

Chesapeake Bay Gateways

Your Map & Guide to the Bay's best places



Your Chesapeake Connection

www.baygateways.net



Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network
National Park Service



National Parks...State Parks...Museums...Wildlife Refuges...Historic Ships & Ports...Lighthouses...Recreation Areas...Historic Sites & Districts...Water and Land Trails...Aquariums...Community Parks and much more

Chesapeake Bay

The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure. Its wonders unfold along its many winding rivers, in deep forest, in lush marshland, and on open water. Its places, stories and traditions are shaped by the extraordinary environment of America's largest estuary.

Gateways

Gateways are the Bay's best places to connect you to the authentic Chesapeake. Their ranks include parks, museums, paddling trails, wildlife refuges and more. They all share a common mission: to make exploring the Chesapeake a richer, more revealing experience.

Chesapeake Bay skipjack fleet, 1921
Courtesy of the Mariners' Museum
Newport News, VA.

Stories

The Chesapeake Bay story is found in the way that water, place, nature, and people are inter-connected through time.



Captain Randolph Murphy explains to visitors at the Chesapeake Maritime Museum the working life of a Chesapeake Bay waterman.

The Chesapeake Bay is born from its rivers - Susquehanna, Potomac, James, Rappahannock and more. Their waters, trickling from 64,000 square miles of land, are the Bay's life blood. They carry stories of generations traveling up from or down to the Bay.

Natural Forces



Experience the dramatic splendor of the Potomac's Great Falls.

When Captain John Smith sailed into the Bay four centuries ago it began a colonial adventure that grew from Jamestown to St. Mary's City, Londontown, Annapolis, Jerusalem Mill and scores of smaller settlements. Hear these stories at many Gateways.

Colonial Times



Blowing glass at Jamestown Island.

A new nation was born on the Chesapeake with Washington's victory at Yorktown. The nation's anthem was inspired at Fort McHenry in the War of 1812. Her unity was preserved - and slavery banished - in a Civil War filled with Chesapeake connections.

Fighting for Freedom



Civil War reenactor at Yorktown Battlefield.

Adventures

Gateways are places to renew your spirit and inspire. It is the Bay's mystery and unique sense of place that brings us back.



Discoveries come large and small at Gateways. Here, a group is discovering what lives in the waters of Mason Neck State Park.

Chesapeake maritime lore is filled with magical boat names: clipper, bug-eye, dead-rise and skipjack. Watermen still head in pre-dawn darkness to harvest the Bay's bounty. Discover these living traditions at many Gateways. An on-line exhibit shows you the way.

Working the Bay



The bug-eye Edna E. Lockwood, at Chesapeake Maritime Museum

The Chesapeake is a paddler's haven. Kayak and canoe enthusiasts choose from more than twenty Gateways water trails--paddling routes along more than one thousand miles of the Bay and its rivers. Find an adventure lasting a few hours or days on end.

Water's Way



Paddling along the Susquehanna River Trail.

Many old Chesapeake beacons still stand along the shores of the Bay, reminders of earlier navigation, commerce and maritime life. Use our on-line guide, then explore lighthouses at ten Gateways and glimpse a keeper's-eye view of the Bay.

Lighting the Way



Thomas Point Lighthouse, part of the Annapolis Maritime Museum, is a traditional screw-pile lighthouse and uniquely Chesapeake.

Stewardship

Gateways encourage you to volunteer and get involved with Bay preservation. Have fun while helping to save the Bay.



Volunteer working with school groups at Kiptopeke State Park.

Every year volunteers sign on at Gateways to help create a healthier future for the Bay. Whether restoring lost marshland, cleaning up a beach, planting trees, or educating others about Bay stewardship, these projects offer a rewarding hands-on Chesapeake experience.

Restore & Renew



Experiencing Chesapeake life inspires volunteers to actively participate in stewardship efforts at Gateways like Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

For centuries, people have gone to the water's edge for life-sustaining food--oysters, crabs and fish. Gateways still connect you with those waters, where many discover the serenity of a day spent fishing or just wading in a special place.

Water's Edge



Fishing for relaxation or supper is a traditional activity in the Chesapeake region preserving this tradition is important at Westmoreland State Park and other Gateways.

Millions of waterfowl make their way along the Bay and through its watershed every year. Witness these stunning avian migrations--and the countless other natural wonders that unfold year-round as you explore and play in the Chesapeake region.

Winged Wonders



In fall and winter, sightings of Wood ducks and other waterfowl are common at many wildlife refuges and other Gateways.

The Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network is coordinated by the National Park Service.

Your Chesapeake Connections

www.baygateways.net

The Gateways website puts the Chesapeake Bay at your fingertips. It's all here, whether you're looking to explore the Chesapeake on-line or planning an excursion tailored to the themes, activities, events and locations that match your interests.

Regional Information

Some Gateways serve as Regional Information Centers. Stop here to discover what's special about the local Chesapeake environment and find out all about other Gateways nearby.

866 BAYWAYS: Dial this number (866-229-9297) for tourism information in the Bay Region

Gateway Sites and Trails

Each Gateway offers a unique connection to the Chesapeake Bay, with its own authentic stories to tell, its own astounding sights to see, and its own memorable adventures to experience.



Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network

Chesapeake Bay Watershed



Gateways: Seeing the Big Picture

That the Chesapeake Bay is an estuary means that it's a place where salt and fresh water mix amid the ebb and flow of tides. This seemingly simple combination makes for an uncommonly rich and complex natural environment blessed with a great abundance and diversity of plant and animal life.

This is especially true in the Chesapeake, one of the world's largest estuaries. The waters of the Bay extend almost 200 miles with 12,000 miles of tidal shoreline. The watershed that drains into the Bay is much larger still. Home to 16 million people, it covers 64,000 square miles, reaching into six states and through the nation's capital in Washington, DC.

The whole wider watershed is rightly called "Chesapeake." Everything that happens on this land impacts the Bay and in turn has been influenced by it. Gateways connect you to the whole of this broad Chesapeake environment. Explore Gateways and discover what makes this place such a national treasure.

National Park Service
410 Severn Avenue, Suite 109
Annapolis, MD 21403



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

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Gateway Sites

UW Gateways in the Upper Watershed

The Chesapeake Bay is fed by rivers, streams and creeks. Many begin far from the tidal reaches of the Bay, as distant as New York and West Virginia. Explore these parts of the Bay through upper watershed Gateways and water trails.

Whether hiking the backcountry of the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area or paddling on the Susquehanna, you are still experiencing a part of the Chesapeake story.

Gateways in the Tidal Region



The Gateways Network includes more than 1,000 miles of water trails and a smaller number of land trails.

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. Land trails provide for hiking, or biking through the Chesapeake landscape.

As water trails involve certain natural risks, it is highly recommended that you plan your trip in advance and follow all safety precautions.

Additional information on each trail is available at:

www.baygateways.net

Maryland & Virginia
1-866 BAYWAYS (229-9297)

Pennsylvania
1-800 VISIT PA (847-4872)

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