beaches, resorts and amusement parks sprung up on the western shore.

The opening of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge in 1952 made the Eastern Shore much more accessible to travelers. A similar transformation took place on the water; over time, recreational boats began to outnumber work boats in many Bay communities.



The Bay presents many challenges to sailors who dare its waters, from those who depend on it for their livelihood or those seeking to tame it on a warm afternoon.

Today, the Bay remains in tune with its rich traditions. With the population of the region at 15.7 million—and growing—the Chesapeake is one of the nation's busiest maritime corridors. More than 10,000 ocean-going vessels carry 100 million tons of cargo in and out of the Bay every year.

Gateways are your route into the natural, historical, cultural and recreational wonders of the Bay. The stories that unfold at these special Chesapeake places speak to the power of nature, the growth of a nation and the wonders of the human spirit.



Quiet afternoon fishing and canoeing at Gunpowder State Park. With thousands of miles of rivers, streams and open water, the Bay watershed is a haven for recreational boating.

The Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Most Chesapeake Bay Gateways are located near the shores of the Bay or one of its tidal rivers, but some lie surprisingly far afield. The Susquehanna River Trail is in central Pennsylvania, and the Chemung Basin River Trail is way up in New York.

The Bay is an estuary, which means it's a place where fresh and ocean waters meet and mingle. Fresh water flows into the Bay from more than 150 major rivers and 100,000 smaller tributaries.

More than 3,000 species of plants and animals live in the Bay, all linked in complex and interdependent ways. But the fact that sediments, nutrients and other pollutants from every corner of the watershed end up in the rivers and the Bay poses serious problems.

Primary Rivers of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed



American Indians called it "great shellfish bay." Captain John Smith joked that its waters were so thick with fish his crew could lean over and "catch them with our frying pan."

But all the growth and expansion the watershed has experienced over the centuries has taken a toll. Oysters were once so abundant that ships ran aground on oyster reefs; today's harvest levels are just 8 percent of what they were in the 1950s.

But the Bay remains an inspiring force. That's why one of the country's largest restoration efforts is under way right here. Established in 1983, the Chesapeake Bay Program guides cooperative efforts by Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, the

How is The Bay Doing?



More Atlantic Blue Crabs are harvested from the Bay than any other place on Earth - 50 to 75 million pounds each year.

District of Columbia, the Chesapeake Bay Commission and the Federal government. The Program has set ambitious, concrete goals for the Bay's future.

While significant strides have been made, imposing challenges still remain. The population of the watershed is expected to grow by another 2 million over the next 20 years. That means more houses, more roads, more sprawling subdivisions.

Everyone who visits the Bay can make a difference for its future.

When Visiting Chesapeake Bay Gateways:

- Learn the stories of the place you are visiting and how it relates to the Bay.
- Ask about opportunities to volunteer in a conservation project.
- Respect local traditions and private property.
- Support local farmers, fishermen and businesses.
- Leave no trace of your travels. Dispose of trash properly. Don't do any damage to trails or shorelines.
- Be a responsible boater. Don't disturb sensitive habitats and bay grasses. Minimize wakes in shallow water and near shore.
- If you fish; practice catch and release.

The millions of Chesapeake travelers who return to homes that lie within the watershed can live in Bay-responsible ways all year round.

What Can I Do?

At home:

- Conserve water and electricity. Drive less.
- Use fewer toxic chemicals, cleaners, and pesticides; whether they go down the drain or run off the land they end up in the Bay.
- Plant native trees and shrubs, especially along streams.
- Use as little fertilizer as possible.
- Support Bay and local watershed conservation efforts and get involved with local land-use issues that can make a difference for the Bay.

For More Information:

Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network
www.baygateways.net
Chesapeake Bay Program
www.chesapeakebay.net

Chesapeake Bay Program Office
410 Severn Avenue, Suite 109
Annapolis, MD 21403
1 - 800 - YOUR BAY



General information about activities and visitor services at each Gateway site, regional information center or trail is indicated on the charts below.

www.baygateways.net

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The "fall line" marks the transition from rocky piedmont plateau to the coastal plain. Over time, rivers crossing this line cut waterfalls on their way to the Bay. The fall line also represents the upper limit of the tidal reaches of the Bay and a natural barrier to river traffic. As a result many cities and ports grew up where rivers crossed the fall line.

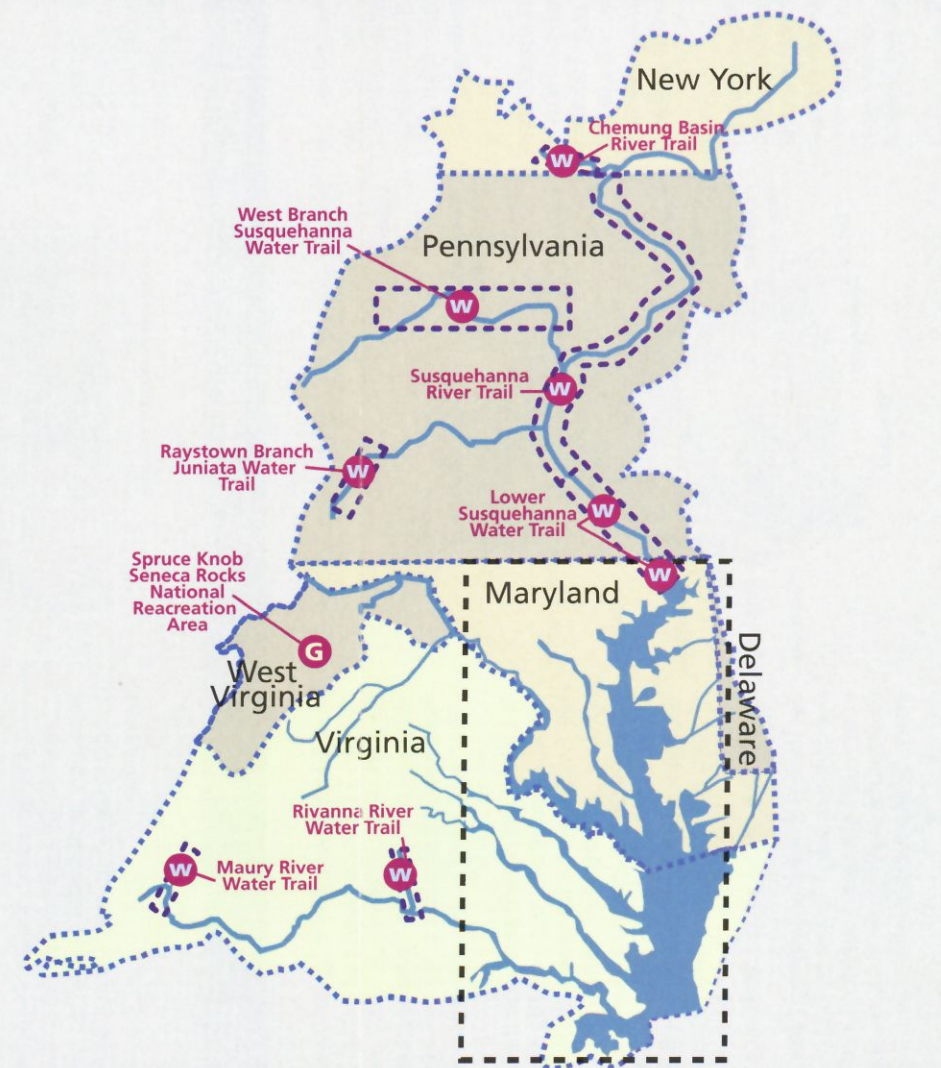
Chesapeake Bay Center at First Landing

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North

The Chesapeake Bay is fed by the Susquehanna, Potomac, Rappahannock, York and James Rivers. Each of these rivers begins far from the tidal reaches of the Bay, as distant as New York and West Virginia.

Explore these parts of the Bay through a number of upper watershed Gateways. Whether hiking the backcountry of the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks NRA or paddling on the Susquehanna, you are still experiencing a part of the Bay story.



The Gateways Network includes more than 1,000 miles of water trails and a smaller number of land trails. These routes offer unique ways to explore the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Water trails let you paddle or boat along routes with many historic and natural sites, all reflecting the tremendous influence of the Bay's waters. Some trails are still developing, with new features being added in coming months (indicated by hollow circles in the chart below).

Before you go, contact the water trail organization for current trail status, a map and guide (if available) and water conditions.

Water Trails						
Chemung Basin River Trail						
Steuben Co. C.V.B. 5 W Market St. Corning, NY 14830 866-946-3386	(above)		●	●	●	●
Choptank & Tuckahoe Rivers Water Trail						
10215 River Landing Rd. Denton, MD 21629 410-241-8661	B4	●	●	●	●	●
Eastern Branch Elizabeth River Trail						
City of Virginia Beach Planning Dept., VA 757-427-4621	G3	●	●	●	●	●
Lower James River Water Trail (Developing)						
James River Ass. PO. Box 909 Mechanicsville, VA 23111 804-730-2898	F2	●	○	●	●	●
Lower Susquehanna Water Trail						
Call 717-299-8333 (PA) or 410-457-2482 (MD)	(above)					
Mathews Blueways Water Trail						
PO Box 1456 Mathews, VA 23109 804-725-484Y	F3	●	●	●	●	●
Maury River Water Trail (Developing)						
150 South Main St. Lexington, VA 24450 540-463-3777	(above)		●	●	●	●
Monocacy River Water Trail (Developing)						
47 South Carroll St. Frederick, MD 21705 301-662-3000	A1	●	○	●	●	●
Norfolk Waterway Trail System (Developing)						
2839 Dana St. Norfolk, VA 23509 757-441-2435	G3	●	○	●	●	●
Potomac River Water Trail						
Call 804-786-5046 (VA) or 410-260-8780 (MD)	D3	●	●	●	●	●
Powhatan Creek Blueway						
1831 Jamestown Rd. Williamsburg, VA 23185 757-259-3200	F2	●	○	●	●	●
Rappahannock River Water Trail (Developing)						
VA DCR 203 Governor St. Suite 213 Richmond, VA 23219 804-786-9042						
Raystown Branch Juniata Water Trail						
702 W. Pitt St. Suite 8 Bedford, PA 15522 814-623-7900 x5	(above)	●	●	●	●	●
Rivanna River Water Trail						
PO Box 141 Palmyra, VA 22963 434-589-7576	(above)	●	●	●	●	●
Susquehanna River Trail (Sunbury to Harrisburg)						
600 N. 2nd St. Suite 300B Harrisburg, PA 17101 717-236-8825	(above)	●	●	●	●	●
West Branch Susquehanna Water Trail						
651 Montmorenci Rd. Ridgway, PA 15853 814-773-3162	(above)	●	○	●	●	●
York River Water Trail						
PO Box 197 Walkerton, VA 23177 804-769-0841	F2	●	●	●	●	●
Land Trails						
Cross Island Trail						
PO Box 37 Centreville, MD 21617 410-758-0835	B3			●	●	●
Elizabeth River Trail -Atlantic City Spur						
508 City Hall Building Norfolk, VA 23510 757-664-4769	G3				●	●
Gwynns Falls Trail and Greenway						
1920 Eagle Dr. Baltimore, MD 21207 410-396-0440	A2		●	●	●	●
Underground Railroad Scenic Byway						
2 Rose Hill Place Cambridge, MD 21613 410-228-1000 1-800-522-TOUR	C4		●			