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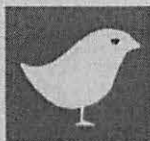
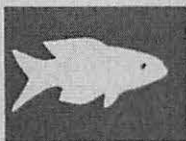
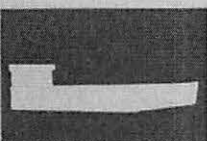
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# POTOMAC NATIONAL RIVER



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PROPOSED

# POTOMAC NATIONAL RIVER

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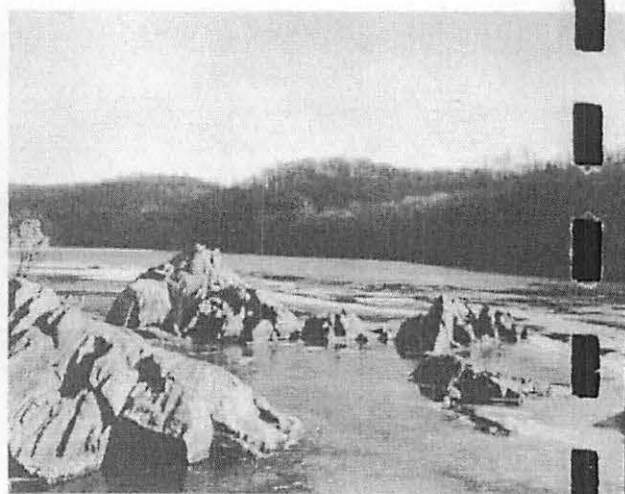


U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
National Park Service

*A broad, slackwater reach  
of the Potomac above  
Seneca Breaks, a superb  
place for fishing, boating,  
and water sports.*



*The river roars over Great Falls . . . before  
entering the gorge a few miles above  
Washington.*



# POTOMAC

*A plan for  
preserving a green sheath of  
recreation lands  
along the mainstem Potomac*

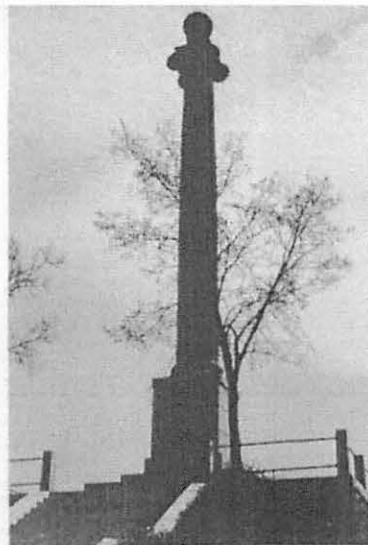
## NATIONAL RIVER

In sweeping bends and stately reaches that have cradled much of the Nation's early history, the Potomac flows from the Allegheny highlands to Chesapeake tidewater through a rich and varied landscape. This bountiful river, perhaps the least spoiled of major streams in the eastern United States, now faces an uncertain future. Towns, industries, housing developments will continue to spread over its shorelands, disrupting vital natural processes and blighting the riverscape, as has happened on all too many rivers in the country, or the Potomac can be preserved and its abundant gifts made accessible to the citizens of a burgeoning metropolis.

In 1965 a Federal task force, directed by the President to prepare a plan that would make the Potomac a "model of conservation," set out to devise a program that would clean up the river and keep it clean, protect the river's natural scenery, and provide adequate recreation facilities along its shores.

This report outlines how a considerable part of that program can be effectively translated into action. A Potomac National River, consisting of about 68,000 acres along the stream valley between Cumberland, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., would both preserve the essential features of the landscape and make certain that the river's waters and shorelands are fully available to the general public. Its boundaries would take in the river's banks and islands, the historic Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, short stretches of the most important tributaries, and vital bordering lands—creating a "green sheath" of recreation space along 195 miles of the Potomac's main stem. For the 5 million people who live within 50 miles of its shorelands and the countless others who would come for one reason or another, the National River would be a permanent scenic asset and an important source of outdoor pleasure.

*The Rumsey Memorial at Shepherdstown, a tribute to early steamboat experiments along this part of the river.*



When fully developed, there would be some 57 public-use areas along the river, including scores of natural and historical sites, 375 miles of foot trails, 185 miles of bridle trails, many camping places for hikers and canoeists, as well as those who arrive by automobile, numerous boat launching points, environmental education centers, and sundry sports facilities. Private businesses would provide most lodging, food and other essential services—either outside the National River or on private lands within. Interpretive and educational programs, as befits so rich and complex an area, would imaginatively attempt to convey an understanding of the river's character and history. In its treatment of the riverscape and in the design of facilities, the National River would serve as a model of how residential, commercial, and industrial development in the basin can proceed in harmony with the processes and amenities of nature, perpetuating them for continuing enjoyment rather than consuming them for the exigencies of the moment.

In a sense, this plan for preserving the riverscape along the main stem goes back some 15 years to the first efforts of conservationists to protect the C & O Canal and make it more useful for recreation. Bills to establish a Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park have twice passed the Senate. Other legislation has been introduced to provide funds to restore and develop the canal. But in the last few years a Federal interdepartmental study of the Potomac basin has greatly enlarged our understanding of the river. By focusing attention on the entire river and its natural processes, it has shown that in reality it is the whole river environment that must be perpetuated if the river and its shorelands are to be attractive for recreation.

This broadened concept of the National River makes this conservation project one of the most com-

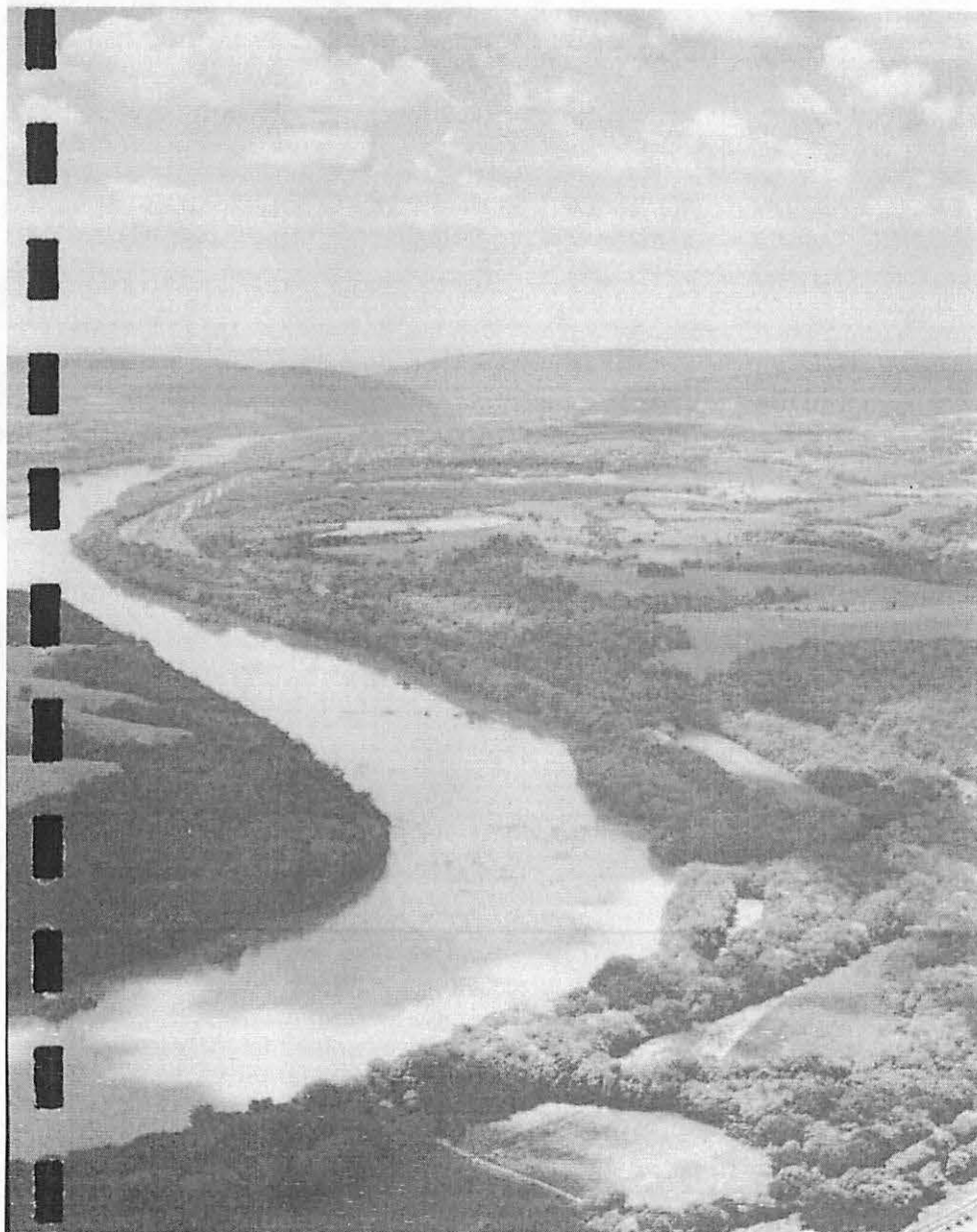
plex ever proposed by the National Park Service. It affects some 5,500 parcels of land in three States, 12 counties, and several towns besides various commercial interests. The proposal provides for a major Federal role in administering the National River, but it is anticipated that Federal efforts would be supplemented by those of other levels of Government.

The National River is fully compatible with the purposes of the pending Potomac River Basin compact, a joint Federal-State undertaking designed to integrate water and related resource management programs throughout the watershed. Should the National River be in existence at the time the compact is adopted, it would be managed in harmony with the plans and programs of the Compact Commission, just as would other public lands within the basin. This cooperation in basic matters like land conservation and pollution control will have a great deal to do with how well the Potomac can be protected and the ultimate uses to which its waters and shorelands can be put.

Because the National River would affect many jurisdictions and interests, the Park Service intends that this plan should remain open to improvements and alterations as conditions and situations change and new objectives arise. What is needed, and what this master plan hopes to spur, are a series of complementary plans and arrangements by the States, counties, and cities which, taken together, would perpetuate the splendid natural qualities of the Potomac and make them available to increasing numbers for swimming, boating, camping, hiking and scores of other activities which people like to do along its varied and wooded shores. The river is a great blessing to present inhabitants of the basin, one wise observer has written, and future inhabitants will have been badly cheated if it does not remain the same.







THE  
NEED  
FOR THE  
NATIONAL  
RIVER

There are a number of Federal and local parklands within the Potomac basin, but much is dry ridgeland, much is hard to reach or far from urban centers, and little of it provides opportunity for water-based activities. The Potomac National River, aside from preserving a handsome and historic riverscape, would assure to the region the kind and quality of public recreational opportunity it now generally lacks. It is estimated that visits to the National River would total 5 million annually within a few years and increase to 12 million annually by 1985, when the population of the Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area is expected to reach nearly 6 million persons. That these are conservative estimates can be seen by comparing them with figures for current visits at two parks along the river, Harpers Ferry and Great Falls, Md. During 1967, Harpers Ferry received nearly a million visits and Great Falls nearly half a million. The river clearly would go far toward meeting the recreational needs of its region.

*Paton Bend: high pastoral land and wooded bluffs of considerable recreational potential.*

*At Paw Paw bends the river flows through rugged, forested country—by far the most isolated within the National River.*

In its official report on the Potomac, *The Nation's River*, the Department of the Interior has presented a searching description of the Potomac basin's problems and opportunities and laid out courses of action on three broad fronts:

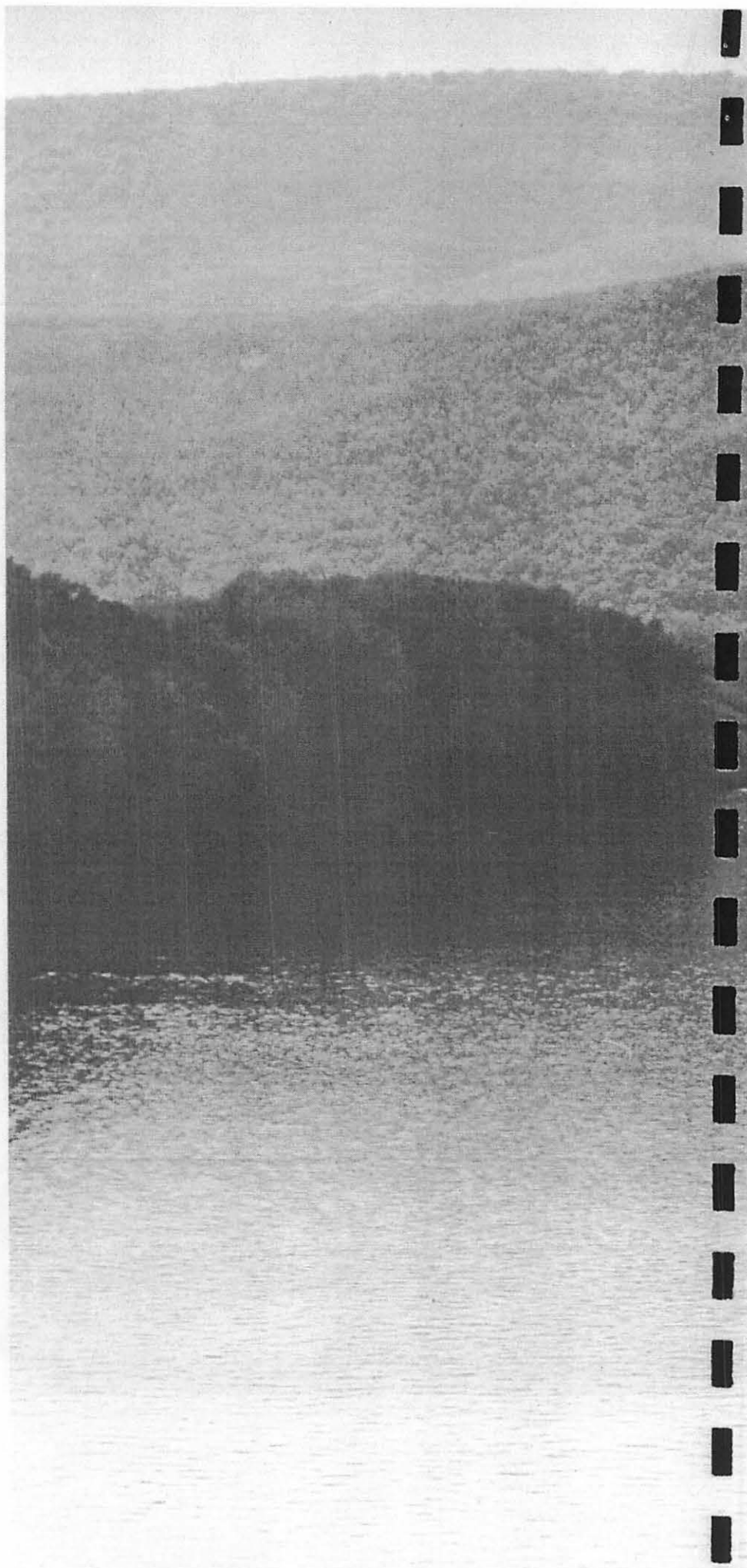
- the matter of coping with a number of water resource problems within the basin as well as contributing greatly to ecological, scenic, and recreational values;
- the matter of protecting and restoring the basin's natural and scenic assets for use and enjoyment by the public;
- the matter of wisely coordinating future planning.

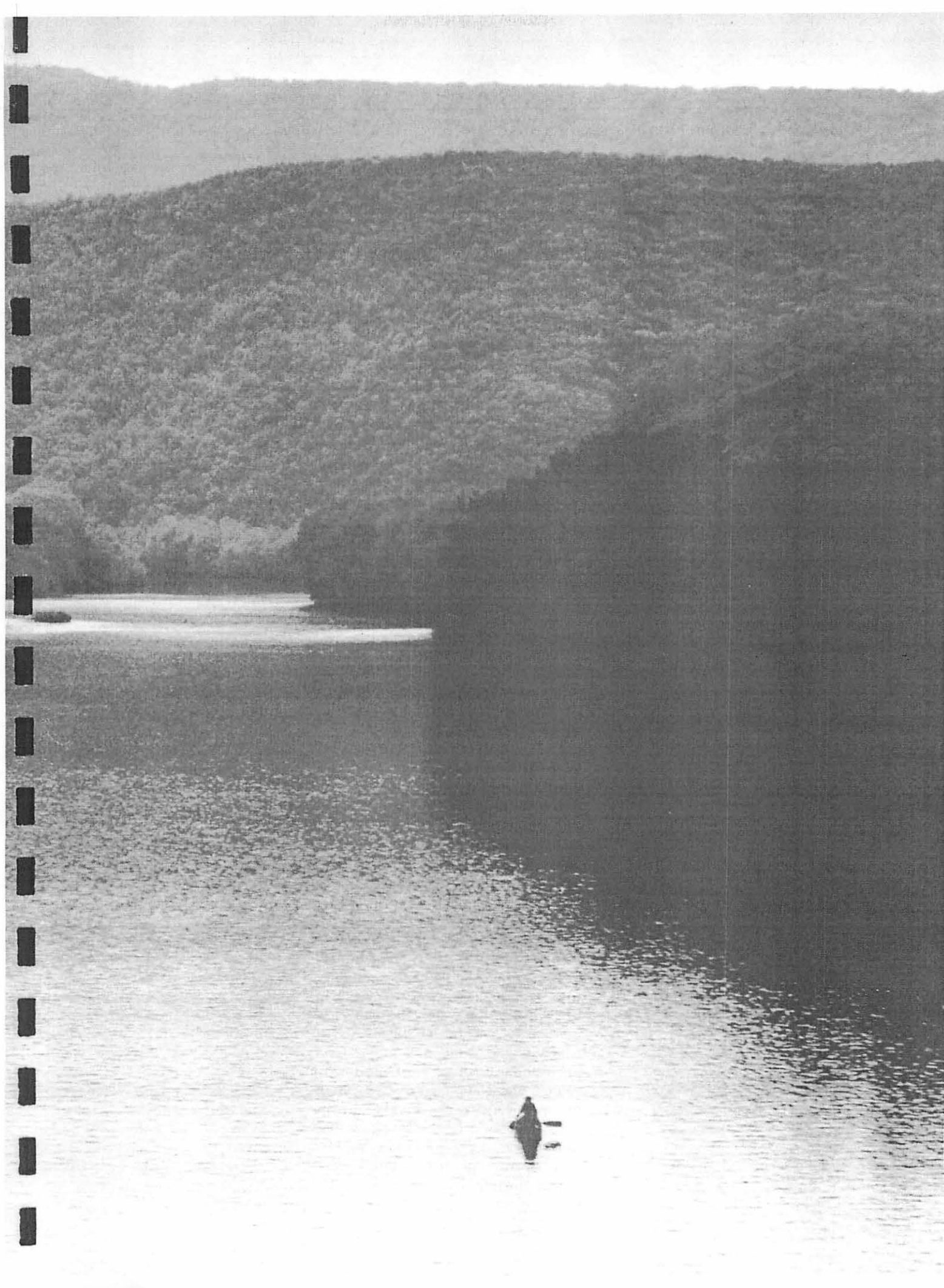
This master plan is mainly concerned with the second of these areas. It aims at offering visitors the maximum amount of recreational opportunities consistent with the perpetuation of the scenic, natural, and historical values along the river. In its various programs of management and development, the Park Service would seek to:

- Perpetuate the natural condition of the river and its shorelands as the setting for a variety of river-based activities;
- Preserve archeological, historical, and scientific sites within the boundaries, restore or stabilize structures of the C & O Canal, and rewater substantial sections of the old canal bed;
- Interpret the river's ecology and history through exhibits, demonstrations, and talks, giving particular attention to broad environmental topics;
- Develop the National River for a wide variety of recreational use.

A number of specific examples can be given as to how this latter objective would be pursued:

The river's slack water reaches would be fully developed for swimming, boating, fishing, and other water-centered activities.







Free-flowing reaches, such as those downstream from Seneca, would be managed for canoeing, fishing, and related activities.

The river's islands would be maintained in either a natural or agricultural condition for hunting, primitive camping, and nature study.

The Paw Paw Bends region would be reserved for primitive, back-country use.

Hunting would be an appropriate use wherever consistent with public safety and perpetuation of the wildlife and managed in cooperation with the States.

A route along the Virginia shore would be designated for the proposed Potomac Heritage Trail (the C & O Canal towpath would be a part of this trail on the Maryland side, and a similar trail system would be developed along the West Virginia shore).

Provision would be made for certain private uses within the boundaries which are compatible with the primary objectives of the National River. This recognizes that man has been a part of the river scene for hundreds of years and that his enterprises can, in the right circumstances, harmonize with the riverscape and add considerably to the visitor's comfort and enjoyment. The wise location of developments and good site planning can spare the river's edge and preserve important scenic, historical, and recreational places. Municipalities and industries would have the right of access to the river for water and other utility service under arrangements which would assure the protection of aesthetic, natural, and historical values. The National River proposal, in short, is a tangible expression of the conviction that conservation and wholesome economic and social growth are not incompatible but rather are interdependent and mutually beneficial.

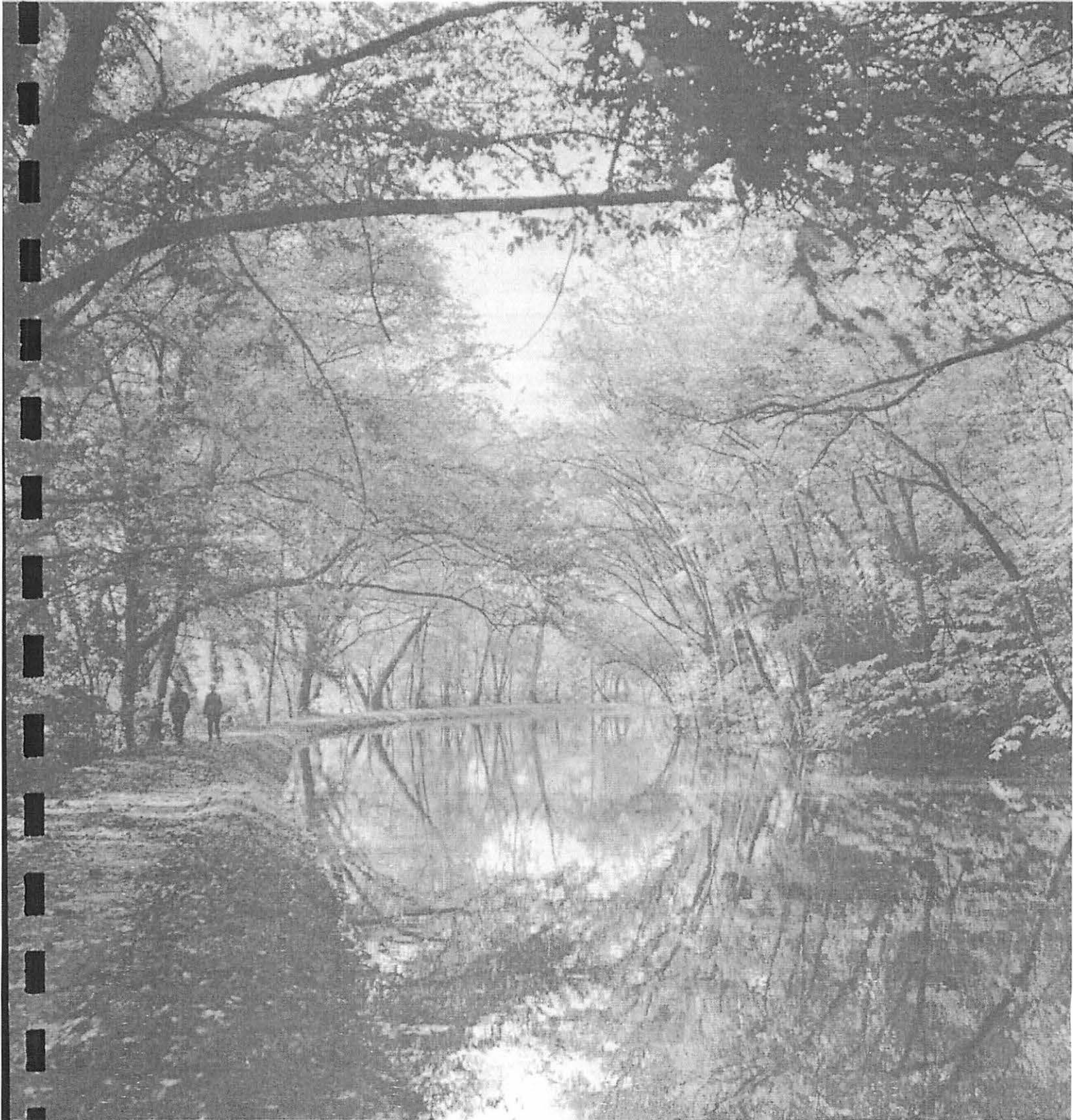
## DEVELOPMENT

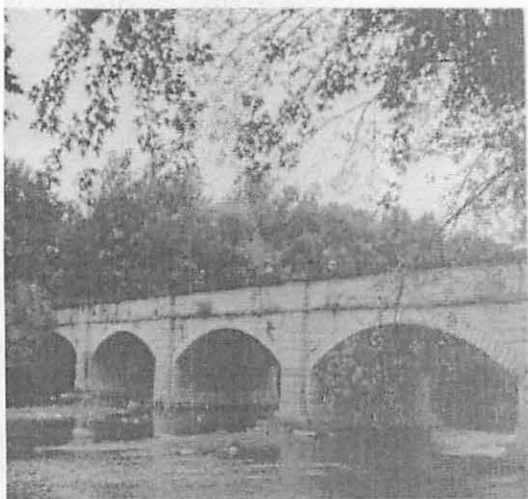
The proposed Potomac National River would embrace 68,200 acres of land between Washington, D.C., and Cumberland, Maryland. About 11,000 acres are already publicly owned: 5,000 in the C & O Canal, 3,500 acres in other Federal land, and the rest in State, country, and municipal lands. Some 15,000 acres of water surface are mostly under the jurisdiction of Maryland.

The boundaries have been drawn to create a "green sheath" of varying width along the main stem of the river. Except for enlargements at intervals to accommodate development or to insure the preservation of vital natural or historical features, the park would vary in width according to topography but average about 600 feet on each side of the Potomac. Nearly half this acreage is flood plain, but much high ground, visible from the river or useful for recreation, is also included. Some 15,000 acres of land within the boundaries are included to forestall adverse developments which would seriously compromise the scenery, historic sites, or recreational opportunities along the river. For these lands, scenic easements are all that are needed to insure protection of the environment.

On the Virginia side of the river from the Capital Beltway (I-495) to Harpers Ferry, the exterior boundary is drawn to accommodate the authorized extension of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the proposed George Washington Country Parkway. In West Virginia from Harpers Ferry to Opequon Creek, the boundary would accommodate the proposed Allegheny Parkway. (Most of this land would be covered only by scenic easements. If Congress authorizes the parkways, rights-of-way would have to be purchased.)

*The C & O Canal, as a historical feature of the National River, would be rewatered for a much greater portion of its length and its structures rehabilitated.*





*The Monocacy aqueduct.*

The National River would contain the old Chesapeake and Ohio Canal from the District line to Cumberland. One of the first orders of business if the National River is authorized would be to restore historical canal structures and rewater the canal from Spring Gap through Paw Paw Tunnel, from Dam 4 to Dam 3, and from the Potomac Electric Power Company plant at Dickerson to Violets Lock, the beginning of the existing restoration. This rewatering will add 62 miles of brimful canal to the present total of 20 miles. Canal Dams 2, 3, and 6 would be rebuilt to re-create or improve slack water reaches near Seneca, Harpers Ferry, and Great Cacapon.

This master plan provides for some 57 developed areas along the river, many of them small and intended only for daytime use, a dozen or so of considerably larger acreage and with extensive facilities. These widenings of National River lands would accommodate fairly large numbers of people for a variety of recreational activities under the best possible conditions for visitor enjoyment.

Great Falls, whose mighty cataracts are one of the great views along the river, would be the main downstream gateway to the National River. It would be managed much as it

is now, except that interpretive activities would be expanded to deal with the entire river.

Seneca Breaks, several miles up from Great Falls, is probably the single most important undeveloped stretch of the lower river. Upstream from the feeder dam, the placid water and several islands make it a good place for fishing, boating, and water sports; downstream is a fast-water stretch ideal for canoeing. There are some 1,500 acres of undeveloped land along both sides of the river, embracing superb forests, vistas, and the only navigable part of George Washington's Potowmack Canal. Among the facilities here would be an environmental education center, picnicking sites, and swimming areas. For people living in northern Virginia, Seneca Breaks would be an important access point.

The Goose Creek-Edwards Ferry area would be one of the major recreational places along the lower river. The 640 acres here, a mixture of high ground, flood plain, and forest, would be useful for a marina, swimming, camping, and assorted day-use.

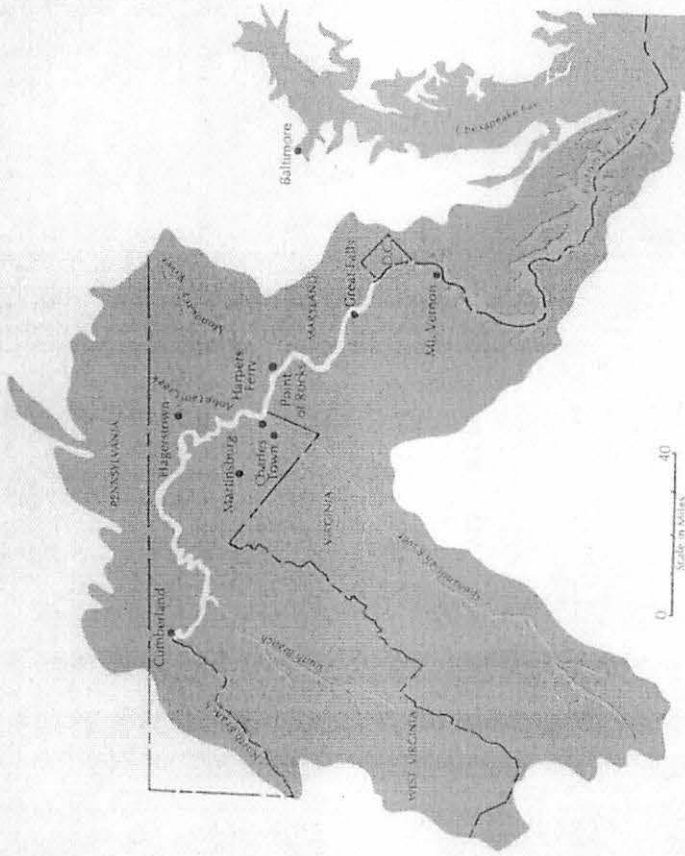
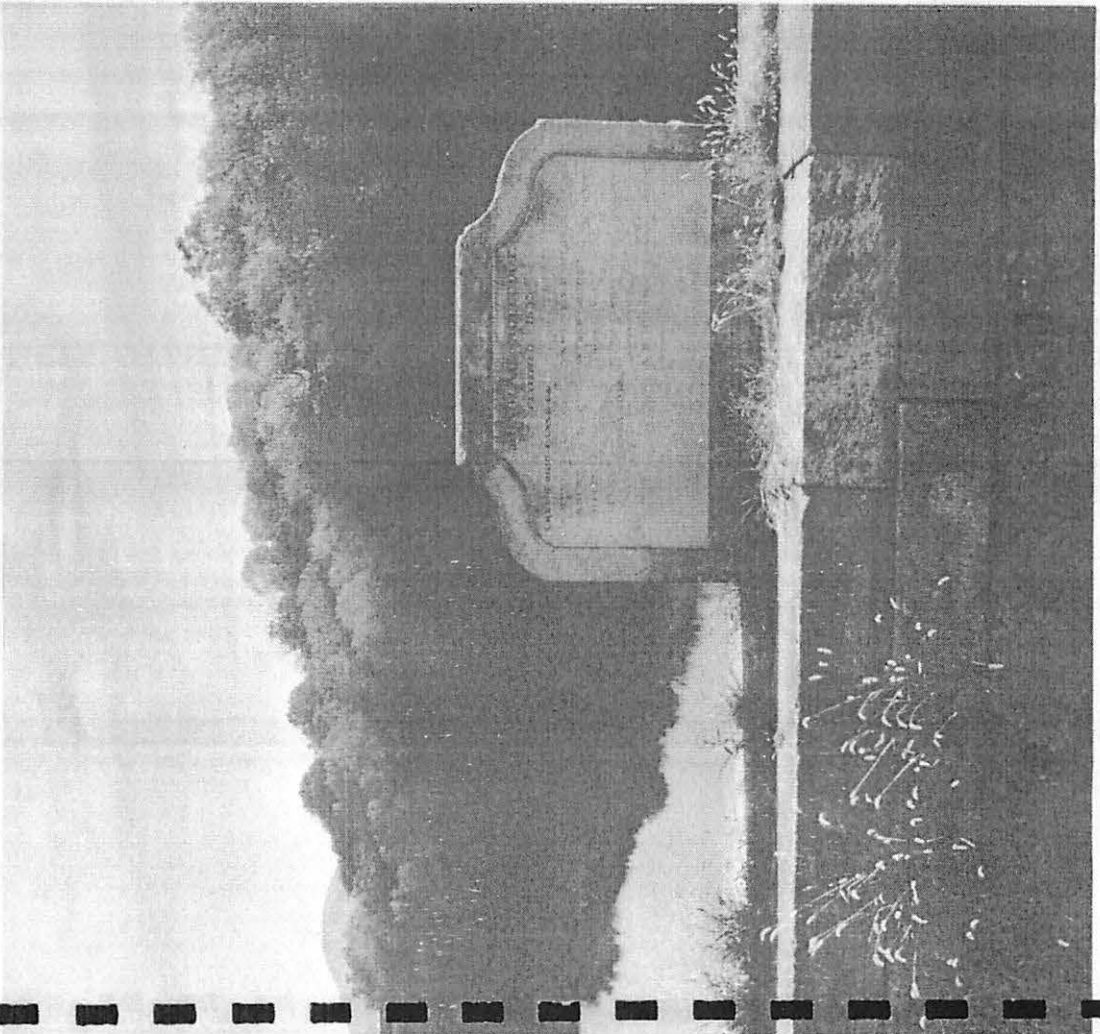
The junction of the Monocacy with the Potomac is another spacious area for large-scale, high-density recreational development. Here is the canal's longest aqueduct and some 1,000 acres of flat land which, with imaginative landscape design, can be turned into a pleasant and useful recreational complex, with interpretive facilities, stables, bridle paths, campsites, marinas, and hiking trails.

Two existing Federal parks—Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, overlooking the dramatic junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah, and Antietam National Battlefield Site, scene of a bloody and decisive Civil War engagement—would adjoin the National River. Harpers



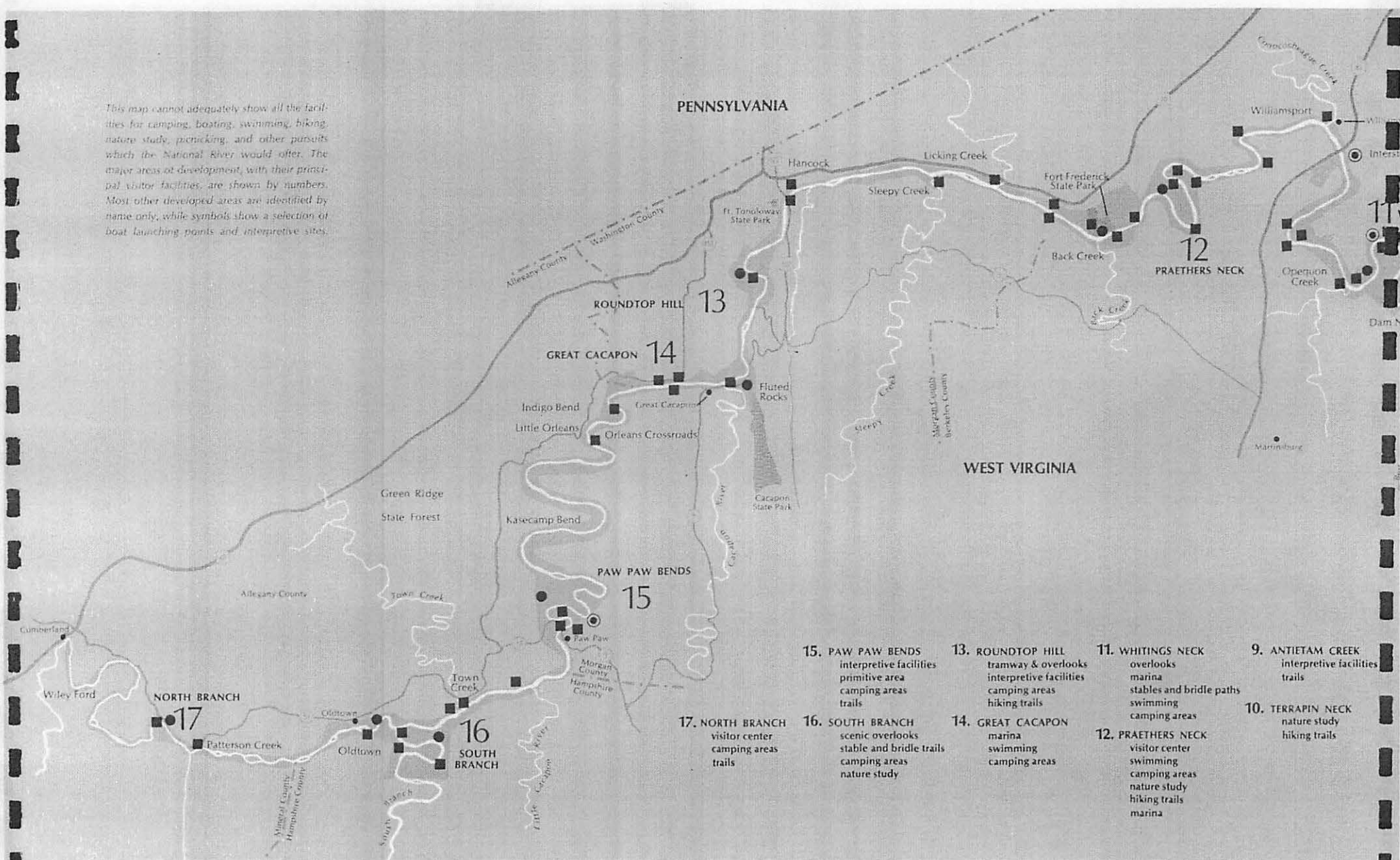


A closer view of the old stone work and the country behind. This aqueduct, named for the river it spans, is the largest one along the canal.





This map cannot adequately show all the facilities for camping, boating, swimming, hiking, nature study, picnicking, and other pursuits which the National River would offer. The major areas of development, with their principal visitor facilities, are shown by numbers. Most other developed areas are identified by name only, while symbols show a selection of boat launching points and interpretive sites.



# GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Proposed Potomac National River

## Legend

- Proposed National River
- Boat access point
- Interpretive site
- Administrative center
- Existing park lands

0 5  
Scale in Miles

1. GREAT FALLS  
visitor center  
interpretive facilities  
group camping  
hiking trails
2. SENECA BREAKS  
environmental education center  
interpretive facilities  
boat and canoe concessions  
group camping  
swimming
3. GOOSE CREEK-EDWARDS FERRY  
marina  
swimming  
camping areas
4. MASON WOOD  
nature study  
trails
5. MONOCACY  
interpretive facilities  
marina  
stables and bridle paths  
camping areas
6. POINT OF ROCKS  
interpretive facilities  
overlooks  
camping  
trails
7. HARPERS FERRY AREA  
interpretive facilities  
camping areas  
hiking trails
8. DARGAN BEND  
visitor center  
nature study  
swimming  
camping areas
9. ANTIETAM CREEK
10. TERRAPIN NECK

81 Crossing

GS NECK

TERRAPIN NECK  
10  
Antietam National Battlefield Site  
Snyders Landing  
Shepherdstown-Packhorse Ford  
9 ANTIETAM CREEK  
8 DARGAN BEND  
HARPERS FERRY  
7  
Bakerton  
Fort Duncan  
Brunswick  
Potomac Wayside  
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park  
Borlar  
Washington County  
Frederick County  
Maryland  
VIRGINIA

VIRGINIA

6 POINT OF ROCKS  
5 MONOCACY  
4 MASON WOOD  
Dickerson Regional Park  
Whites Ferry  
McKee-Beshears State Wildlife Area  
3 GOOSE CREEK-EDWARDS FERRY  
Broad Run  
GREAT FALLS 1  
River Bend  
Turkey Run  
Rockville  
Mason County  
Montgomery County  
Prince George's County  
District of Columbia

GREAT FALLS 1

Ferry straddles the National River proposal, preserving important flanking ridges. Potomac Wayside, 500 acres of open land downstream, would both serve camping and day-use needs of visitors to Harpers Ferry and protect an important scenic backdrop of the old town. Upstream, Fort Duncan offers more day-use and camping facilities and a fine view back toward Harpers Ferry. At Antietam Creek, a finger of land, with a trail, would reach up the creek to the battlefield. Near the aqueduct is Antietam Furnace, which made cannonballs for George Washington's Revolutionary Army, and some 75 acres of flat, open land well suited for day-use.

On three great looping bends of the river—Terrapin Neck, Whittings Neck, Praethers Neck—and at the mouth of South Branch are many opportunities for a high order of recreation activities. Terrapin Neck's 850 acres would be a valuable natural preserve. At Whittings Neck, the largest of the West Virginia bends, the river becomes slack water, backed up by Dam 4. Swimming, boating, camping and a variety of day-use activities are eminently suitable here. As with Terrapin Neck, the bend is recommended for State or local park development, if those jurisdictions are interested. It would also serve as a major development site for the proposed Allegheny Parkway.

Praethers Neck, some 700 acres in extent, has perhaps the best potential for park use of any site on the upper river, especially if developed in conjunction with an interlocking West Virginia bend, accessible from I-81. The river here, as at Whittings Neck, is slack, the land has adequate elevation, and one of the most interesting sections of the C & O Canal passes nearby. Most development would be on the land side of the canal, leaving the rest for trails and walk-in camping.

Roundtop Hill, upriver from Fort Tonoloway State Park, offers one of

the finest views along the entire river; nearby is suitable land for a wide range of recreational activities. A tramway is recommended as the means of access up steep Roundtop. Hunting would be an important use nearby, along with camping, hiking, and picnicking.

The Fluted Rocks area adds high, scenic ground and the lower mile and a half of the beautiful Cacapon. Farther up the Potomac, the old canal dam would be reconstructed to add another slack water reach for boating and fishing. Though space is limited, there is enough room for a marina and limited camping on the West Virginia shore.

Paw Paw Bends, a huge, rugged, forested area, penetrated only by a railroad, a few dirt roads, and the canal, would be the primitive section of the National River. It would be managed for back-country activities—hunting, camping, and similar activities dependent on a degree of isolation. Most visitor facilities would be centered near the town of Paw Paw.

The South Branch confluence adds to the National River some 2,300 acres of the best pastoral countryside in the eastern United States. Any public development here would be carried out on ridgeland and forested upland areas to avoid marring this rural landscape. Sites for boat access, camping, and interpretation of natural history would be of a similar unobtrusive nature.

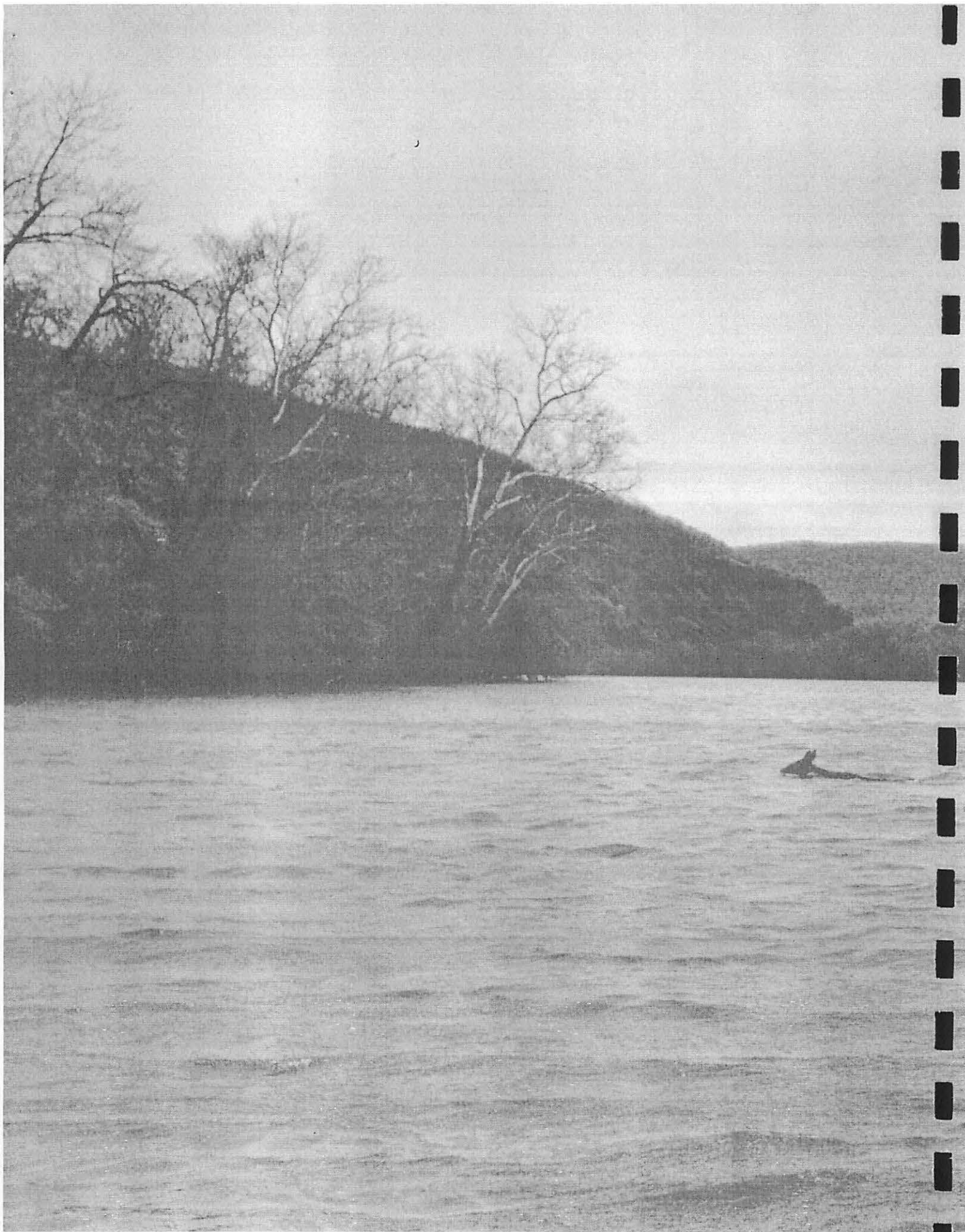
The upstream gateway to the National River would be at North Branch, a site that includes the last lift lock on the old canal and the last available land for general recreation before reaching Cumberland. There would be a major visitor center, some camping and considerable day-use here. From this area, a narrow ribbon of parkland would continue on into the city. The towpath, still evident, serves as a trail leading to the old canal terminus in the heart of Cumberland.

*Flowing smoothly here, the river winds around Whittings Neck. This plan proposes the neck as a major recreational area along the middle river.*



*Fort Duncan bend, on the left, offers much useful open space and a fine view downriver toward Harpers Ferry.*









*Deer swimming the river above Harpers Ferry.*

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

A major objective for the Park Service within the National River would be to insure that those qualities of the land and water which make it attractive for recreation are perpetuated and not diminished.

A system of land classification is one way in which this objective would be pursued. All the land within the proposed National River falls into one of three general classes:

**Public-Use**, about 53,000 acres, of which about 11,000 acres are already publicly owned. This is land required for public access and use, either now or in the future. It would be purchased in fee simple. A substantial amount, perhaps about one-fourth, could probably be leased back to private interests for such compatible uses as farming.

**Preservation**, 2,700 acres. These lands, essential as scenery but generally too steep for public use, would be protected by easements.

**Private Development**, about 12,500 acres. These are lands on which permanent controls are needed to prevent incompatible development but where full ownership is not essential to preservation of scenery or public use of the river.

This classification is meant only to indicate the general attitude of the Park Service toward the lands within the proposal. Actual acquisition and designation of specific tracts for controls or lease back would proceed with great flexibility, and depend to a large extent on what could be worked out in negotiations with individual land-owners.

Specifically, the management programs for the various tangible aspects of the National River would take the following form:

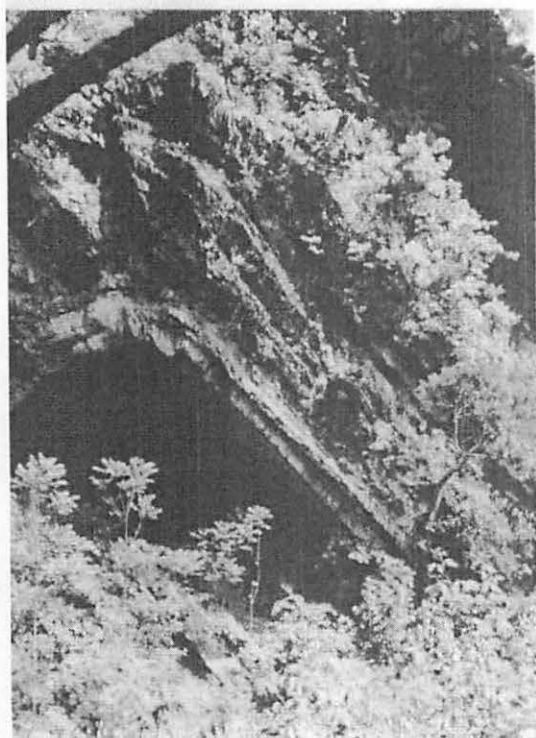
**Forests** Natural forest would be maintained within the boundaries wherever agriculture is not present and wherever compatible with recreation facilities, and no programs that would contribute to erosion of river banks or other lands would be undertaken.

**Wildlife** The management of wildlife within the National River would be a joint State-Federal responsibility, dependent for its success on close cooperation. The States would remain basically responsible for regulating hunting, while the Park Service and the States together would see that important habitats are perpetuated, that private property is respected, and that hunting does not jeopardize either public safety or interpretive programs.

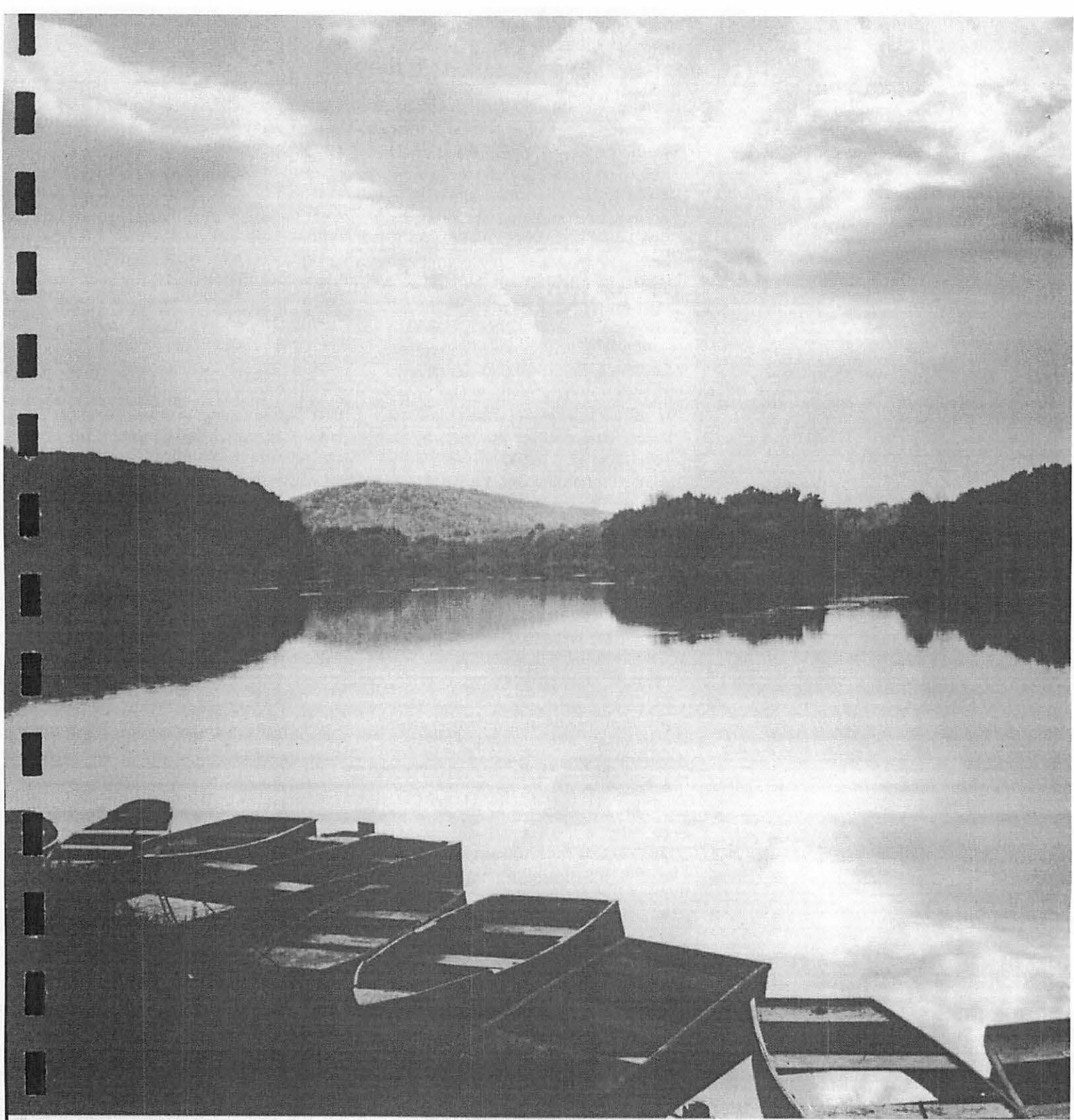
**Water** Because the quality of recreation along the river will be directly related to the quality of its waters, the National River would be managed in full support of State water quality control standards, as approved by the Federal Government. The prevention or abatement of pollution and siltation would be an objective of the first priority under Park Service administration.

**Fish** Though the Potomac fishery would continue to be a State responsibility, the Park Service would seek, by its programs, to perpetuate natural levels of aquatic life and to restrict recreation activities and developments in or near good fishing areas. Rewatered sections of the C & O Canal would be particularly useful for fishing by children and the aged.

**The sites of other resources**—geological, archeological, and historical—would be surveyed, protected, and interpreted in place and as part of larger themes.



This rock fold near Roundtop Hill is the kind of geological feature that would be interpreted in the National River.



*A quiet reach of the river at Nolands Ferry.*





*Point of Rocks, a scenic watergap and the place where the canal and the B & O Railroad vied for the right-of-way in their race westward.*



## INTERPRETATION

Because it embraces nearly an entire river valley, the National River would present unparalleled opportunities for interpreting several broad themes of considerable significance:

1. the river as an integrated whole, as an ecosystem;
2. the National River as a geologic and physiographic cross section of the Piedmont-Appalachian region, offering the possibility of relating specific geologic sites to the broad sweep of geological history which molded the entire eastern United States;
3. the life forms of the Piedmont-Appalachian region and their changing admixture from the Alleghenies to tidewater;
4. the river as a natural route for man, funneling commerce and migrations up the valley and making it a theater for a number of significant events.

The principal interpretive centers would be at Great Falls, which would deal mostly with geology and history, Seneca Breaks (archeology, history, natural history, and conservation), McKee-Beshears Wildlife Area (wildlife conservation and management), Balls Bluff (Civil War battle), Mason Woods (natural his-

tory), the Monocacy River confluence (site of the largest canal aqueduct), Point of Rocks (a view of the water-gap and scene of the struggle between the railroad and canal over the right-of-way in their race westward), Bakerton (site of an early iron mine), Antietam Creek (an important iron furnace and a major canal aqueduct), Packhorse Ford (early river ford and skirmish site after the battle of Antietam), Shepherdstown (where James Rumsey carried on his steamboat experiments), Terrapin Neck and Whittings Neck (geological and ecological interpretation), park headquarters at I-81, and Fort Frederick State Park (Colonial military history).

Roundtop Hill, Fluted Rocks, and Indigo Bend offer dramatic views over the Potomac Valley. At Paw Paw, public interpretation of the canal tunnel and other historical and ecological subjects is in the planning stage, while at Oldtown, the character of this former Indian town and frontier outpost can be effectively interpreted. Interpretation at North Branch, as at Great Falls, would deal with broad themes about the entire river.

Demonstrations, working models, and exhibits that involve the visitor would be notable features of the interpretive program for the National River. The canal would be rewatered (or as much of it as is

feasible) so that barges could ply its upper waters again, as they do along the Georgetown section. Old mills, locks and other canal structures, ferries, early American stores and trading posts could be restored and a working model of the Rumsey steamboat reconstructed. A successful example of this type of interpretation is the militia drills of the French and Indian War period held during the summer at Fort Frederick State Park.

Of all the interpretive activities along the National River, none would be more important than a program for environmental education, designed to foster an awareness of the natural processes at work along the river and within its watershed and of man's relationship with them. This program would work closely with nearby school systems, conservation groups, and others interested in learning more about the ecology of the Potomac. One potential site for the program is at Seneca Breaks; others would be designated after detailed field study.

## VISITOR SERVICES

The Park Service would provide only those facilities and services directly related to public use of the National River: access roads, parking, trails, primitive campsites, boat launching points, and picnic grounds. Food service and lodging, including

the more highly developed camping facilities would be provided by private businesses, either inside the National River or outside, thus helping to preserve the riverscape and aiding local business in nearby towns.

Some services would be provided by concessioners inside the National River: stables, boat rentals, campsites, and marinas are examples.

Because the National River would be used by many long-distance hikers, bicyclists, and canoeists, special facilities will be needed for these travelers. Sites would be strategically located so that their users would not be forced to compete with automobile campers for space.

Group camp facilities would serve many organizations from nearby urban areas. This master plan contemplates a variety of such camps, ranging from those with dormitories and dining halls to simple campfire units for Scout troops and nature-study organizations.

The Potomac should once again become useful for swimming. It is expected that the water quality control measures in force or under consideration will make the Potomac suitable for this activity by 1972. Though siltation, debris, and spot pollution will continue to be problems for some time, the Park Service would seek to make as much of the river as possible safe for swimming. Most of the swimming areas designated in this plan are in slack water stretches.

#### CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT

But the National River is intended to do more than preserve the main stem of the Potomac and to satisfy urgent needs for recreation space

in a densely urban region. It should also become a model of good river conservation for the entire country. All development would carry a double burden: buildings, signs, roads must not only serve their purpose well but sit appropriately on the land, blending and never dominating. Where structures cannot be hidden, their designs should be of such excellence that they are handsome and pleasing additions to the riverscape rather than disturbing intrusions. Residential, commercial, and industrial developments within the boundaries should meet these same standards. The legal tool most appropriate to the situation (among the several available are limited development easements, lease-back arrangements, and sell-back agreements) would be used to control the location, density, and height of buildings, percentage of open land, and preservation of the landscape. A decent respect for the environment on the part of the National River could not help but influence events outside, benefiting not only the river itself but the whole region.

#### ADMINISTRATION

Park headquarters would be located at the I-81 crossing of the Potomac, near Williamsport, Maryland. District headquarters would be located at Goose Creek-Edwards Ferry, Dargan Bend, Whittings Neck, and Paw Paw.

Because the river itself would remain under State jurisdiction and State laws would regulate hunting and fishing, concurrent police jurisdiction would be sought within the National River.





*The National River would include the lower reaches of the pastoral South Branch, adding an unsurpassed rural landscape.*



The Department of the Interior—the Nation's principal natural resource agency—has a special obligation to assure that our expendable resources are conserved, that our renewable resources are managed to produce optimum benefits, and that all resources contribute to the progress and prosperity of the United States, now and in the future.

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NPS Inactive  
Proposed Areas

Administrative Report

POTOMAC NATIONAL RIVER  
(Proposed)

Maryland . West Virginia . . Virginia

Prepared by  
Office of Resource Planning  
National Park Service  
November 1966

Revised, November 1967

**ON MICROFILM**

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### Potomac Valley Park Description

Potomac Valley Park would extend from just south of Chain Bridge, in the northern suburban environs of Washington, 190 river-miles upstream on both sides of the Potomac to a point near the western Maryland town of Cumberland. The backbone of this park would be the river; the most important feature on the Maryland side, one that infuses its surroundings with an historic character and a scenic resource, will be the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal; and on both banks would be preserved the slopes and fields that provide the setting for the main stem of the Potomac, and those areas that will accommodate the visitor. Within the park, a description of which follows, the following general policies of acquisition would apply:

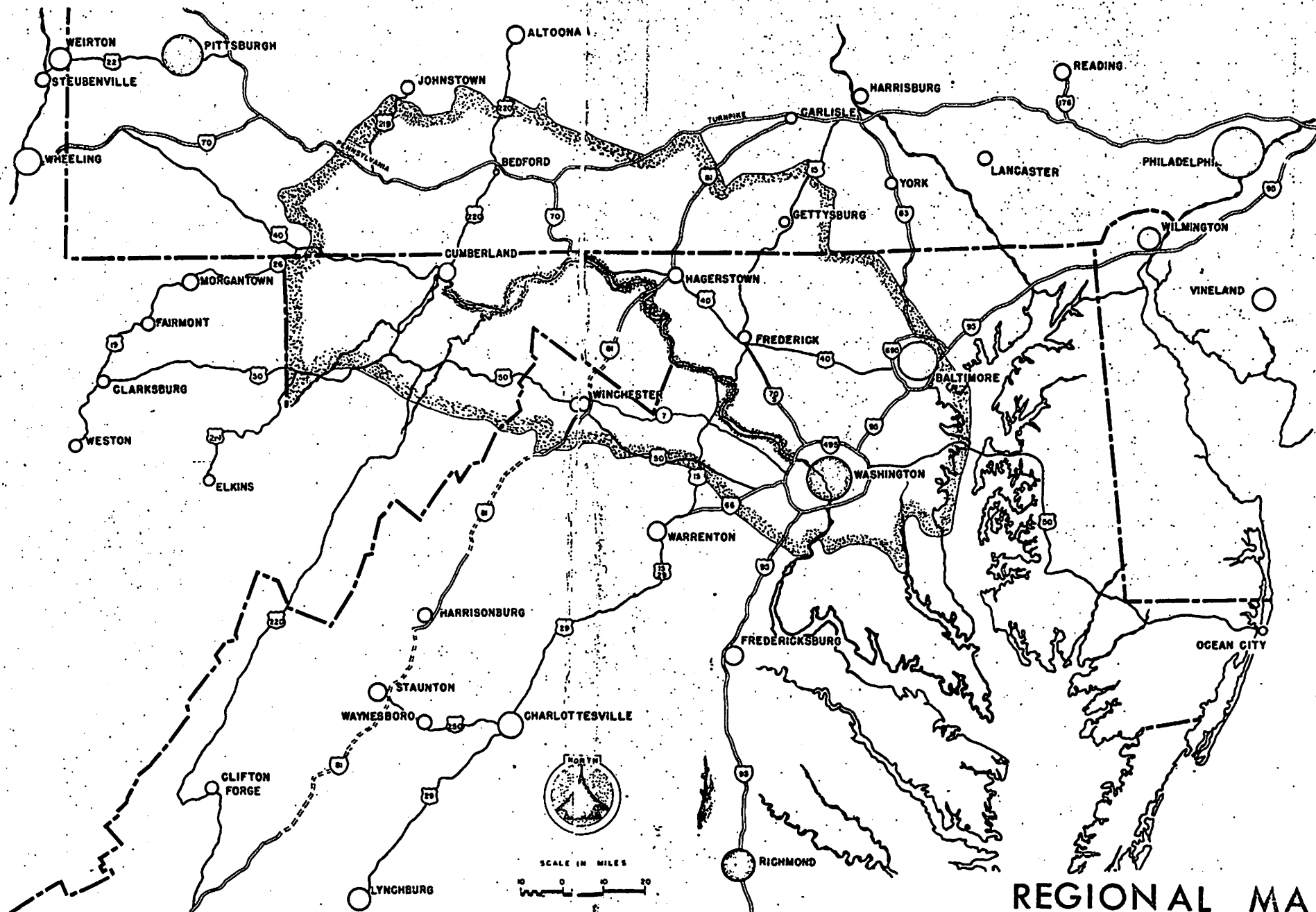
1. Both riverbanks, throughout the park, would be acquired and held in fee.
2. All islands.
3. All land that is required for public access and use or for administrative purposes would be acquired and held in fee.
4. Areas in which features of outstanding natural, historic, or recreational significance are to be preserved would be acquired and held in fee.
5. The remaining areas, not needed in full government control to accomplish the park's objectives, would be subject to fee purchase with



the subsequent lease-back or sell back of partial rights or the issuance of use permits; the acquisition of appropriate easements only; or other feasible means of controlling the scene.

Although only the areas of major development and recreation will be described below, facilities and opportunities, such as boat launching sites, canoe camps, and access would be provided to a lesser degree all along the river, and especially in connection with the Canal.

A Potomac Heritage Trail would traverse the length of the park, extending south through Washington and on to the mouth of the Potomac estuary, and



REGIONAL MAP

PRESENT AND FUTURE POPULATION SERVED BY THE  
PROPOSED POTOMAC VALLEY PARK

Area and Use Zone

Population in Thousands  
(Estimated)

1965                      1985                      2010

Day Use (25-50 miles)

4977                      6605                      9300

Washington Metropolitan Area (SMSA)

2,407                      3,370                      5,000

Baltimore Metropolitan Area (SMSA)

1,826                      2,335                      3,092

Piedmont (excluding Wash. and Balt.)

(SMSA) (Whites Ferry to Harpers Ferry)

175                      243                      373

Great Valley (Harpers Ferry to Hancock)

298                      311                      374

Appalachians (Hancock to Cumerland)

271                      346                      461

Weekend and "Long Day" Use (50-100 miles)

4,142                      4,538                      5,203

Pennsylvania Metropolitan Areas (SMSA'S)

3,684                      4,009                      4,498

Altoona

137                      137                      154

Harrisburg

345                      398                      446

Johnstown

281                      281                      315

Lancaster

278                      322                      361

York

238                      274                      307

Pittsburgh

2,405                      2,597                      2,915

Wilmington Delaware Metropolitan Area (SMSA)

458                      529                      705

Grand Total

9,119                      11,143                      14,503

Source: Adopted from "Economic Base Survey of the Potomac River Service Area", prepared by U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Business Economics, for the Corps of Engineers, 1961 and U.S. Census estimates and projections.