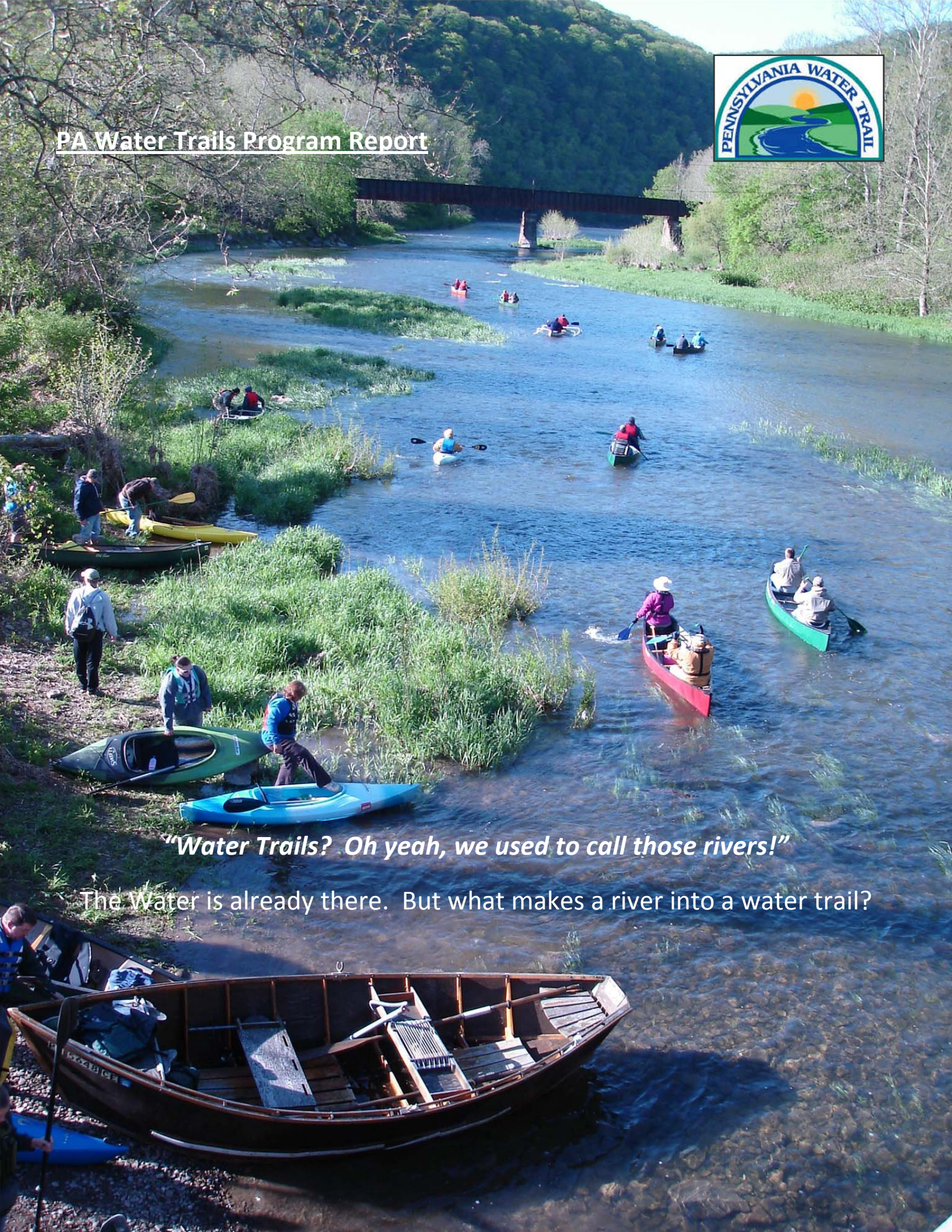


PA Water Trails Program Report



"Water Trails? Oh yeah, we used to call those rivers!"

The Water is already there. But what makes a river into a water trail?

I. What is a water trail?

Water trails are recreational and educational corridors between specific locations that can be used for both single day and multiple day trips. They are comprised of access points, boat launches, day use sites, and -- in some cases -- overnight camping areas. They provide safe access to and information about Pennsylvania's waterways while also providing connections to our diverse history, ecology, geology, heritage and wildlife.

Pennsylvania Water Trails provide information to users about general boating safety and also local information that's necessary for enjoying the specific water trail. Information should be provided through a combination of materials including a trail map and guide, signage, web site, or other format.

Water Trails are positive contributors to local communities by providing economic stimulus and also protecting resources that are important to the quality of life of Pennsylvania residents. Water trails promote an ethic of caring that makes the Commonwealth a better place. Pennsylvania Water Trails embrace the "Leave No Trace" code of outdoor ethics that promotes the responsible use & enjoyment of the outdoors.

In Pennsylvania we have adopted eight principles of water trail development and we encourage water trail managers to consider these principles in their projects and we have provided guidance about how to do that in the PA Water Trails Handbook. These principles are instrumental to the PA Water Trails designation process.

PA Water Trail Principles*

- Partnerships
- Stewardship
- Volunteerism
- Education
- Conservation
- Community Vitality
- Diversity
- Wellness & Wellbeing

Establishing a water trail can be a great approach to enhancing recreational access and fostering interest in local water resources. Nowhere have water trails been more enthusiastically embraced than in Pennsylvania.

II. PA Water Trails Program History

Modern water trail development in Pennsylvania started at the local level with the development of the Susquehanna River Water Trail – Middle Section. This project was initiated by a group of local stakeholders who were interested in promoting this 51-mile section of river from Sunbury to Pennsylvania's capital (Harrisburg) for paddling. This was happening in the mid-1990s (1996) at the same time as modern interest in water trails was popping up in other parts of the country. The Halifax to Harrisburg section of the Susquehanna River Water Trail – Middle Section, the first modern water trail in Pennsylvania, officially opened in June 1998. In 1998 there was also a large national water trail conference in Shepherdstown, WV organized by North American Water Trails, Inc. and the National Park Service (NPS) that did a lot to connect and encourage water trail activity in the Chesapeake Bay region.

* These principles are adopted from early work that was done by North American Water Trails, Inc. which is no longer in existence, but many of the resources developed by this organization are still alive in the water trail work of other organizations.

The PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) was on the original committee that worked on the first water trail. Their interest in promoting water trails quickly grew as the PFBC saw this as a way to achieve their mission of promoting safe boating in Pennsylvania. They became the lead agency in developing the PA Water Trails Program and provided assistance to local organizations who wanted to develop water trail projects. Assistance included: providing official designation of PA Water Trails, layout and printing of water trail map and guides, assistance with boat access and signage and promotion of water trails through their web site. A recent accomplishment includes publication of the PA Fishing & Boating Access Strategy that will help to guide increased access in the Commonwealth.

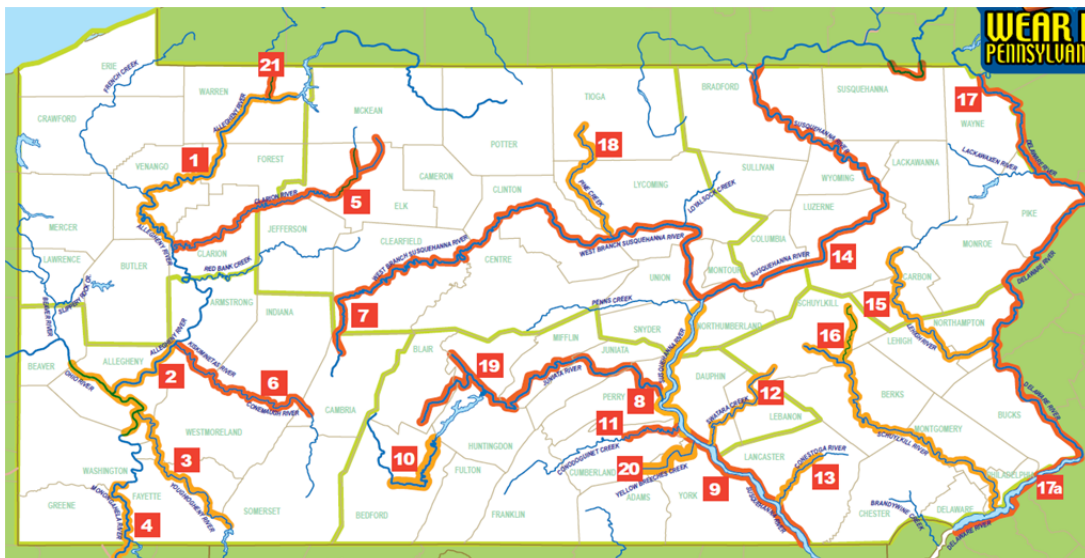
The PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR) was involved early on in water trail development in Pennsylvania as a property owner. DCNR owns a majority of the islands that are a key feature on the Susquehanna River Water Trail - Middle Section. Based on their involvement with the Susquehanna River Water Trail – Middle Section, the DCNR – Bureau of Forestry developed guidelines for the development of island campsites that are available statewide to water trail managers. Since then they have been a consistent funder of water trail projects and partner with other state and federal agencies in promoting water trails in Pennsylvania. Their support was again renewed as part of the recent Statewide Outdoor Comprehensive Recreation Plan that included several goals related to strengthening the PA Water Trails Program.

Water trails have been a focus of recreation development throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed for over a decade. Dating from its 1998 authorization, the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network (CBGN) has been an impetus for water trail development in the Susquehanna River basin. The NPS has provided financial and technical assistance through both the CBGN and the Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA).

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) joined the program as a statewide, non-profit partner in 2003 with the hiring of staff dedicated to work on the Pennsylvania Water Trails Program. PEC is committed to the water trail program as a way to further their mission of, “conservation through cooperation.” Before PEC’s role as the statewide manager of the PA Water Trails Program, PEC was involved as a local project manager during the water trail feasibility study that was undertaken for French Creek in late 2001. In addition to statewide responsibilities, PEC continues to manage water trails at the local level on the Youghiogheny River Water Trail and Tidal Delaware River Water Trail.

Sojourns are important to the PA Water Trails Program. Several water trails organize yearly sojourns, which are guided paddling trips. Organizations use them to get people out onto the water and to educate people about a water trail or issues impacting that body of water. An educational component is required by the PA Organization of Watersheds & Rivers (POWR, www.pawatersheds.org), which was created to support local organizers of sojourns. The sojourn program is thriving with 14 sojourns scheduled in 2011.

There are currently 22 designated water trails in Pennsylvania.



- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Middle Allegheny River Water Trail | 12. Swatara Creek Water Trail |
| 2. Three Rivers Water Trail | 13. Conestoga River Water Trail |
| 3. Youghiogheny River Water Trail | 14. North Branch Susquehanna River Water Trail |
| 4. Upper Monongahela Water Trail | 15. Lehigh River Water Trail |
| 5. Clarion River Water Trail | 16. Schuylkill River Water Trail |
| 6. Kiski-Conemaugh River Water Trail | 17a. Delaware River Water Trail |
| 7. West Branch Susquehanna River Water Trail | 17. Tidal Delaware River Water Trail |
| 8. Middle Susquehanna River Water Trail | 18. Pine Creek Water Trail |
| 9. Lower Susquehanna River Water Trail | 19. Juniata River Water Trail |
| 10. Raystown Branch Juniata River Water Trail | 20. Yellow Breeches Creek Water Trail |
| 11. Conodoguinet Creek Water Trail | 21. Conewango Creek Water Trail |

Each of Pennsylvania's Water Trails is managed by a local water trail managing organization. The Susquehanna River Trail Association (SRTA), which was incorporated in 1999, led the way and is a model for other water trails as a volunteer-run membership organization. They partner with the Bureau of Forestry and other partners to manage 22 island campsites and organize paddling trips. As water trails have changed and evolved so have management activities and entities. Several PA Heritage Areas manage water trails as part of their role in promoting regions (Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area, Endless Mountains Heritage Region, Allegheny Ridge Corporation). They use signage and water trail map and guides to provide information to visitors. Other water trails are managed by municipalities, watershed organizations or other non-profit organizations. Most of the local WT managers have taken on water trail development as a secondary or tertiary interest. At their core they may be paddling enthusiasts, environmental advocates, storytellers, or tourism and economic development interest. The PA Water Trail Partnership encourages local WT managers to build partnership coalitions and capacity. Many PA water trails and their local WT managing organizations—having taken the first steps in trail development—are beginning to confront the challenges of cooperative stewardship and sustainable management, and are looking for all the help and guidance that they can find.

As part of the PA Water Trails Program we have organized several statewide conferences and workshops. These workshops are in addition to water trail presentations being made at other statewide conferences, like the PA Recreation & Park Society's Annual Conference and PA Greenway & Trail Summits. Materials and presentations from these workshops are available and are used to provide technical assistance to local managers. Following is a listing of the water trail specific conferences and workshops.

- *Water Trail Workshop* (May 2004)
- *Water Trails Working Session* (April 2008)
- *Natural Resource & Stewardship Management for Water Trails* (September 2009)
- *Developing Boat Access* (December 2010)

While this accounts for a decade or more of growth of the water trail movement in Pennsylvania, throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed and nationally, there remains a growing, and heightening, interest in providing public access to waterways for recreation at the state and federal level as a result of several key initiatives. These initiatives represent an alignment of state and federal policy that creates opportunity to cultivate new partnerships.

2009-2013 Statewide Outdoor Comprehensive Recreation Plan

The *2009 – 2013 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan - Pennsylvania Outdoors – The Keystone for Healthy Living* was released on November 13, 2009. The plan was developed with the expertise and support of the Technical Advisory Committee and extensive input from citizens and stakeholders throughout the Commonwealth. In 2011 the plan was recognized as the best in the nation by the National Park Service and the National Association for Recreational Resource Planners.

The *PA Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* included several goals related to strengthening the PA Water Trails Program.

1. Establish an official and recognized trails committee to recommend trail policy and coordinate standardized planning, trail information and evaluation of trail efforts in Pennsylvania.
2. Standardize trail planning guidelines, information and funding decision criteria to build a sustainable statewide trail system.
3. Standardize and improve existing electronic information available for data collection and trail planning and launch the interactive trails website.
4. Improve the accessibility and use of trails by enhancing the quality, quantity and visibility of access points and printed and electronic information.
5. Develop self-guided and interpreter-led educational and programming opportunities at trailheads and on trails statewide.
6. Build the capacity of local and regional land and water trail groups in planning, stewardship and programming.

Pennsylvania's Fishing and Boating Access Strategy

The recently developed *Pennsylvania's Fishing and Boating Access Strategy* prioritizes the Commonwealth's HUC 8 Watersheds for the purpose of enhancing boating and fishing access. Of the watersheds ranked in the top ten, eight have water trails. The Strategy identified over 600 stretches on waterways or water bodies that need access improvement. Many of the locations identified were on water trails.

The Strategy also cited the Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership and its important role in coordinating the designation of water trails in the Commonwealth. One of the action steps in the Strategy is continuing the implementation of the Statement of Purpose for the Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership by DCNR, PFBC, NPS, and PEC.

Americas Great Outdoors Initiative/National Blueways Initiative

The Americas Great Outdoors (AGO) Report released in February, 2011 called for empowering communities to connect with America's great outdoors through their rivers and other waterways. It noted that Americans are working together to establish recreational opportunities on their rivers and other waterways and to access their local aquatic resources and adjacent green spaces. There is federal interest in helping to empower local communities to restore and connect with their rich water-based natural resources. The report recommended establishing a National Recreational Blueway

Trails Initiative to increase access to recreation. It is anticipated that the National Blueway Trails initiative will be announced in fall 2012.

The AGO report also supported restoration and conservation of rivers, bays, coasts, lakes, and estuaries for recreation, healthy fisheries, and wildlife habitat. It stated that the federal government should integrate federal water resources projects with locally driven watershed protection efforts and expand support for community-based restoration and conservation of water resources. These locally supported restoration projects may result in enhanced fish passage, habitat restoration and connectivity, water-based recreation, flood control, traditional uses, and adjacent land-based recreation. The report recommended enhancing and restoring local waterways and the surrounding land by partnering with state, local, and tribal government, and the private sector to support community efforts.

Chesapeake Bay Executive Order

In May 2009, President Obama signed Executive Order 13508, which tasked a team of federal agencies to draft a way forward for protection and restoration of the Chesapeake watershed. This team—the Federal Leadership Committee for the Chesapeake Bay—developed the *Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*, which was released in May 2010. Following the structure of the EO Strategy, the Action Plan is organized into four goal areas (“restore water quality,” “recover habitat,” “sustain fish and wildlife,” and “conserve land and increase public access”) and four supporting strategy sections (“expand citizen stewardship,” “develop environmental markets,” “respond to climate change,” and “strengthen science”).

In fall 2010, federal, state, local, nongovernmental, and community partners began crafting a regional public access plan to inform and guide expansion of Chesapeake watershed public access sites. Due for completion by 2012, the plan will help focus access funding efforts. NPS has, as directed by the EO Strategy, made development of public access the priority in its recent CBGN matching grants. This program is already supporting projects along the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania (along with the James, Nanticoke, Rappahannock, and York rivers in the other Bay states) that will increase public access sites within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

While all the stars seemed to have aligned from a policy perspective to continue the advancement of water trails, funding has become more difficult for grant making and technical assistance. We need to renew our efforts to voice support for the authorization and appropriation of both state and federal programs that support water trails.

III. PA Water Trails Partnership/Vision

Leaders in the water trail movement in Pennsylvania gathered in Harrisburg on June 4, 2008 to confirm their vision of establishing a strong direction and course for the future of water trails in this state. The purposes of the gathering included discussion of common interests, options for improvement of programs and policy, and identifying actions of a collaborative nature among government, non-profit groups, users, and citizens. Key points from that discussion are summarized below as a reminder of the charge that was created for the now on-going work of the PA Water Trails Partnership.

A Vision of Water Trails in PA in 5 Years:

Access/Use

- Access on Every Navigable Waterway

Information

- Full Access to WT Information
- Positive, Consistent Signage

Marketing

- Public Recognizes WTs
- WTs Thought of as Part of the Recreation infrastructure
- PA WTs Program Identity and Branding

Education

- Users Have Clean Gear When They Arrive

Community/Economics

- WTs Part of Community Development

Funding

- Consistent Funding for WTs

Recognition

- Increased Visibility for WTs
- State Legislators Take Pride in Their Local WTs
- Increase National Recognition

Responsibility

- Local Group Responsibility on Every WT

Safety

- Public Knows about Water Safety

Stewardship

- Increased Citizen Stewardship Ethic
- Local Stewardship for Every WT
- Appropriate Managing of Impacts

- WTs Physically Connected to Land Trails

- WT Users Choose Their Experience with Confidence

- Increased Visibility for WTs
- Cohesive, Comprehensive and Consistent
- Seamless Connection – Packaging the System
- Increased Event Programming on WTs

- Education and Interpretation along WTs

- Measure and Promote Economic Benefits

- Whole Susquehanna Designated as “National” WT
- WTs as Gateways Sites in PA

- Managed by an Interagency Partnership

- No Fatalities or Injuries in 5 Years

- Minimize Impacts on Natural Environment
- Water Trails Use and Promote Best Management Practices

- Access Sites are Model Habitats
- WTs Become a Force in Driving Land Conservation

Changes & Improvements Needed:

Continue this Leadership Forum

- Establish permanent commitment and consensus among partners
- Formalized agreement with roles/responsibilities
- Maintain flexibility & entrepreneurial qualities; needs to be multi-tiered functionally

Provide more technical assistance

- On-going program of TA; integrate WTs assistance into est. agency functions
- Promote key developmental needs

Need to leverage each other's funding

- Improve financial stability of local non-profit partners

Define "water trail"; develop criteria & definition

- Provide a consistent user experience (e.g., facility standards)

Marketing of WTs

- Provide education & interpretation: awareness through marketing
- Ensure marketing to motorized and non-motorized users
- Need to improve signage
- Need to improve website

Turn all the many separate WT segments into one system

- Identify gaps in the system

- Define and Measure Success

- Need a smaller group to maintain continuity and progress

- Include Tourism & Transportation partners

- ID needs of existing WTs; involve local partners in defining the needs

- Work with the most important WTs first

- Sell more launch permits; educate users through this process

- Adapt/develop principles for WTs

- Improve messaging

- Institute a sense of recreational stewardship

- Keep it simple for the user

- Get people on the water: Don't scare people off; keep them safe

- Seamless visitor experience

PA Water Trails Statement of Purpose

On September 30, 2008 leaders from the PA Water Trails Partnership came together to sign the “PA Water Trails Statement of Purpose” that was drafted based on the common vision developed at the June meeting. The goals that were included in that document are:



- To encourage and further the development of water trails in Pennsylvania,
- To strengthen the connections between and among existing water trails to promote a system of water trails,
- To better market and promote Pennsylvania’s water trails as a recreational resource to residents and visitors alike,
- To provide technical assistance to local project managers who are implementing water trail projects,
- To promote the national recognition of Pennsylvania’s water

trails,

- To provide assistance to local project manager specifically with the long-term maintenance, stewardship and sustainability of water trails.
- To promote the development and management of water trails as a means to enhance citizen stewardship of local water resources.

These goals are the basis for all work of the PA Water Trails Partnership and continue to drive the work of the PA Water Trails Program.

The PA Water Trails Partnership is committed to the Statement of Purpose and managing a robust statewide system of water trails that will continue to keep Pennsylvania as a leader in water trail development. The Partnership sees this as an important way to promote the sustainable use of PA’s natural resources.

IV. Report on Actions Since June 2008:

Action Item	Brief Status Update	Link to More Detail
1. Organizing for Continuity of PA Water Trails Leadership		
A. PA Water Trails Partnership Statement of Purpose	Signed Sept. 30, 2008	See Tab # 1
B. Vision Statement – Developing Water Trails in PA	Complete (July 2008)	See Tab # 2
C. Regular On-going Meetings of the PA WTs Executive Committee (PEC, PFBC, DCNR, NPS-CBGN & RTCA)	July 2008, Sept 2008, December 2008, May 2009, May 2010, July 2010, August 2010, April 2011, July 2011	
D. Recurring Meetings of the PA WT Leadership	June 2008, September 2009	
E. DCNR/NPS Funding for PEC to Staff PA WTs Partnership	DCNR \$181,000 to date (awarded June 2003, July 2005, June 2009, April 2010) NPS \$70,000 to date (awarded Aug 2008, June 2009)	
2. Water Trail Definition & Designation Criteria		
A. Definition/Checklist/Guiding Principles	Complete; incorporated into the PA Water Trails Handbook	See Vision Statement, Tab # 3
B. Benchmarking: Evaluate Current Status of PA Water Trails	Complete	See Benchmark Summary Report, Tab # 4
C. Develop Standards for Designation of PA Water Trails / Outline Designation Process	Updated designation process in place. One PA WT designated with new application/review process (Conewango Creek – October 2010)	See Designation Process & Application Notes, Tab # 5
3. Water Trail Funding		
A. Near-term Funding to Continue PA WT Partnership	DCNR/NPS \$ for PEC Staff Assistance	
B. Leverage Partners Funding Support for WTs	History of funding (since 2008?)	
C. Advocate for Long-term Funding Support	CBGN/DCNR/PFBC	
D. Identify New Funding Sources	Foundations, non-profit organizations, and corporate partners should all be evaluated as potential sources for funding support and financial and technical assistance.	See Funding for PA Water Trails White Paper, Tab# 12
4. Water Trail Marketing		
“get people on the water and keep them safe”, “institute a sense of recreational stewardship”, “reach WT managers and users”, “reach both motorized and non-motorized users”		
A. Develop an Overall Communication Plan	Progress, but not complete; Executive Committee identified issues and potential process for development in	See Communications Plan White Paper, Tab# 11

	the accompanying Communications Plan White Paper.	
B. Improve Messaging	Identified as part of the scope of Communications Planning; needs input from the full Partnership.	See Communications Plan White Paper, Tab# 11
C. Improve Web Sites	PEC has developed and published online resources for local water trail managers - www.pawatertrails.org . Online resources for users - PFBC improvements to online mapping: interactive maps, improved resources on water trails page, initiating water trail trip maps. Region guide - one whole side devoted to PA Water Trails. ExplorePA Trails team and local water trail project managers are exploring ways to better integrate online water trails information for users.	www.pawatertrails.org www.fish.state.pa.us/watertrails www.explorepatrails.com
D. Improve Signage & Interpretation (recommendation of the SCORP)	-Susquehanna Orientation & Safety Signage Project is a model for PA water trails (54 panels). -Susquehanna Greenway Partnership (SGP) has agreed to be a pilot for West Branch for bridge signage project. Currently moving slowly due to funding priorities. -Several water trails have implemented water trail interpretive panels/kiosks.	Signage Examples, refer to www.pawatertrails.org
E. WTs Economic Impact Analysis (recommendation of the SCORP)	Resolution to direct the Budget & Finance Committee to undertake this analysis was introduced; 10 co-sponsors. Need to keep options open in case legislation is not successful.	See Legislation/Benchmarking Report, Tab # 7
5. Water Trail Recognition		
A. PA WT Designation Process	22 designated water trails.	See Designation Process & Application Notes, Tab # 5
B. CBGN Designation Process	Juniata River WT; Raystown Branch Juniata River WT; Susquehanna River WT – Lower, Middle, North and West Sections; Swatara Creek WT <u>Note:</u> Also Chemung Basin WT and Headwaters River WT (both in NY)	http://www.baygateways.net/join.cfm
C. National Recreational Trails Designation	Juniata River Water Trail; Susquehanna River WT – Lower, Middle, North and West Sections	
D. Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail - Connecting Trail	Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, in coordination with local water trail managing partners, has submitted an application for Connector Trail status	

	for the Susquehanna River Water Trail. Support letter from Gov. Corbett secured.	
6. Provide More Technical Assistance		
On-going Program of TA Integrated into Agency Functions		
A. Promote Key Developmental Needs	Needs identified through: Designation Process, Benchmarking, Conference/workshop feedback, meetings w/ local project managers (ex, Susquehanna-wide meetings). This is an ongoing process	
B. Involve Local Partners in Identifying Developmental Needs	Needs identified through: Designation Process, Benchmarking, Conference/workshop feedback, meetings w/ local project managers (ex, Susquehanna-wide meetings). This is an ongoing process	
C. Water Trails Toolbox	NPS CBGN product	http://www.baygateways.net/watertrailtools.cfm
D. Community Toolbox	NPS RTCA product	http://www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoobox/
E. Targeted Technical Assistance Workshops	Natural Resource & Stewardship Management (9/2009) Developing Boat Access (12/2010)	www.pawatertrails.org
F. Individual Project Funding (projects with demo value)	-West Branch of the Susquehanna-Stewardship & Conservation Plan -Susquehanna River Orientation & Safety Signage Project -Tidal Delaware web site trail stewardship program -Juniata & Susquehanna Interpretive Plans -Schuylkill Signage Master Plan	
7. Access		
A. Pennsylvania's Fishing and Boating Access Strategy	Completed 04/2010	www.fishandboat.com/accessplan.htm
B. Chesapeake Bay Executive Order 13508	Set target goal to increase public access to the Bay and its tributaries by adding 300 new public access sites by 2025; directs public access as CBGN funding emphasis	Six access project applications from PA; CBGN \$ cut in FY11; FY12 funding decision pending
C. Develop a Public Access Project Permitting Flowchart	Collaboration of PA WT Partners and PA State Consulting and Permitting Agencies	See Spreadsheet, Tab # 8
D. Developing Boat Access Workshop	Completed 12/2010; 60 attendees	www.pawatertrails.org
8. Stewardship		

A. Natural Resource & Stewardship Management Workshop	Completed 9/2009; 40 attendees	www.pawatertrails.org
B. West Branch of the Susquehanna Stewardship & Conservation Plan	Pilot for other projects; Phase I completed 08/2009, Phase II ????	http://www.npcweb.org/Executive_Summary_2009.pdf
C. BOF Campsite Guidelines	Guidelines for primitive campsites.	See Tab # 9
9. Sustainability		
A. PA WTs Principles	The PA WTs Handbook incorporates 8 principles. Challenge is assisting water trail partners in achieving all of them without being too cumbersome.	See Water Trail Management and Stewardship White Paper, Tab# 10

V. Current Issues & Future Challenges (Discussion Points for Leadership Forum)

There are several issues and challenges that will frame the future work of the PA Water Trails Partnership. Please refer to the associated Tabs #10-12 for a complete discussion of each of these issues and the recommended next steps. The PA Water Trails Partnership will develop action steps for each issue.

Building Effective Localized Water Trail Management and Stewardship

Many PA water trails and their managing entities—having taken the first steps in trail development—are confronting complex issues and challenges related to cooperative stewardship and sustainability. The challenge is in both designing a sustainable program that will keep volunteers engaged in water trail work and also being able to have staffed that can manage volunteers successfully. Please refer to Tab #10.

- The PA WTs Partnership expects local/partnership management and citizen stewardship for every water trail.
- Local WT managers assume the tasks of developing and sustaining the trail infrastructure, maintenance and programming.
- The PA WT Partnership encourages local coalitions and volunteer recruitment to build and sustain the water trails.
- Some local WT managers haven't figured out the organizational business model to sustain their interest in water trails or support the financial requirements of such operations.
- Organizations must work at the right scale, with WT segments that they know and care enough about to make a sustainable commitment.
- Funding for ongoing operations or staffing can be hard to secure. Coalition building equals staff time, and while volunteers may not draw pay, the management of volunteers costs.
- We need to find or develop local WT managers that can will sustain their water trails and support the financial requirements of management operations.
- We will need to continue to promote our state and national expectations. AND we should anticipate the continuing need to provide technical assistance and funding to support local partners' needs.

Communications Plan

Developing a communications plan for the PA Water Trails Program was an early goal of the Partnership that remains largely undone. Please refer to Tab #11.

- Online communications are changing at a very rapid pace and there are many ways to reach people who are interested in visiting or developing water trails.
- We have a good message: PA WTs are important recreational resources in the Commonwealth with positive benefits on local communities and residents, similar to land trails.

- The PA WT Partnership has a strong interest in improving the way that we communicate about water trails to the public and water trail managers.
- Among the PA Water Trails partners, there is not a dedicated funding source for PA Water Trails communications efforts. There are several existing resources that, if better coordinated, have the potential to improve our PA Water Trails communications.
- In light of new communications and marketing tools, reduced funding resources and increasing interest in water trails at the national and statewide levels, there is a need to develop a communications plan for the PA Water Trails Program to better tie together existing initiatives and to identify the work that still needs to be done.

State and Federal Funding & Outreach to New Funders

In order to maintain and grow the PA Water Trails Program we need to engage new funding partners to accomplish statewide goals and also to maintain a consistent level of management. Please refer to Tab #12.

- Water trails require basic funding to develop and maintain facilities, signage, and marketing tools.
- Since the beginning of the PA Water Trail Program, state and federal partners have played an important role in supporting these locally based recreation assets. Each partner has played a different role.
- There has been a decline in the availability of state and federal project funding and technical assistance from the PA Water Trail Partners due, in part, to current budget constraints.
- At the same time as grant funding has been reduced there is a heightened interest in providing public access to waterways for recreation at the state and federal levels. The policy stars are aligned, but the funding may not be there to assist local groups in implementing major policy initiatives.
- The emphasis on improving recreational access to waterways at both the state and federal levels creates an opportunity to cultivate new partnerships for the PA Water Trails Program.

VI. Vision for the Future & Goals

The PA Water Trails Partnership is committed to the Statement of Purpose and managing a robust statewide system of water trails that will continue to keep Pennsylvania as a national leader in water trail development. Following are the goals of the program that will enable the Partnership to continue to be successful at achieving the vision of the PA Water Trails Program:

1. Focus on developing sustainable water trails (development, management, maintenance, funding). Water trails promoting sustainable use of PA's natural resources.
2. Focus on increasing and improving access to PA Water Trails. Connections to the America's Great Outdoors Report.
3. Opportunities to connect to other forms of outdoor recreation. Connections between land and water trails.
4. Achieve water trail objectives included in SCORP.
5. Improve Pennsylvania's place in National Blueways Initiative.

Action Steps will be identified by the PA Water Trails Partnership.

VII. Contacts/Resources



PA Water Trails Partnership

Pennsylvania Environmental Council

Hannah E. Hardy, hhardy@pecpa.org, 412-481-9400

www.pecpa.org

PA Fish & Boat Commission

Laurel Anders, landers@state.pa.us, 717-705-7849

www.fishandboat.com

PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources

Terry Hough, though@state.pa.us, 717-783-2712

www.dcnr.state.pa.us

National Park Service – Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network

Bob Campbell, Bob_Campbell@nps.gov, 410-260-2478

www.baygateways.net

National Park Service – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program

Dave Lange, david_a_lange@nps.gov, 215-597-6477

www.nps.gov/rtca

National Online Water Trail Resources

A useful resource for water trail development is the Water Trail Toolbox that was put together by the National Park Service - Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network. This online toolbox provides hands on information about developing a high quality water trail. The Toolbox is available at <http://www.baygateways.net/watertrailtools.cfm>

Another important resource that cuts across several of the principles is the Community Toolbox that was prepared by the National Park Service – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program. The Community Toolbox provides information on a variety of topics to assist project managers in working in their communities. The Community Toolbox is available at <http://www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoobox/>.

In 2008, American Rivers created the Blue Trails Guide, an expansive online guide that provides step-by-step instructions for developing a thriving blue trail with a focus on conservation. It includes cutting edge case studies on planning, building, and managing for conservation. This guide is intended to provide practical and easy to use web-based guidance for local and state government entities, planners, non-governmental organizations, recreational enthusiasts, and others. See American Rivers at www.americanrivers.org , www.bluetrailsguide.org

Other national organizations that have information about water trails are:

American Canoe Association at www.americancanoe.org

American Trails at www.americantrails.org

TAB # 1

PA Water Trails Partnership

Statement of Purpose

Among
The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
The National Park Service,
The Pennsylvania Environmental Council

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has an abundance of natural resources that are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike with 86,000 miles of rivers and streams in one state;

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is a major contributor to the Chesapeake Bay as home to 517 miles of the Susquehanna River, which provides the Chesapeake Bay with fifty percent of its fresh water (24 million gallons) on a typical day;

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is a participating partner in the multistate effort to conserve and restore the Chesapeake Bay watershed and as a signatory to the Chesapeake 2000 agreement has committed to expanding public access to Bay tributaries in an environmentally sensitive manner, to increasing the number of designated water trails in the region, and to support local and community-based watershed restoration and protection projects;

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 (*P.L. 105-312, Sections 501-2*) calls for the National Park Service to facilitate development of a network of Chesapeake Bay gateways, water trails and other connecting routes in cooperation with other Federal agencies, state and local governments, non-profit organizations and the private sector and to establish a technical and financial assistance program to aid development of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network;

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is a national leader in the development of water trails with an active water trails program and over twenty water trails developed or under development. Each water trail provides users with a different and unique trail experience;

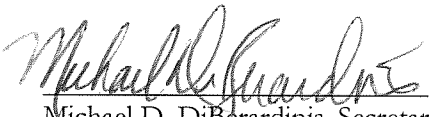
WHEREAS, In order to ensure the ongoing stewardship and sustainability of our water trails, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, National Park Service-Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, National Park Service-Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council agree to work together in a coordinated effort with local and regional organizations to achieve collaborative goals of the Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership; and

NOW, THEREFORE, we the undersigned representing the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, National Park Service – Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, National Park Service – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program, Pennsylvania Environmental Council intend to collaborate to provide overall planning and coordination for implementation of water trail projects in Pennsylvania. The partners will work in concert with a variety of local and regional organizations and agencies to implement projects throughout Pennsylvania and with our adjoining states. We will work with the understanding that each resource has its own character and will need to be approached with that character in mind. The goals of the Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership are to:

- To encourage and further the development of water trails in Pennsylvania,
- To strengthen the connections between and among existing water trails to promote a system of water trails,
- To better market and promote Pennsylvania's water trails as a recreational resource to residents and visitors alike,
- To provide technical assistance to local project managers who are implementing water trail projects,
- To promote the national recognition of Pennsylvania's water trails,
- To provide assistance to local project manager specifically with the long-term maintenance, stewardship and sustainability of water trails.
- To promote the development and management of water trails as a means to enhance citizen stewardship of local water resources

By this statement of our intention, we will work toward our goals in a spirit open to others, welcome new ideas, encourage collaborative approaches, and always be committed to the common goal of a strong system of water trails that benefit the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

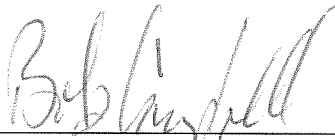
This Statement of Purpose and the commitments of the parties hereunder are subject to the availability of funding. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as binding the parties to expend in any one fiscal year any sum in excess of appropriations or administrative allocations for the purpose of this statement, or to involve the parties in any contract or other obligation for the further expenditure of money in excess of such appropriations or allocations. In addition, nothing contained herein shall be interpreted as obligating the parties to provide funding, compensation or reimbursement.



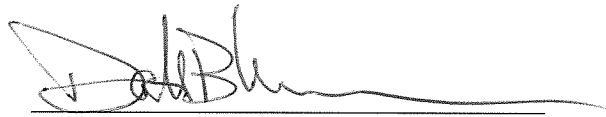
Michael D. DiBerardinis, Secretary
PA Department of Conservation &
Natural Resources



Douglas J. Austen, Ph.D., Executive Director
PA Fish & Boat Commission



Bob Campbell, Program Manager
Chesapeake Bay Gateways and
Watertrails Network



Davitt B. Woodwell, Senior Vice President
Pennsylvania Environmental Council

TAB # 2

Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership



A Project of:

**National Park Service – Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network (CBGN)
National Park Service – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance (RTCA)
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR)
Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC)
Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC)**

Vision, Mission, Goals

Vision

Pennsylvania's water trails are destinations for our citizens and visitors alike. These waterways provide recreation, conservation, and access opportunities while maintaining their place as important drivers in the Commonwealth's industrial, commercial, and residential economies.

Pennsylvania's water trails provide information about and access to every navigable waterway in the Commonwealth. Our water trails are a valued part of the recreational infrastructure in Pennsylvania. They are an important part of the way that we tell the story of Pennsylvania regionally and nationally.

Water Trails are positive contributors to local communities by providing economic stimulus and also protecting resources that are important to quality of life of Pennsylvania residents. Water trails promote an ethic of caring that makes the Commonwealth a better place.

Mission

The Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership (Partnership), a project of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, National Park Service and Pennsylvania Environmental Council, provides overall planning and coordination for implementation of water trail projects in Pennsylvania. The partners work in concert with a variety of local and regional organizations and agencies to implement projects throughout Pennsylvania and with our adjoining states.

Goals

The goals of the Partnership are:

- To encourage the development of additional miles of water trails in Pennsylvania,

- To strengthen the connections between and among existing water trails to promote a system of water trails,
- To better market and promote Pennsylvania's water trails as a recreational resource to residents and visitors alike,
- To provide technical assistance to local project managers who are implementing water trail projects,
- To promote the national recognition of the Susquehanna River Water Trail as a premier water trail,
- To provide assistance to local project manager specifically with the long-term maintenance, stewardship and sustainability of water trails.
- To promote the development and management of water trails as a means to enhance citizen stewardship of local water resources.

Overarching all of these goals is the understanding that each community has its own character and will need to be approached with that character in mind. There is also the understanding that the CBGN has a specific focus within the Chesapeake Bay and will work to achieve these goals in their service area.

Organizational Statement

The Partnership will be formalized through the signing of a Partnership Agreement. Staffing will be provided by PEC with support from the RTCA Program. Both the CBGN and DCNR are considering requests for financial assistance to staff the Partnership through FY 2009.

The Partnership will meet on a regular basis. The Executive Committee will meet on a quarterly basis with meetings of the full Partnership twice a year. The Program Manager is responsible for organizing other get-togethers, technical assistance workshops and statewide conferences for regional and local partners.

TAB # 3

<i>Table of Contents</i>

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3. PA Water Trail Partnership	P. 4
4. Guiding Principles and Guidelines	P. 7
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What is a Water Trail?

Definition

Water trails are recreational and educational corridors between specific locations that can be used for both single day and multiple day trips. They are comprised of access points, boat launches, day use sites, and -- in some cases -- overnight camping areas. They provide safe access to and information about Pennsylvania's waterways while also providing connections to our diverse history, ecology, geology, heritage and wildlife.

Pennsylvania Water Trails provide information to users about general boating safety and also local information that's necessary for enjoying the specific water trail. Information should be provided through a combination of materials including a trail map and guide, signage, web site, or other format.

Water Trails are positive contributors to local communities by providing economic stimulus and also protecting resources that are important to the quality of life of Pennsylvania residents. Water trails promote an ethic of caring that makes the Commonwealth a better place. Pennsylvania Water Trails embrace the "Leave No Trace" code of outdoor ethics that promotes the responsible use & enjoyment of the outdoors.

Water Trail Checklist

The water trail checklist provides guidance on what activities you should undertake to implement your water trail.

Every water trail must have...

- ☐ A **local managing organization** to care about and manage the trail.
- ☐ A part in the statewide water trail system with **state designation** by the PFBC.
- ☐ **Public involvement** by the local community.
- ☐ A **map** providing information for using the trail.
- ☐ **Free** information provided to users on the internet and/or printed materials.
- ☐ Water trail **feasibility study or plan** to determine if your waterway can be a water trail.
- ☐ Active **volunteers** who will participate in the management of the trail.
- ☐ **Signage** that can direct users, interpret the resource, provide safety and orientation information.
- ☐ **Maintenance** of existing and new amenities (boat access points, signage, information provided, etc.).

Every water trail project should consider...

- ☐ **Designation** by the CBGN (where relevant), National Recreation Trail, American Canoe Association or other nationally recognized organization.
- ☐ **For-Sale** water trail map & guide.
- ☐ **Volunteer** recruitment & development program.
- ☐ Conducting **outreach educational programs**.
- ☐ **Trail amenities** & facilities including campsites, comfort stations, access points, a full range of signage, etc.
- ☐ There are a variety of additional **planning and implementation** efforts to consider:
 - Stewardship & conservation plan.
 - Interpretive Plan
 - Management Plan
 - Marketing & promotion plan.

PA Water Trails Partnership

Pennsylvania has a statewide program to support the development of water trails. The partners include: PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, PA Environmental Council, PA Fish & Boat Commission, National Park Service – Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Watertrails Network and National Park Service-Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program. The partners are available to assist with local water trail efforts and to advance projects at the statewide level.

For more information or assistance please contact the PA Water Trails Partners:



1. Pennsylvania Environmental Council
Hannah E. Hardy, hhardy@pecpa.org, 412-481-9400
www.pecpa.org
2. PA Fish & Boat Commission
Dan Martin, danmartin@state.pa.us, 717-705-7849
www.fishandboat.com
3. PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources
Terry Hough, though@state.pa.us, 717-783-2712
www.dcnr.state.pa.us
4. National Park Service – Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network
Bob Campbell, bcampbell@chesapeakebay.net, 412-267-5747
www.baygateways.net
5. National Park Service – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
Dave Lange, david_a_lange@nps.gov, 215-597-6477
www.nps.gov/rtca

PA Water Trails Partnership

Statement of Purpose

Among
The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
The National Park Service,
The Pennsylvania Environmental Council

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has an abundance of natural resources that are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike with 86,000 miles of rivers and streams in one state;

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is a major contributor to the Chesapeake Bay as home to 517 miles of the Susquehanna River, which provides the Chesapeake Bay with fifty percent of its fresh water (24 million gallons) on a typical day;

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is a participating partner in the multistate effort to conserve and restore the Chesapeake Bay watershed and as a signatory to the Chesapeake 2000 agreement has committed to expanding public access to Bay tributaries in an environmentally sensitive manner, to increasing the number of designated water trails in the region, and to support local and community-based watershed restoration and protection projects;

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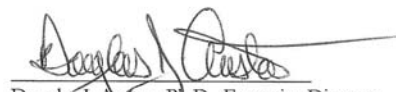
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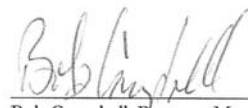
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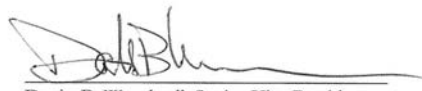
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This Statement of Purpose and the commitments of the parties hereunder are subject to the availability of funding. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as binding the parties to expend in any one fiscal year any sum in excess of appropriations or administrative allocations for the purpose of this statement, or to involve the parties in any contract or other obligation for the further expenditure of money in excess of such appropriations or allocations. In addition, nothing contained herein shall be interpreted as obligating the parties to provide funding, compensation or reimbursement.


 Michael D. DiBerardinis, Secretary
 PA Department of Conservation &
 Natural Resources


 Douglas J. Austen, Ph.D., Executive Director
 PA Fish & Boat Commission


 Bob Campbell, Program Manager
 Chesapeake Bay Gateways and
 Watertrails Network


 Davitt B. Woodwell, Senior Vice President
 Pennsylvania Environmental Council



Secretary DiBerardinis (PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources), Dr. Austen (PA Fish & Boat Commission), Davitt Woodwell (PA Environmental Council) and Bob Campbell (National Park Service – Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Water Trails Network) sign the PA Water Trail Partnership Statement of Purpose at the 4th Annual PA Greenways & Trails Summit (2008).

Guiding Principles and Guidelines

“The water trail vision is best fulfilled when global principles, augmented by local purposes, guide trail development and use. Successful water trails have used the following ‘Principles’ as a framework for the development of their definitive trail design and management plan.”

*-North American Water Trails, Inc.**

The PA Water Trails Partnership has adopted eight principles to guide our work promoting and developing water trails in Pennsylvania. The principles are intended to promote the potential of water trail projects. Water trail projects can have a positive impact on local communities by building an ethic of stewardship, bringing new people into the community and providing recreational resources for local residents.

PA Water Trail Principles

1. Partnerships
2. Stewardship
3. Volunteerism
4. Education
5. Conservation
6. Community Vitality
7. Diversity
8. Wellness & Wellbeing

We have also developed guidelines for fulfilling each principle and provided project examples and resources to get more information. When considered together, the principles and guidelines should provide a “*how to*” manual for developing a water trail. Some elements may not be relevant to your specific experience, but there should be something in each principle that is important for each project. The Partners encourage you to use each of the eight principles in the development of your water trail.

* North American Water Trails, Inc. is a non-profit organization that spearheaded the national water trails movement. They can be credited with initially developing these principles. They are no longer an active organization, but their work lives on in other national organizations like the American Canoe Association and American Rivers.

#1- PARTNERSHIPS – Cooperating and Sharing

A water trail is the product of partnerships among an array of governmental and non-governmental entities. With volunteers as the key supporters and advocates of the trail, partnerships are developed among government land managing agencies, private property owners, government regulatory agencies, user groups, and local businesses. Together, these groups can create and maintain and promote a successful water trail with broad-based and long-term support.

Partnership Guidelines

-Establish a Core Group - Form a strong core group of similarly inclined individuals and representatives of organizations who are keenly interested in establishing a water trail and will share in the workload.

-Form an Advisory Committee - Create an advisory, or steering, committee composed of the core group and the initial key partners to generate a long-term development and management plan for the trail and if appropriate, formally establish a permanent water trail organization.

-Identify Stakeholders - Identify all individuals and groups in your community that could have an interest in or be affected by the creation of the water trail. They are your stakeholders. Some stakeholders may become partners—those who will work jointly on shared goals. Others may become sponsors—those who support the trail with funds, resources, or expertise. Some may become opponents of the trail. To be successful, you must understand and address the interests and concerns of all of these stakeholders.

-Local Government Notification - As part of the public process it is highly recommended that water trail organizers work with the local governments that are traversed by the trail. The purpose is both to notify and involve them in the development of the water trail. Local support is critical. Water trails benefit local governments so it is only logical that they should be involved. Also, if the local government is not involved at the outset of the project there may be unforeseen conflicts as the trail goes into development.

-Public Planning Process - In order to designate a water trail, there must be a public process. This includes multiple public meetings that are publicly advertised. The purpose of the meetings is to collect information about the water trail (access points, amenities, etc.) and to gain support for the water trail.

-Create a Vision - Develop a vision statement that describes the desired future condition of the water trail and how the group wants to proceed. Members of the core group may have different ideas on what the trail actually should be. Reaching a consensus on a vision statement will help build a sense of ownership and commitment.

-Define the Mission - Create a mission statement that defines the role of your group in reaching your vision for the water trail. This statement can help keep the group focused and introduce and explain it to others. The mission statement should be clear and concise—ideally, no more than 25 words.

-Establish Partnerships - Use the vision and mission statements to establish partnerships with local governments, community organizations, state natural resource agencies, private property owners, and user groups such as paddlers' clubs and anglers. Partners should be willing to share in the responsibility for getting the actual work done.

-Communicate with Stakeholders - Conduct face-to-face interviews with community leaders, meet with focus groups, mail a survey to all landowners that may be affected by the proposed water trail, conduct public forums and meet one-on-one with water trail opponents. Develop a variety of ways to communicate with the different kinds of stakeholders.

Project Examples:

-Chemung Basin River Trail Partnership – www.chemungrivertrail.com

-Susquehanna River Trail Association Bylaws available at
http://www.susquehannarivertrail.org/about_srta.htm

Resources:

-Planning a Water Trail - http://www.baygateways.net/trail_planning.cfm

-Vision Creating - http://www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoobox/dec_vision.htm

- Florida Guidelines for Paddling Trails Development
<http://myfwc.com/Boating/Paddling/Guidelines.htm>

#2- STEWARDSHIP – Leaving No Trace!

Water trails promote minimum-impact practices that ensure a sustainable future for waterways and adjacent lands. Water trails embrace the Leave No Trace Code of Outdoor Ethics that promotes the responsible use and enjoyment of the outdoors. A trail user, who understands their potential impacts to water, soil, vegetation and wildlife, and their impact on other trail users, will be a better caretaker. When users learn to protect and restore areas along the trail, they may be inclined to do likewise in their own communities and backyards.

Stewardship Guidelines

-Stewardship & Conservation Plan – Generally the process can include: 1. Assess the current water trail situation, 2. Develop a future vision for the water trail, 3. Develop water trail management principles, 4. Develop a water trail stewardship and conservation action plan, 5. Determine future organizational structure for future water trail management. The plan should inventory significant viewsheds, landscapes and critical habitats and develop a plan for riparian buffer protection.

-Maintain Facilities - Clean and repair parking areas, launch ramps, campsites, fire rings, toilets, portage trails, signs, exhibits, and other facilities. Establish a regular maintenance schedule and keep records of repairs and replacements.

-Conduct Cleanup Campaigns - Organize public campaigns to clean up trash along the waterway at least twice a year, before and after the busy season.

-Monitor Water Quality - Enlist volunteers to establish and conduct an ongoing water-quality monitoring program. Alert officials about illegal dumping, floodplain encroachments, and damage to natural, archeological, and historical resources.

-Promote Species Awareness – Promote drying of equipment to prevent transferring invasive species from one waterway to another. “Clean Your Gear”

Project Examples:

-West Branch of the Susquehanna Stewardship & Conservation Plan. Contact the Northcentral PA Conservancy, www.npcweb.org.

-Clinton County Cleanscapes <http://www.clintoncountypa.com/PA%20Cleanways%20Banner.htm>.

Resources:

-Bureau of Forestry – Campsite and Aquatic Buffer Guidelines

http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/sfrmp/documents/Water_Aquatic_Buffer_Guidelines.pdf

-Protecting the Resource http://www.baygateways.net/trail_protecting.cfm

-American Canoe Association - Club Fostered Stewardship Program

<http://www.americancanoe.org/stewardship/cfs.lasso>

- Leave No Trace <http://www.lnt.org/>

- Maine Island Trail Association - Recreation Management Plan for the Public Islands on the Maine Island Trail 2004-2014. <http://www.mita.org/learn/stewardship>

#3- VOLUNTEERISM – Experiencing the Joy of Involvement

Most water trails are created, promoted, and maintained through the energy and dedication of local citizens, working individually and through organizations to support the trail. Community involvement and volunteerism are the keys to developing a sense of trail stewardship, promoting the trail within the community, encouraging respect for the trail's natural and cultural heritage and ensuring that local governments support the trail's existence. Through love of place, and of good times, volunteers bring hard work and celebration to the water trail community.

Volunteerism Guidelines

-Management & Stewardship Commitment – There must be a local group who is willing to sign a Water Trail Partnership Agreement with the PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC). The agreement is for a length of five years and includes specific agreements about signage, mapping, roles of the local group and the PFBC, stewardship goals, etc.

-Establish a Formal Organization – Consider establishing, after gaining sufficient community support, a permanent organization to implement the development and management plans and to carry out fundraising and personnel initiatives, including the hiring of a professional staff. Members of the advisory committee may well become officers and directors of the new organization. An alternative to establishing a formal organization would be to have one of your partners “adopt” the water trail as an ongoing project.

-Recruit Volunteers – Enlist volunteers to carry out day-to-day stewardship tasks and special development projects. Your organization cannot succeed without a solid corps of volunteers. Use their expertise so their tasks are meaningful. Recognize their contributions.

Project Examples:

-Susquehanna River Trail Association - Island Steward Program www.susquehannarivertrail.org

-Friends of the Rappahannock - Volunteer Programs www.riverfriends.org

Resources:

-RTCA Community Toolbox – Working with Volunteers
http://www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoolbox/org_volunteers.htm

#4- EDUCATION – Learning by Experience

Through comprehensive trail guides, signage, public outreach, and informative programs, water trail organizations encourage awareness of the natural, cultural, and historical attributes of the trail. Serving as outdoor classrooms, water trails teach through seeing, listening, touching – experiencing.

Education Guidelines

-Educating the Public – Building and expanding community support for the water trail is a never-ending process and should be considered an essential element of development of the trail. Provide a variety of interpretive educational programs to inform both children and adults about the waterway. An informed citizenry will value and champion the trail and become active in stewardship activities.

-Develop a Marketing & Promotion Plan – Focus efforts by developing a specific action plan for promoting your water trail. Define the audience that you want to attract and identify how to get information to them. A well thought out plan of attack will help in reaching everyone that you want to be involved in your local water trail.

Project Examples:

- Friends of the Rappahannock - Education Programs www.riverfriends.org
- Wildlands Conservancy - Education Programs www.wildlandspa.org
- PA Fish & Boat Commission Learning Center <http://www.fish.state.pa.us/edind.htm>

Resources:

- Boating Sidekicks www.boatingsidekicks.com
- Leave No Trace PEAK (Promoting Environmental Awareness in Kids) Program www.lnt.org

#5- CONSERVATION – Protecting our Natural and Cultural Heritage

Water trail activities support the conservation of the aquatic ecosystem, contiguous lands, and important cultural artifacts. Trail builders and activists are a respected constituency advocating for resource protection and participating in resource restoration. The water trail community is a watchdog in prevention of environmentally harmful acts, striving to sustain the natural integrity of the trail and preserve the quality of the trail experience.

Conservation Guidelines

-Protecting the Resource – The water trail’s success now hinges on keeping the waterway as pristine as possible or improving its condition through a variety of conservation programs ranging from cleanup campaigns to habitat restoration projects.

-Conservation and Education – At all times, the water trail organization must be vigilant about protecting—and, better yet, enhancing—the natural qualities of the waterway itself. By initiating a series of conservation projects and education programs, the organization not only protects the waterway but gains a cadre of water trail supporters.

Project Examples:

-PA Fish & Boat Commission - Conservation Programs

http://www.fish.state.pa.us/partners_programs.htm

Resources:

-Pennsylvania Land Trust Alliance www.conserveland.org

-American Rivers Blue Trails Program

http://www.americanrivers.org/site/PageServer?pagename=AR7_BlueTrails

-PA DCNR PA Rivers Conservation Program <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/rivers/riversconservation/>

#6- COMMUNITY VITALITY – Connecting People and Places

A water trail is a network of recreational and educational opportunities. Hiking trails, bikeways, greenways, museums, historic sites, parks and preserves are connected by water trails creating frontiers for exploration, discovery and enrichment. The connections build a sense of place and bind citizens in a love for their community. Water trails link families who grow together through work and play on the trail.

Community Vitality Guidelines

-Drafting a Water Trail Plan - Planning and developing a water trail requires maintaining a careful balance between protecting the resource and responding to the needs of landowners, trail users, and the community. You have established a steering committee or formal organization, talked with the stakeholders, established partnerships, recruited volunteers, and started raising funds. Now it is time to study the evidence and make some thoughtful choices about the character of the trail.

-Connecting to Land Based Recreation- Make strong connections to land-based recreation, natural and historic resources. By emphasizing land-based points of interest in water trail publications and information water trails provide another way to bring people into local communities. Connections can be strengthened through shared facilities (i.e. shared parking lots for both land and water trails) and Trail Town development.

-Interpretive Plan – An interpretive master plan emphasizes the natural, cultural and stewardship components of a water trail. Plans typically provide information about under-represented themes and they can be used to encourage greater personal involvement by telling the stories of the water trail. Plans guide future implementation of wayside exhibits and other interpretive materials.

Project Examples:

-Susquehanna Greenway Interpretive Plan – www.susquehannagreenway.org

-River Towns – Lancaster York Heritage Regions - <http://www.lyhr.org/RiverTowns.asp>

-PA Wilds <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/info/pawilds/index.aspx>

Resources:

-Chesapeake Bay Gateway Network Interpretive Planning Assistance -

<http://www.baygateways.net/assistance.cfm>.

-Case Studies of Water Trail Impacts on Rural Communities

<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/wtimpacts.pdf>

-Northern Forest Canoe Trail –

- Trip Planner <http://www.northernforestcanoetrail.org/>
- Baseline Economic Impact Study <http://www.uvm.edu/~snrvtdc/NFCT/>
- Art and Community Landscapes http://www.nefa.org/feature_canoeTrail/index.html

#7-DIVERSITY– Providing Opportunities for all

Water trails are non-exclusive. They benefit the able-bodied and the disabled, the young and the old, the disadvantaged and the advantaged. Water trails welcome all those that want to respectfully enjoy and appreciate the trail experience. Through shared work and play, tolerance and understanding are fostered. Broad-based participation in trail activities is achieved through affirmative outreach and recruitment.

Diversity Guidelines

-Outreach Programming – Many water trail managers are paddling enthusiasts who have already “come to the river”. To enhance the positive long-term impacts of water trails it is important to go beyond the *usual suspects* to get as many people involved as possible. Project managers should consider developing their own programs or partnering with other organizations who can assist getting people out onto the water.

Project Examples:

- Venture Outdoors www.ventureoutdoors.org
- Wildlands Conservancy – Bike & Boat Program
http://wildlandspa.org/recreation/bikeandboat_main.html

Resources:

- The Black & Brown Faces in America’s Wild Places, by Dudley Edmondson, publisher: Adventure Publications, Inc., 144 pages, softcover.
- Universal Trail Access Program <http://www.beneficialdesigns.com/rectech/water.html>
Adaptive paddling for paddlers with disabilities

#8-WELLNESS AND WELLBEING– Caring for Self and Others

Water trails are wholesome; fresh air and exercise bring fitness and health to trail users. While actively promoting these benefits, water trail users need reliable and accurate safety information and training to responsibly enjoy and appreciate water trails. Safe use requires a commitment to safe design and sound management. Awareness, education and safety skills training promote the wellness and well being of all water trail users.

Wellness and Wellbeing Guidelines

-Gather Data - Conduct a feasibility study. Identify needs, problems, and opportunities. Determine the funds and other resources required to establish and maintain the trail. Create a development plan and budget. Your best case for your trail system will be one that articulates benefits to the community.

-Raise Funds - Develop a fundraising plan based on projects in your development plan. Focus first on obtaining contributions of money, services, products, and labor from the local community. Then, extend your fundraising efforts to a larger, regional audience and to state and federal agencies and foundations that provide grants.

-Safety Information - Managers of water trails have a responsibility to provide safety information and to warn of hazards. No waterway is completely safe. However, by providing pertinent information about the waterway and good safety tips, hazardous conditions can be addressed appropriately. For example, users may be asked to portage around a particularly hazardous area.

-Establishing Access - Over the years local boaters commonly create informal sites to get onto and off the waterway. Some of them make ideal accesses for the trail while others might be dangerous, awkwardly placed, and unevenly spaced for general public use. You probably will have to develop some new launch sites and parking areas and you may have to create some campsites.

-Producing Guide Materials - All but the most adventurous of boaters want a map of the water trail and information about sites—and hazards—they will encounter along the way. They want to know the locations of launching and parking areas, campsites, picnic areas, toilets, and other facilities. You can convey this information, safety tips, and management policies through map folders, guidebooks, signs, and orientation exhibits and websites. Properly written and designed, they can greatly enhance the water trail experience.

-Developing Trail Facilities - Facilities that are customarily built along a water trail fall into three general categories: access, day use, and camping. The size and appearance of these facilities may well be determined by the availability of funds, the setting, and the expertise of the construction crew.

Project Examples:

-Wildlands Conservancy - Walk for Wellness <http://wildlandspa.org/recreation/walk.html>

-Wyoming Valley Wellness Trails Partnership <http://www.wvwellnesstrails.org/>

Resources:

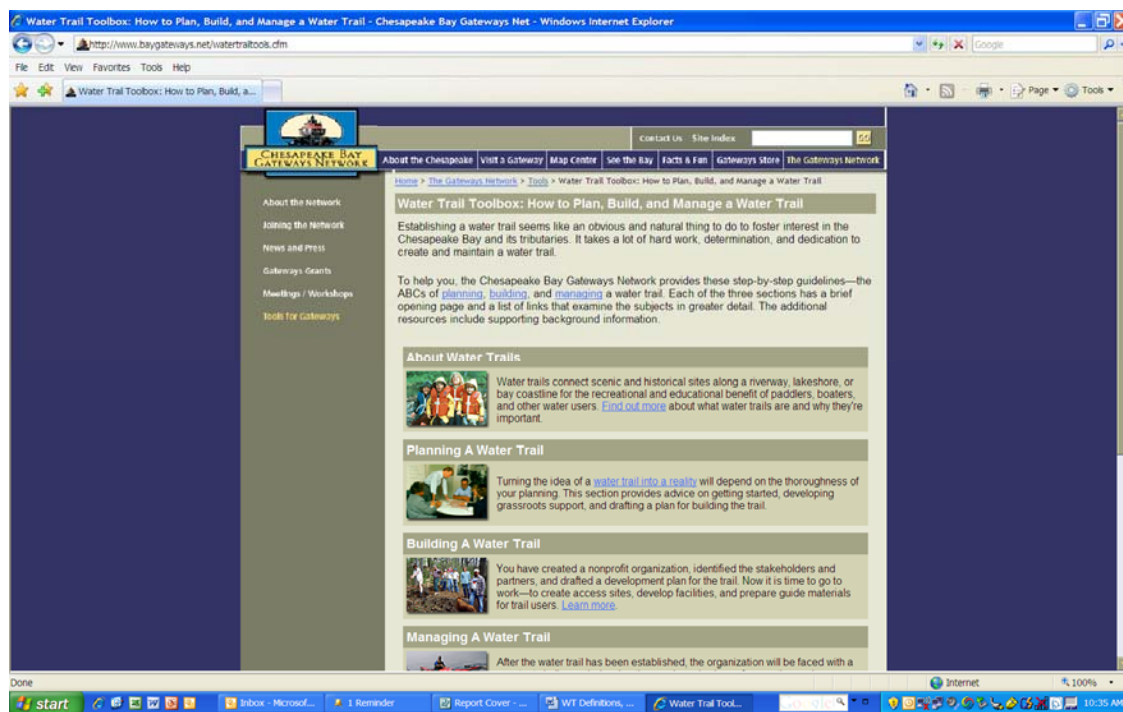
-PFBC Technical Guidance Program and Safe Paddling Tips www.fish.state.pa.us

-PANA – Keystone Active Zone & nrg Outdoors Program www.nrgoutdoors.org

- Logical, Lasting Launches http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/ht_launch_guide.html

Resources

A useful resource for water trail development is the Water Trail Toolbox that was put together by the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network (CBGN). This online toolbox provides hands on information about developing a high quality water trail. The Toolbox is available at <http://www.baygateways.net/watertrailtools.cfm>.



Another important resource that cuts across several of the principles is the Community Toolbox that was prepared by the National Park Service – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program. The Community Toolbox provides information on a variety of topics to assist project managers in working in their communities. The Community Toolbox is available at <http://www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoobox/>.

Other national organizations that have information about water trails are:

- American Canoe Association www.americancanoe.org
- American Rivers www.americanrivers.org
- American Trails www.americantrails.org

Water Trail Brainstorming – What do we want to work on next?



On April 18, 2008 over 70 water trail stakeholders from Pennsylvania and additional states met in Danville, PA at the Geisinger Center for Health Research for the Water Trails Working Session. This was the second meeting of this kind in Pennsylvania. The first Water Trails Workshop was held in Harrisburg in May 2004. The Working Session was a follow-up to this earlier gathering and was focused on the long-term sustainability of the PA Water Trails Program.

Both the Workshop and Working Session included interactive sessions for participants to brainstorm project ideas that should be implemented at the statewide and local levels. Some of the sessions were set up to provide technical assistance on specific questions. We have complete documentation of the input from the statewide gatherings.

Many of the project ideas from these conferences have been acted upon. We have, for example, integrated water trails into the statewide tourism promotion system and we do have a set of guidelines for camping along water trails. Both of these project ideas came from the Water Trail Workshop. Many of the projects remain to be completed.

On the following pages are the major project recommendations from both the Water Trails Working Session and Water Trails Workshop. We will continue to implement as many as possible at the statewide level and continue to keep you updated as to our progress.

Our hope is that you will participate in implementing relevant projects in your area.



Water Trail Working Session (April 2008):
Open Space Discussion Groups
MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Stewardship & Sustainability

1. Volunteer recruitment, retention and training programs to define what is needed of volunteers and how they can help.
2. Improve marketing efforts related to water trails by forming partnerships with the media to assist in spreading the word.
3. Conduct educational outreach programming, particularly with local schools.
4. Provide information to users about access point ownership issues, where camping is available and other private property concerns so that users know where to and where not to go.

Rainbow of Users/Diversifying the Audience

1. Make sure that programs and activities are culturally appropriate for everyone considering differences in cultural expectations.
2. Develop and implement additional models for working with school districts.

Making Water Trails More User Friendly

1. Consider distances between access points to assure that water trails are accessible to families with small children.
2. Engage the younger generations and inner city/urban populations through educational programming with schools.
3. Develop creative marketing strategies to attract new users (i.e., geocaching).
4. Improve water quality so that new users have a quality recreation experience.
5. Provide free opportunities for people to use water trails and grant programs for organizations to get free equipment.

Insurance Liability

1. A risk management entity is needed to provide assistance for problem areas along trails.
2. Develop multi-county authorities to provide umbrella insurance policies.

Log Jams

1. Work with property owners for access to blocked areas, for permission before applying for grants and to determine ownership of the trees.
2. Leave root structure intact to prevent erosion.
3. Get statewide agencies involved.

Long-Term Management Strategies

1. Provide training for volunteer managers.
2. Identify successful models.
3. Coalitions as a model for long-term management.
4. Provide templates for: management plans for sustainability and forming a functioning coalition.

Marketing

1. Coordinate statewide marketing within and throughout the PA Water Trails System taking into account local considerations.
2. Focus on safety, stewardship and participation.
3. Develop a new web site that is a coordinated effort among state agencies including a database of groups.

4. Use new methods of advertising.
5. Market all of the ways that people can get involved with water trails including habitat and invasive species.

Maintaining the Primitive Nature of a Campsite

1. Policy recommendation – for islands develop a policy that facilities are on the shore at a PFBC access point.
2. Marketing strategy – “You pick up after your dog don’t you?”, “Going to the bathroom is fun.”
3. Develop guidelines for the minimal components that are needed for a primitive campsite.

Creating Realistic Expectations for the Public

1. Provide information to users about what they can expect so that users are prepared for the current conditions. First time users are not going to want to purchase a guide so there should be free information readily available.
2. Provide adequate signage to users and development of a statewide template for signage.
3. Develop educational components to water trail development.

Signage for Water Trails

1. Circulate standard signs templates to all organizations.
2. There is a need for a committee to look at the standardization throughout the water trails signage system and develop uniformity.
3. Coordinate with PennDOT to get signage in place.
4. Provide resources of where and how to get signage made.

Susquehanna River Water Trail System

1. Work together on funding applications to avoid competition among groups.
2. Establish guidelines for consistent signage.
3. Initiate an interstate coalition of water trail groups.
4. Develop a forum for connecting all of the water trails.
5. Develop a joint system or organization for management of the water trails (i.e., Susquehanna River Trail Association or Susquehanna Greenway).

Water Trail Workshop (May 2004): *Developing a Statewide System*
Open Space Discussion Groups
MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Starting a Water Trail – What Makes a Great Water Trail?

1. Include information about hazards on maps and on signage at access sites.
2. For every new bridge project PennDOT should provide river access – it should be standard procedure. Give PennDOT contacts to local project managers.
3. Develop a list of desired access points under or near bridges. Give this list to MPO and RPO for planning purposes.

Conservation is Business

1. Better communicate the benefits and successes of conservation to local governments.
2. Require an economic development component as part of River Conservation Plans.
3. Develop partnerships at all levels – local businesses, local officials, regional, state & federal.

Interpretive Art & Signage

1. Develop statewide consensus on maps/guides.
2. Develop statewide interpretation guidelines.
3. Develop a template for signs – design package.

Providing Camping Opportunities on Water Trails

1. Develop a sub-set of regulations for camping along water trails to allow for flexibility of use.

Universal & ADA Compliant Accessibility

1. Develop guidelines to assist with the design aspects of water access. Especially for getting into the water.
2. Develop appropriate signage at access points to let users know how an area is accessible.
3. Develop a clearinghouse of information regarding accessible water trail sites.

Recreation-Outreach beyond “Die Hard Enthusiasts”

1. In order to attract novice users project managers should do the following: include activities that will appeal to kids, incorporate both river and other community related aspects into events, involve the public in the planning, schedule events that attract novice users, get the press out early and often, work in conjunction with other existing events and organize specialized outings that will attract specific audiences.

Role of Non-Profits and Water Trail Partnerships

1. Develop a vehicle to bring water trail leaders together from around the state.
2. Develop a forum for sharing information among water trail project managers.
3. Evaluate existing programs.

Marketing

1. Incorporate water trails into the state tourist promotion system.
2. Develop a bigger and better PaddlePA – online and print versions of outreach materials.
3. Develop an informal system for continuing discussions about statewide marketing of water trails and the development of PaddlePA.

Water Trail Maps & Guides

1. Determine what users would like to see on water trail maps & guides.

2. Develop a system for providing more information in a take home guide and offering a simpler map those users will take on the water with them.
3. Identify as many ways as possible to distribute information about water trails.

TAB # 4

**PA Water Trails Benchmarking
Report to the PA Water Trails Partnership
May 29, 2009**

Water trails surveyed to date

Chesapeake Bay Watershed:

Conodoguinet Creek Water Trail

Juniata River Water Trail

Pine Creek River Water Trail

Raystown Branch of the Juniata River Water Trail

Susquehanna River Water Trail

 Lower Section

 Middle Section

 North Branch

 West Branch

Yellow Breeches Creek Water Trail

Others:

Three Rivers Water Trail

Youghiogheny River Water Trail

Project managers have two general angles that get them involved in management of their water trail.

1. **Tourism Related:** Heritage areas are project managers for several water trails. These managers generally excel at the marketing and promotional aspects of water trail development and lack some of the grassroots components of water trail development like working with volunteers and emphasis on stewardship.
2. **Grassroots/Stewardship Focused:** Water trails initiated by groups who are more focused on the recreational (paddling) and environmental aspects of water trail development. These groups can be more focused on the environmental aspects of water trail development (i.e., invasive species work of SRTC & WB stewardship and conservation planning).

Recommendations from Surveys

- **Facility Assistance:** Several water trails are in need of continued development of amenities and facilities such as access points, signage, portage, canoe/kayak racks, etc. There is a continued need to provide technical assistance with water trail activities that are considered part of Phase I water trail development. This is for both existing water trail projects and also new water trail projects that are under development or yet to be initiated. Examples of existing projects are available to share with people who are in need of assistance.
- **Coalition Building:** Promote the importance of coalition building to fulfill the complete definition of what it means to be a PA Water Trail. None of the organizations can do every task on their own. Water trail development needs to be able to build a coalition of river users and lovers who can each play their role to protect and promote the resource.
- **Public Health:** Incorporate public health connections into water trail development. None of the water trails are engaged in activities involving a public health partner or promoting water trail activity as a way to promote public health. This is much more prevalent in land trail development.
- **Diversity of Use:** Promote activities that will increase the diversity of users of Pennsylvania water trails. There are some examples of water trail projects that have a strong

programming component to encourage diversity of use, but many groups focus more on the guide publication and signage components of water trail development. Programming activities can be enhanced.

- **Trail Towns:** Many water trails have good connections to land trails and have shared services and facilities. These connections can continue to be enhanced and organized in the same manner as the Trail Towns Program, which is currently focused on land trails. Some groups are working on some form of Canal Towns or River Towns program so there are good examples out there. Statewide assistance would help to encourage these activities.
- **Stewardship & Conservation Activities:** Generally stewardship and conservation activities related to water trails are accomplished through partnership with other organizations. Water trail project managers are going to continue to need to leverage additional partnership in order to accomplish all of the tasks of water trail development. Continue to monitor the impact of stewardship and conservation plans as a way to organize and promote these activities.

Technical Assistance Workshop Recommendations

Recommendation to PA Water Trails Partnership:

1. Economic Development
2. Stewardship & Maintenance

Recommendations from surveys:

- Economic development impact of water trails on local communities.
- Riparian Buffer Protection assistance. Primitive campsites. Stewardship plan. Plan for engaging volunteers.
- Involving related river/stream-side and river user groups/municipal bodies in water trail maintenance. Working with adjacent communities in developing/maintaining launch and wayside amenities facilities.
- General how to have a water trail and more advanced opportunities for entities that already have a water trail and are looking for more details technical assistance, i.e. more than just the big vision.
- Implementing stewardship & conservation plan.
- Invasive species control (knotweed) - entire session about invasive species. Issue with maintenance and not cleaning equipment when moving from site to site. Need for agency brainstorming. What's working and what's not working. Contribute to workshop. Land and water trail focused invasive species. DCNR-BOF (Pine Creek site is a good example, Jason Smith), PennState, Natural Biodiversity, Land Studies (Lancaster-717-627-4440 Mark Gotschall, flood plain restoration work)
- Streambank vegetation maintenance for landowners and agencies for erosion control and riparian function. US Fish & Wildlife Service, DEP.
- Using DEP's best management practices for developing sites.
- Floodplain riparian land use. Communities developing inappropriately in the floodplain.
- Water quality and AMD issues. Probably not specifically a water trail issue?
- Community connectivity. Connecting the water to communities. Trail Towns Program, Michigan WT contact.
- How to build and maintain a strong volunteer group? Primitive campsites and invasive species.

Technical Assistance Needs (sampling)

- Work with Kiski-Conemaugh to get that project up and running. Participate in bridge signage discussions with PennDOT. Assistance with developing access in Mcveytown.

- Riparian Buffer Protection assistance. Primitive campsites. Stewardship plan. Plan for engaging volunteers.
- In the coming year, plan to emphasize the wellness aspect of paddling.
- Complex engineering of certain projects, permitting can be a challenge both on a state and local level.
- Publishing of a water trail map & guide.

Issues/Needs (sampling)

- Economic development impacts of water trails in communities. Need for access from Newton Hamilton to Locust Campground (22 miles). McVeytown in the middle on the River.
- Riparian Buffer Protection assistance. Primitive campsites. Stewardship plan. Plan for engaging volunteers.
- Need for more maintenance volunteers.
- Funding for long-term maintenance and stewardship can be hard to secure. Also there needs to be a clear understanding put forth by the PA F&B as to the equality of canoe/kayaks at PA F&B access points. Are those accesses considered part of local PA Water Trails system or is priority given to motor boats?
- How to build and maintain a strong volunteer group.

TAB # 5



PA Water Trails Partnership

Pennsylvania has a statewide program to support the development of water trails. The partners include: PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, PA Environmental Council, PA Fish & Boat Commission, National Park Service – Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Watertrails Network and National Park Service-Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program. The partners are available to assist with local water trail efforts and to advance projects at the statewide level.

According to our signed “Statement of Purpose”, the PA Water Trails Partnership established several goals for the PA Water Trails Program.

- To encourage and further the development of water trails in Pennsylvania,
- To strengthen the connections between and among existing water trails to promote a system of water trails,
- To better market and promote Pennsylvania’s water trails as a recreational resource to residents and visitors alike,
- To provide technical assistance to local project managers who are implementing water trail projects,
- To promote the national recognition of Pennsylvania’s water trails,
- To provide assistance to local project manager specifically with the long-term maintenance, stewardship and sustainability of water trails.
- To promote the development and management of water trails as a means to enhance citizen stewardship of local water resources

Accordingly, the PA Water Trails Executive Committee has renewed the water trail designation process for the PA Water Trails Program. Existing and active water trails will be “grandfathered” into the program if the established selection criteria are met through the benchmarking process that was undertaken by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC). If you are involved with an existing water trail that is no longer active please let us know.

New applicants to the PA Water Trails Program will complete an application process by answering the questions on the survey tool that is being used for benchmarking purposes. The survey tool is based on the principles and guidelines of the PA Water Trails Program.

PA Water Trail Principles

1. Partnerships/Feasibility
2. Stewardship
3. Volunteerism
4. Education
5. Conservation
6. Community Vitality
7. Diversity
8. Wellness & Wellbeing





PA Water Trails Partnership

The PA Water Trails Executive Committee will review and make decisions about the designation for each water trail. Once a decision is made PEC will notify the local water trail partner. Each partner will receive a letter of welcome into the PA Water Trails Program that may be helpful for funding applications and other applications for additional recognitions. Existing water trails will receive a letter acknowledging their participation in the program.

Generally groups that indicate an interest in undertaking the minimum requirements for water trail development will be included and welcomed into the program.

Every water trail must have...

- ☐ A **local managing organization** to care about and manage the trail.
- ☐ **Public involvement** by the local community.
- ☐ A **map** providing information for using the trail.
- ☐ **Information** provided to users on the internet and/or printed materials.
- ☐ Water trail **feasibility study or plan** to determine if your waterway can be a water trail.

The Partnership strongly advocates for the following early water trail activities...

- ☐ Active **volunteers** who will participate in the management of the trail.
- ☐ **Signage** that can direct users, interpret the resource, provide safety and orientation information.
- ☐ **Maintenance** of existing and new amenities (boat access points, signage, information provided, etc.).

Every water trail project should consider...

- ☐ **Designation** by the CBGN (where relevant), National Recreation Trail, American Canoe Association or other nationally recognized organization.
- ☐ **For-Sale** water trail map & guide.
- ☐ **Volunteer** recruitment & development program.
- ☐ Conducting **outreach educational programs**.
- ☐ **Trail amenities** & facilities including campsites, comfort stations, access points, a full range of signage, etc.
- ☐ There are a variety of additional **planning and implementation** efforts to consider:
 - Stewardship & conservation plan.
 - Interpretive Plan
 - Management Plan
 - Marketing & promotion plan.





PA Water Trails Partnership

Letters will be reviewed periodically determine if water trail project managers continue to meet the goals of the agreement and if water trails should continue to be included in the PA Water Trails Program.

Your designation and continued participation in the program is dependent on maintaining the minimum level of criteria. If you are no longer able to maintain the criteria established as “Every water trail must have...” the Partnership reserves the right to remove the water trail from the PA Water Trails Program.

The goals of the PA Water Trails Partnership are concerned with enhancing the sustainability and long term management of PA’s water trails. Activities that meet these goals are included in the PA Water Trails Handbook and will be encouraged through a robust technical assistance program.

PA Water Trails will have access to:

1. Use of the PA Water Trails logo.
2. Letter of recognition.
3. Link on www.fishandboat.com.
4. Enhanced web resources and marketing, which will be a repository for water trails related information.
5. Potential to participate in interactive online mapping that is being developed by the PFBC.
6. Periodic updating of the **PA Water Trails Handbook**.
7. Up to two **technical assistance workshops** or statewide water trail conferences to be held each year with content inspired by local project managers.
8. Management and promotion of the **PA Water Trails Yahoo Group** and other social media development.
9. Individual **technical assistance** provided to local groups on an as needed/requested basis (examples include assistance with managing public meetings, guidance on developing water trail map and guides, examples of water trail signage, etc) from statewide program partners.
10. Inclusion in any statewide marketing effort related to water trails.



PA Water Trails Program Application for Designation



The PA Water Trails Program seeks to increase the number of water trails in the Commonwealth while also helping water trail managers better manage their water trails. We are asking water trail partners to fill to complete this application for designation as part of the PA Water Trails Program. If you are just beginning your water trail efforts we understand that you may not have engaged in many of these activities. The state partners want to collect information about what project managers are doing and also to inspire new water trail activity across the Commonwealth.

Please note - some of the answers with yes or no filled in are drop down fields. Please select the appropriate response.

General Information

Water Trail Name:

Length:

Geographic Reach (from beginning to end):

Lead Managing Organization:

Key Partners:

Current Designation:

- ☐ American Canoe Association Recommended Water Trail
- ☐ Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network
- ☐ National Recreation Trail
- ☐ Wild & Scenic River
- ☐ Other Designation:

User Information Available

Water Trail Map & Guide

Is there a map of the water trail? No

When was the guide printed?

- ☐ Free Guide ☐ PFBC Format ☐ Other Format
- ☐ Paid Guide

If no, do you have plans to produce a map or guide? Please provide details.

Web Site

Information is available on a web site? Yes

Link:

Description/Is your website designed for public information about the water trail or is it more general to your organization?:

Do you provide safety information necessary to safely use your water trail? Yes

Please describe the safety plan or safety related activities for your water trail:

Do you have a plan for marketing and promoting your water trail? Yes

Please describe marketing and promotion activities:

Trail Amenities

What types of trail amenities are available for users?

- ☐ Public Boat Access Points How many?
- ☐ Private Boat Access Points How many?

What is the minimum and maximum distance between access points on your water trail?

Do you currently have sufficient access points to be able to provide a safe trail experience (i.e., are there logical beginning and stopping points for typical paddling trips)? Yes

☐ Signage How many?

What Type? ☐ Interpretive ☐ Orientation & Safety ☐ Wayfinding

☐ Marking Access Sites Other:

Do you have a signage plan? Yes

Date/name:

- | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camping Areas | Mainland | How many? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comfort Stations/Restroom Facilities | How many? | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outfitters | | How many? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to land trail: | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Amenities: | | |

Do you have any needs for developing new amenities?:

Fulfillment of PA Water Trail Principles

#1 Partnerships/Feasibility

How are trail partners organized for the management, planning and stewardship of your trail?

Did you undergo a water trail feasibility study? A feasibility study answers the basic question of whether it makes sense to develop a water trail on a given waterway. A feasibility study is a process that includes: the identification of a water trail committee, inventory of the waterway, public outreach through public meeting, analysis of inventory, recommendations based on the inventory (i.e., we need to develop additional boat access points). The end result is typically the development of a water trail map and guide.

#2 Stewardship

Have you developed a plan for the stewardship and conservation of your water trail? Yes

Plans include assessing current situation of water trail facilities, developing a vision, developing management principles, developing an action plan, determining organizational structure.

What type, if any, stewardship activities do you organize, promote or participate in? Please describe.

- ☐ Maintenance of Facilities:
- ☐ Clean up Efforts:
- ☐ Monitor Water Quality:
- ☐ Invasive Species Control Awareness Activities:
- ☐ Other:

#3 Volunteerism

Do you provide volunteer opportunities for community members to participate in your organization or planned volunteer activities? Yes

Please describe:

Do you have a program for volunteer coordination, management or longer-term cultivation? Yes

Please Describe:

Do you have an interest in or need assistance to develop a volunteer management program:

#4 Education

Do you use your water trail to provide educational opportunities? Yes

Examples include providing educational materials or programs.

Please describe:

#5 Conservation

Do you or another organization engage in land conservation activities along your water trail? Yes

This can include conservation of land and habitat restoration efforts.

Please describe:

Are any of the following plans/inventories complete?

- ☐ River Conservation Plan, date/name:
- ☐ Riparian Buffer Protection Plan/Activities, date/name:
- ☐ Inventory of Significant Watersheds & Landscapes, date/name:
- ☐ Other:

#6 Community Vitality

Does your water trail have access to or connect to a land trail? Yes

If yes, are there any shared facilities (i.e., parking lots, restrooms, signage, maps)? Yes Please describe:

Please describe any work that you are doing to connect your land and water trail:

Is there an interpretive plan for your water trail? Yes date/name:

Interpretive plans identify major themes (natural, cultural and stewardship based) along the corridor. Plans can guide development of wayside exhibits and other interpretive materials.

#7 Diversity

Please describe any activities that you undertake to increase the cultural diversity of uses of your water trail (i.e. targeted programming or outreach efforts):

In this case we are looking for information about any activities that you undertake to expand the people using your water trail beyond paddlers who would be involved with or without the development of the water trail.

#8 Wellness & Wellbeing

Please describe any activities to strengthen the connection between your water trail and the health of community members (i.e. wellness activities):

Do you have a public health partner? If yes please name them:

Future PA Water Trail Activities

What, if any, technical assistance needs do you have?

The PA Water Trails Program is considering technical assistance workshops. Do you have any recommendations for topic areas?

Any recommended speakers?

What future plans do you have for your water trail (future projects)?

What issues/needs do you have on your water trails that are significant?

TAB # 6

**PA Water Trails Partnership
Communications Planning Workshop
December 4, 2008**

Invited Participants:

Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Water Trails; Bob Campbell
PFBC: Dan Martin, Tim Schaeffer, Eric Levis
PEC: Hannah Hardy
DCNR: Brook Lenker, Adrian Stouffer, Terry Hough, Gretchen Leslie
DCED: Shelley Speirs
NPS Rivers and Trails: Dave Lange

Discussion -- Why Should We Develop A Communications Plan?

Possible answers

- We have limited resources — both time and money.
- A good plan imposes discipline and clear thinking that will help us clarify our objectives and target audiences, sharpen our message and help us better understand the environment in which we will be delivering that message.
- A good plan will help ensure that everyone is on the same page when we communicate with the rest of the world.

Proposed Communications Planning Process

1. Define our problem statement

Where are we now?
What is working? What's not working?
What are our opportunities?

2. Define our goals and objectives

What are we trying to do?
What is our Program Goal?
What is our desired situation?
What can we try to accomplish in next 12 to 18 months

Who are our decision makers?
People we are ultimately trying to reach that can say 'yea' or 'nay' to our goal.

How will we measure success?
What are measurable objectives we can define?

3. Who is our Target Audience?

What do they care about (values and core concerns)
What do we want them to do?
Desired behaviors and results?
By when do we need them to do it?

4. Messaging

What are our messages?
What are we going to say to our target audiences
Who is our messenger?

5. Research

Internal scan

What resources do we have (people, dollars)?

What challenges do we have (such as lack of funding or data)?

External scan

What are known facts, misperceptions, players.

6. What are our strategies and tactics?

What is our budget and schedule?

TAB # 7



PA Water Trails Economic Impact Study: Benchmarking & Recommendations

“More than three out of four Americans participate in outdoor recreation each year. Americans spend money, create jobs, and support local communities when they get outdoors. Simple healthy outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, camping, or wildlife viewing generate enormous economic power and fuel a far-reaching ripple effect that touches many of the nation’s economic sectors.”

~The Active Outdoor Recreation Economy: A \$730 Billion Annual Contribution to the U.S. Economy (Fall 2006)

<http://www.outdoorindustry.org/images/researchfiles/RecEconomypublic.pdf?26>

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- IV. Recommendations for Pennsylvania**
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I. Project Overview

The Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership is proposing to undertake an Economic Impact Study to estimate the value of water trails on local communities. This is also included as one of the recommendations of the recently completed Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2009-2013) to, “Conduct an economic impact analysis to benchmark the economic impact of water trails.”* This information will improve our efforts to increase water trail development in the Commonwealth and to maintain our position as a national leader in water trail development. The objectives of this research are to assess the group and trip characteristics of paddlers recreating on Pennsylvania waterways, to quantify the economic impact of paddlers in specific communities, to identify potential social and environmental impacts, and to highlight current success stories and challenges for businesses and communities along Pennsylvania Water Trails.

Pennsylvania has a lot of examples of economic impact studies and trail user surveys that estimate the impact of land trails on local communities. The Trail Town Program® for example completed an Economic Impact Study for the Great Allegheny Passage dated 2007-2008 (<http://www.trailtowns.org/1studies.aspx>). They are currently in the process of updating this information. The Rails to Trails Conservancy has also completed user impact surveys for five rail trails in Pennsylvania (http://www.railstotrails.org/ourWork/trailBuilding/toolbox/informationSummaries/trailuser_surveys.html).

We do not have any estimates of the impact of water trails in Pennsylvania. In fact there are very few examples nationally that estimate the positive impact of water trails. The most comprehensive and recent water trails related study was completed by the University of Vermont for the Northern Forest Canoe Trail. This study, and others, will be useful models for us in Pennsylvania.

An economic impact study for water trails will help to guide the future of the PA Water Trails Program. One trend that we see with land trails is that the economic benefit increases with stronger connections to communities. Also, longer land trails have the potential for greater economic impact in local communities. If this is also true for water trails it will assist us in providing technical assistance to local groups. Some important questions could be answered including: Should we encourage that water trail managers promote as many continuous miles as possible or instead focus on day trips? How can communities’ best prepare for water trail visitors? All of this information would be helpful in managing the PA Water Trails Program.

Several national trends point to greater use of our trail and greenway resources. Tim Poole of 4Ward Planning (www.landuseplanning.com) cites three major trends that are a boon to trails*. The “Aging Boomers” who are more affluent and also focused on health and fitness. The “Great Recession & Increased Travel Hassles” are impacting where people want to vacation and causing people to look closer to home for vacations. People want to spend money on “Experiences Instead of Goods”. All three of these things including increased emphasis on public health are good for the economic impact of trails and greenways on local communities because they mean more users.

* www.paputdoorrecplan.com

*Laurel Highlands Summit, Latrobe, PA, St. Vincent College, April 4, 2011 <http://www.pecpa.org/laurel-highlands-summitII-overview>.

With mounting evidence and increased stories of the impact of trails and greenways we have the proof of the positive benefit that trails and greenways have on local communities. Why is this important? It is important to measure because the economic impact of your project can be a powerful tool in support of developing additional miles of trails and implementing greenway projects. This will be valuable information in our effort to work with local communities to develop water trails

II. PA Water Trails Background Information

Following is the official definition of a Pennsylvania Water Trail as defined by the PA Water Trails Partnership.

“Water trails are recreational and educational corridors between specific locations that can be used for both single day and multiple day trips. They are comprised of access points, boat launches, day use sites, and -- in some cases -- overnight camping areas. They provide safe access to and information about Pennsylvania's waterways while also providing connections to our diverse history, ecology, geology, heritage and wildlife.

Pennsylvania Water Trails provide information to users about general boating safety and also local information that's necessary for enjoying the specific water trail. Information should be provided through a combination of materials including a trail map and guide, signage, web site, or other format.

Water Trails are positive contributors to local communities by providing economic stimulus and also protecting resources that are important to the quality of life of Pennsylvania residents. Water trails promote an ethic of caring that makes the Commonwealth a better place. Pennsylvania Water Trails embrace the "Leave No Trace" code of outdoor ethics that promotes the responsible use & enjoyment of the outdoors.”

In September 2008 the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, National Park Service – Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, National Park Service – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program, Pennsylvania Environmental Council signed a PA Water Trails Partnership Statement of Purpose solidifying our partnership. The goals of the Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership are to:

- To encourage and further the development of water trails in Pennsylvania,
- To strengthen the connections between and among existing water trails to promote a system of water trails,
- To better market and promote Pennsylvania's water trails as a recreational resource to residents and visitors alike,
- To provide technical assistance to local project managers who are implementing water trail projects,
- To promote the national recognition of Pennsylvania's water trails,
- To provide assistance to local project manager specifically with the long-term maintenance, stewardship and sustainability of water trails.
- To promote the development and management of water trails as a means to enhance citizen stewardship of local water resources.

The Partnership is accomplishing these goals in a variety of ways. We provide technical assistance to water trail managers with workshops, online resources and hands on technical assistance. We are also undertaking a

number of statewide initiatives through inter-agency cooperation. One example is this initiative to complete an economic impact study of water trails in Pennsylvania.

III. Case Studies

There are several studies that were completed in other states as part of an evaluation of a statewide water trail program or a specific water trail that will be helpful to the work that we plan to undertake here in Pennsylvania. Following is a brief description of each study, overview of information that they included and a brief synopsis of their findings.

“Northern Forest Canoe Trail: Economic Impacts and Implications for Sustainable Community Development” 2007

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail (NFCT) is a 740-mile route traversing New York, Vermont, Quebec, New Hampshire, and Maine. The objectives of this research were to:

- Assess group and trip characteristics of paddlers recreating on Northern Forest Canoe Trail waterways;
- Quantify the current economic impact of paddlers in regional communities;
- Identify potential social and environmental impacts of increased waterway recreation;
- Report on opportunities and challenges for businesses and communities along the NFCT.

The researchers used the data gathered to attempt to answer the question, “Can the Northern Forest Canoe Trail stimulate sustainable community development?”

Lead Author(s): Noah Pollock, Rubenstein School of Environment & Natural Resources, University of Vermont
Lisa C. Chase, University of Vermont Extension and the Vermont Tourism Data Center
Clare Ginger, Rubenstein School of Environment & Natural Resources, University of Vermont
Jane Kolodinsky, Department of Community Development and Applied Economics, University of Vermont

Target: paddlers and visitors

Data Sources: #s of visitors: Use levels were monitored in six regions utilizing registration kiosks at public boat launches and staff assistance at campgrounds, checkpoints, and lodging establishments. Visitor demographics, trip characteristics, and expenditure data were collected at registration kiosks and through in-person and mail surveys. 1024 paddler surveys were completed.

ID of social & environmental issues: Discussions with regional land managers and business owners helped identify potential social and environmental concerns, success stories, and challenges for communities seeking to attract new paddlers to the area.

Methodology: MGM2, an input-output model developed by the National Park Service, was used to model direct and indirect impacts. The spatial extent of impacts was mapped using ArcGIS software.

In addition to the research completed, the report includes a literature review of literature analyzing rural community change, sustainable development, and the economic, social, and environmental impacts of recreation and tourism.

Major Findings: Results indicate that approximately 90,000 visitors paddled the waterways in the six study regions. Their spending in local communities created \$12 million in total economic impacts, supporting about

280 jobs. The median paddler group spent about \$215 per trip, primarily at lodging establishments, restaurants, grocery stores, and service stations. Non-locals spent an average of \$414-498 per trip, or \$46 per person per day. However, use levels, types of users, average expenditures, and resulting economic impacts vary significantly between regions.

In addition to information about economic impact, the report gathered information about the social and environmental impacts of water trails. The primary source of information for these findings was from interviews with land owners and outfitters. Social impacts noted included positive things like increased cultural and historical awareness and some negative things like the potential for over crowded waterways. Similar the environmental impacts noted positive impacts like increased environmental awareness to negative ones like degradation of campsites and increased pressure for development.

Analysis and Recommendations:

- This study was completed in regions. It may be appropriate for us to define specific study regions.
- Based on the findings the report draws conclusions about what factors drive economic impact. The analysis suggests trip lengths, lodging types, group size, travel distances, and use of outfitters drive economic impacts. Communities with developed tourism infrastructure situated close to well-traveled waterways appear most successful at capturing visitor dollars. Land managers are generally supportive of paddler recreation where proactive management and paddler educational efforts are in place.
- Surveying of paddlers and visitors can provide very useful information for water trail management. We should look for opportunities to make broader management recommendations based on the data received. The authors of this study used the data gathered and the qualitative information through surveying of land managers to identify social and environmental factors impacting the water trail in addition to identifying challenges for water trail development. The report also included recommendations (implementation strategies) to address the challenges as identified. Recommendations include: expand camping & lodging opportunities, construct rustic shelters, complete guides, organize events, develop collaborative marketing, educate paddlers and plan proactively.

“2008 Paddle Tourism Study: North Carolina State Trails Program”

2008

This study is more of a market analysis of paddling in North Carolina. Many of the questions asked about the users, how they paddle, where they paddle and what other resources they access when they paddle. As a part of the overall survey questionnaire, there are questions about spending so there are conclusions about the overall economic impact of paddling. At the time of the study North Carolina was beginning to implement a water trails program as part of their statewide trails program. The intent of this survey was to get general information about paddling in North Carolina to assist in establishing this program. Goals of the study (taken directly from the study):

- “Paddlers who recreate in North Carolina: demographics, level of paddling, desired amenities, trip patterns, planning sources, other activities, and expenditures
- Paddling/outfitting businesses/guides who operate in North Carolina, as well as organized outdoor clubs and organizations that promote paddle trips within North Carolina.”

Lead Author(s): Jennifer Beedle, North Carolina State University, Parks Recreation & Tourism Management Internship Project

Target: paddlers (NC, GA, SC, TN, VA)

Data Sources: Online survey that was distributed through a variety of sources with 2,153 total responses.

Methodology: A 26-question survey was designed to assess trip qualities desired by paddlers, and to measure paddlers' economic impacts on North Carolina's local communities. It was distributed primarily through an online, Survey Monkey format. Please refer to Appendix A for a full copy of the survey.

Major Findings:

Following are selected items from the major findings (these are taken from a total list of 21 findings that is available in the report):

- North Carolina is a destination for paddlers from surrounding states. The greatest numbers of responses from outside North Carolina were from Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia
- The majority of participants in this survey (70%) believe that paddling is a viable form of economic development for North Carolina.
- Respondents spent almost one million dollars (\$947,800) last year on paddle trips outside their local area.
- Respondents spent nearly \$300,000 last year on trips within their local area.
- Kayaks dominated paddlers' choice of craft. Over half of survey participants (58%) indicated they use their own kayak when they go paddling.
- Over half of all survey participants (56%) considered themselves recreational paddlers. Another 27% considered themselves avid paddlers and 17% considered themselves novice paddlers.
- The Piedmont was the most frequently paddled region of North Carolina, visited by 39% of respondents. However, 86% of respondents were from the Piedmont.
- The Neuse was the most popular river to paddle in North Carolina (named by 306 respondents as the body of water they most frequently paddle), followed by the Cape Fear River (255 respondents) and the Nantahala (254 respondents).
- Survey participants who considered themselves avid paddlers took an average of 17 paddle trips last year **within 50 miles of their home**. Recreational paddlers reported an average of eight trips, and novice paddlers reported an average of four.
- Survey participants who considered themselves avid paddlers took an average of nine paddle trips last year **farther than 50 miles of their home**. Recreational paddlers reported an average of six trips, and novice paddlers reported an average of six.
- Most respondents (41%) indicated driving 30 minutes or less from their home to begin their last paddling trip.
- Respondents were asked about their top concerns when on a paddle trip. Almost three-fourths of respondents reported being concerned with the quality and safety of access sites (73%) and adequate water level (72%).
- Viewing wildlife (91%) and being away from the city (88%) represented the top two elements of paddling trips most enjoyed by respondents.

- Respondents were asked to select additional outdoor recreation activities they participate in. The most popular among respondents were hiking (82%), camping (73%) and walking/running (71%).
- Almost two-thirds of respondents (64%) support additional funding for paddle access and trail development. One-third (36%) reported they would not support any of the listed funding sources for improved and increased paddle access and trail development. Out of the four choices, the most supported (33%), was user fees.
- Over one-quarter (27.9%) of respondents reported a household income of \$100,000 or more.

Analysis and Recommendations:

Ask where people paddle. This survey provided a lot of information to the state of North Carolina about where people paddle, which is being used to manage their water trails program. Are there any general questions about the nature of paddling in PA that we want to ask as part of the economic impact analysis that will be helpful to the PA Water Trails Program?

In addition, distribution of the NC survey was very comprehensive. Look to the appendices of this report for ideas about how to get the word out about any surveying that we will undertake in PA.

“Evaluating the Economic Benefits and Future Opportunities of the Maine Island Trail Association”

March 22, 2011

Lead Author(s): Jonathan Glassman NC & Vilas Rao, Master in Public Policy Candidates, Harvard Kennedy School

Targets: boaters and campers (users), supporters of MITA, local communities and state government

Data Sources: island log book entries from 2002-2010; a

2006 census conducted on user characteristics and attitudes toward the trail; and a detailed survey that was fielded from December 2010-January 2011 on usage and spending patterns.

Methodology: Travel Cost Method

This report is focused on the Maine Island Trail Association, which is the non-profit organization that manages the Maine Island Trail (www.mita.org), and the value of the organization. The report attempted to answer three central questions: “First, what is the value of the Maine Island Trail as a recreational asset? Second, how does MITA actualize this value through its activities? Finally, how can MITA improve its operations to increase its value delivery?” As a way of proving the value of the MITA, this report does quantify the overall impact of the Maine Island Trail.

Major Findings:

- The Maine Island Trail generates at least \$674,000 annually in visitor spending in Maine, up to potentially \$2.1 million, 27 jobs and \$54,000 in annual state and local tax revenue.
- \$3.2 million in annual consumer surplus for users.
- Recommendation for MITA to adopt a “balanced scorecard framework and activity-based costing.”
- The partnerships that MITA has arranged between property owners increase the value of the Maine Island Trail.

Analysis and Recommendations:

This report quantifies the economic impacts of the Maine Island Trail as a way of valuing the managing organization (MITA). There is a lot to take from this analysis related to management of water trails and recommendations that can be made to some Pennsylvania organizations regarding the importance of developing partnership for successful water trail management. The PA Water Trails Partnership is becoming increasingly aware of the need to develop strong partnerships for sustainable water trail management.

The report is very recent in terms of using up to date methodologies for obtaining the value of the trail. It should be reviewed for methodology recommendations.

“Report on the Survey of Iowa Canoe, Kayak & Innertube Liveries”

January 27, 2009

Lead Author(s): Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) with assistance from Iowa State University
Department of Landscape Architecture

Target: liveries

Data: phone surveys

Methodology: multiplier added to trips reported to determine total receipts and economic impact.

This is a report of a phone survey that was conducted with canoe, kayak and innertube liveries in Iowa. Liveries who were contacted are the ones who are listed on the Iowa DNR web site. Following are the survey questions (these are taken directly from the phone survey script that was included in the report).

1) Please verify all information we are currently listing on the DNR web site
(contact info, river or other waterbody served, etc) and fill in any missing gaps
(try to get phone #s and e-mails).

2) How many of the following are in your rental fleet?

____ canoes

____ kayaks

____ innertubes

3) Are there kayaks in your fleet under 13 feet?

4) Are you registering those kayaks under 13 feet?

Yes / No

5) What are your rental rates for...

____ canoes

____ kayaks

____ innertubes

6) How many trips would you estimate that you run each season for ...

____ canoes

____ kayaks

____ innertubes

7) What type of life jackets do you outfit your customers with?

____ type II (orange horse-collar type)

____ type III (vest type)

8) How can DNR better assist in helping to provide a safe, fun environment for your clients?

Major Findings:

- Liveries contribute \$5.14 million to Iowa's economy.
- Innertubing is a major part of the industry.
- Most livery revenues are concentrated on four rivers.
- Findings regarding the size of kayaks and type of life jackets used.
- Private entities reported more revenues than public entities.
- In addition, DNR received several specific recommendations from respondents about access points and amenities at access points.

Analysis/Recommendation:

This report is fairly narrow in terms of the findings and how they relate to the work that we seek to undertake here in Pennsylvania. Liveries are an important audience and indicator of use of water trails so they should be included in an analysis of PA Water Trails, but we should go beyond just liveries as the target for economic impact of PA Water Trails.

"Case Study of Water Trail Impacts on Rural Communities"

September 2002

Lead Author(s): Lindsay Johnson, MCRP, University of Oregon (in fulfillment of a Masters Degree in Community and Regional Planning)

Target:

Data Sources:

Methodology: Literature review, secondary data analysis and primary qualitative data.

The focus of this report is on the economic impact of water trails on rural communities. The author used three case studies to evaluate the impact (1. Lake County, Minnesota 2. Vernon County, Wisconsin 3. Martin County, North Carolina). She was able to make some general and informative conclusions about developing water trails in rural areas

Major Findings:

- Water trails are beneficial to rural communities. Based on the findings of the study, the author makes several recommendations about how to better manage water trails in rural communities to take the most advantage of the potential impact.
- Paddlers will spend between \$27-\$63 per day. "Destination" paddlers on an overnight trip will spend roughly \$88 in local communities.

Analysis and Recommendations:

Pennsylvania has string examples of urban and rural water trail. If we undertake an analysis of specific trails we should be sure to include variety in the type of water trail that we focus on.

IV. Recommendations for Pennsylvania Report

Based on the case studies, the PA Water Trails Partnership makes the following recommendations about a PA Water Trails Economic Impact Study.

Information to include/evaluate:

- Survey both outfitters/liveries and paddlers/visitors about water trails.
- Ask where and how people paddle?
- Survey water trail managers about partnerships that they have developed to manage their water trails.
- Define water trail segments or regions before undertaking the analysis. Select both urban and rural water trail examples. Following are some ideas for appropriate water trail segments:
 - Urban: Three Rivers Water Trail, Tidal Delaware Water Trail, Schuylkill River Water Trail
 - Rural: Susquehanna Water Trail North & West Branches, Juniata River Water Trail

Methodology:

- Plan for comprehensive distribution of survey tool that will be developed.

General:

- Use the data that is gathered to make recommendations about ways to improve and encourage sustainable water trail development.
- Address issues such as the environmental and social impacts of water trails.

V. Strategy for Completion

On behalf of the PA Water Trails Partnership, PEC worked with Senator John Pippy to introduce Senate Resolution 143, which directs the Legislative Budget & Finance Committee to study the economic impact of recreational water trails on local communities in the Commonwealth. Beginning in September, when the PA legislature is back in session, we will work with Senator Pippy's office to make sure that this legislation is moved through committee and on for a vote. It is important to build a lot of support for this work to make sure that once the legislation is passed that the work is completed in a timely manner. One of the benefits of working with the Legislative Budget & Finance Committee is that the study can be done with existing resources.

If we are not successful at getting this Resolution passed then PEC, along with the PA Water Trails Partnership, will begin fundraising for this project. Potential sources include: private foundations, existing state grants through DCNR or federal funding opportunities through the CBGN. In order to cut down on costs we are also aware of the opportunity to partner with an educational institution to conduct some of this research. DCNR, for example, partnered with Penn State to complete some analysis as part of the SCORP. The Allegheny Trail Alliance partnered with the University of Pittsburgh to conduct an economic impact analysis of the Great Allegheny Passage in 2002.

VI. Resources

- Beedle, J. (2008) *2008 Paddle Tourism Study: North Carolina State Trails Program*. North Carolina State University.

- Glassman, J. & Rao, V. (2011) *Evaluating the Economic Benefits and Future Opportunities of the Maine Island Trail Association*. Harvard Kennedy School. Retrieved from: <http://www.mita.org/node/7486>.
- Hoogeveen, N. (2009) *Report on the Survey of Iowa Canoe, Kayak and Innertube Liveries*. Iowa Department of Natural Resources.
- Johnson, L. (2002) *Case Study of Water Trail Impacts on Rural Communities*. University of Oregon. Retrieved from: <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/wtimpacts.pdf>
- Pollock, N., Chase, L., Ginger, C., & Kolodinsky, J. (2007) *Northern Forest Canoe Trail: An Economic Impact Study*. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont. Retrieved from: <http://www.uvm.edu/~snrvtdc/NFCT/>
- Trail Town Program® 2007-2008 Economic Impact Study for the Great Allegheny Passage <http://www.trailtowns.org/1studies.aspx>.
- Rails to Trails Conservancy, User Impact Surveys (http://www.railstotrails.org/ourWork/trailBuilding/toolbox/informationSummaries/trailuser_surveys.html).

Appendix A

2008 North Carolina Paddling Tourism Study Questionnaire

1. 2008 N.C. Paddle Tourism Survey

Welcome to the 2008 N.C. Paddle Trails Survey!

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey. This survey is being conducted by the North Carolina State Trails Program as a follow up to the 2006 paddle trail development survey. The information obtained from these questions will be used to gain a local and statewide understanding of travel related to paddling, the characteristics of paddlers, and to determine the economic impacts paddlers may have on various areas of North Carolina.

All Completed Surveys Will be Entered Into a Drawing for One of Two Prizes:

1. A \$200 gift card to Great Outdoor Provision Co.
2. \$200 in products or services from your choice of one of the the following partnering outfitters:

- Barrier Island Kayaks
- Endless River Adventures
- Fish Stalkers Outfitters
- Frog Hollow Outdoors
- GetOutdoors
- God's Country Outfitters
- Hanging Rock Outdoor Center
- Haw River Canoe and Kayak Co.
- Headwaters Outfitters
- Herring's Outdoor Sports
- High Mountain Expeditions
- Huck Finn River Adventures
- Paddle Pamlico Kayak Outfitters
- Riverside Canoe and Tube
- Southern Waterways
- The Adventure Company
- Troublesome Creek/Three Rivers Outfitters
- Uwharrie Tours
- White Oak River Outfitters
- Zalloo's Canoes

Please forward this survey to anyone who has an interest in North Carolina paddling as it is important that we hear from as many voices as possible. The information gathered in this survey is critical to the development of positive paddling and travel experiences throughout the state.

The responses to the demographic data are anonymous and will only be used to:

- Determine the geographic area where people are paddling
- Describe paddlers who are using each site
- Emphasize the importance of paddling to potential funders
- Direct future projects to the areas where paddlers are concentrated

At the conclusion of this study, the results will be shared in a comprehensive report available on the North Carolina State Trails Program website. This report will be used to determine what trip qualities are desired by paddlers, and to measure paddlers' economic impacts on North Carolina's local communities. In order to obtain the most accurate information possible, you will be able to fill out the survey only once.

Please encourage as many people as possible to fill out the survey. This will demonstrate strong support for paddling as an increasingly popular recreational activity as well as a source of income for local communities through tourism. The information will also help communities create high-quality paddling experiences.

Thank you for your continued efforts in making North Carolina a better place to paddle.

1. Would you describe yourself as a(n)

- ☐ Avid paddler
- ☐ Recreational paddler
- ☐ Novice paddler

2. When you go paddling do you...(Check the response that applies most often)

- ☐ Use your own canoe
- ☐ Use your own kayak
- ☐ Rent a canoe
- ☐ Rent a kayak
- ☐ Other

Other (please specify)

3. With whom do you typically paddle? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Myself
- ☐ My friends
- ☐ My spouse
- ☐ My family
- ☐ My grandchildren
- ☐ Business colleagues
- ☐ An outfitter/guide
- ☐ My paddle club
- ☐ Other organized groups (scouts, church, YMCA, tour group, etc.)

4. What region of North Carolina do you most frequently paddle?

- ☐ I paddle primarily outside of North Carolina.
- ☐ Coast
- ☐ Mountains
- ☐ Piedmont

5. Please list the top three rivers/ bodies of water you most frequently paddle.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

6. Please enter your home zip code.

7. Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

8. What is your age?

- ☐ 18 - 30
- ☐ 31 - 40
- ☐ 41 - 50
- ☐ 51 - 60
- ☐ 61 - 70
- ☐ Over 70

9. Would you describe your employment status as...

- ☐ Non-profit
- ☐ Private
- ☐ Public
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Unemployed

10. What is your household income level?

- ☐ \$1,000 - \$24,000
- ☐ \$25,000 - \$49,000
- ☐ \$50,000 - \$74,000
- ☐ \$75,000 - \$99,000
- ☐ \$100,000- \$149,000
- ☐ \$150,000 - \$199,000
- ☐ Over \$200,000

11. On your last paddling trip, how far did you drive from your home to the put-in point?

- ☐ 30 minutes
- ☐ 1 hour
- ☐ 1 1/2 hours
- ☐ 2 hours
- ☐ 3 hours
- ☐ 4 or more hours
- ☐ I didn't drive; it was part of a trip in which I flew.

12. Last year, how many paddling trips did you take?

Within 50 miles from your home

Farther than 50 miles from your home

13. How long is your typical paddling trip including travel time?

- ☐ Less than a full day
- ☐ 1-2 days
- ☐ 3-4 Days
- ☐ 5-7 Days
- ☐ More than 7 days

14. My last paddling trip was...

- ☐ Primarily for paddling
- ☐ Part of a vacation
- ☐ Part of a work related trip
- ☐ While I was visiting friends or relatives
- ☐ Other (please specify)

15. Which of the following lodging do you use when on a paddling trip? Please rank with 1 being the most frequently used.

With friends/family	<input type="text"/>
At a primitive camp site	<input type="text"/>
At a campground	<input type="text"/>
At a Bed and Breakfast	<input type="text"/>
At a hotel/motel	<input type="text"/>
I typically take day trips only.	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>
(please specify)	
<input type="text"/>	

16. When I take a paddling trip I...

	Often	Sometimes	Never
Like being away from the city	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Want to see wildlife	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Want to see birds	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Enjoy learning about native flora	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Go fishing	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Meet the locals	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Typically pack my own food	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Seek out well-known chain restaurants	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Experience local cafes and restaurants	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Try regional foods	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Stay at local campgrounds	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Stay at Bed and Breakfasts and/or locally owned lodging	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Seek out well-known chain lodging	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Learn about local history	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Get the feel of local culture	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Look for handmade arts and crafts to buy	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Attend community events	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Enjoy hearing local music	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Visit farms	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Visit farmer's markets	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

17. When on a paddling trip what are your concerns?

	Often	Sometimes	Never
Adequate water level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality and safety of access sites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficult portages	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Distance between access sites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of restrooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal safety in the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to call for assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to medical care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of rental equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to knowledgeable instructors/guides	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finding a safe, clean, and comfortable place to stay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safety of my personal vehicle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being recognized as an outsider	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Getting lost	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. Which of the following sources do you use to plan paddling trips? Please rank with 1 being the most frequently used source.

Internet	<input type="text"/>
Word of mouth/ recommendation from others	<input type="text"/>
Magazines	<input type="text"/>
Television	<input type="text"/>
Travel books/guides	<input type="text"/>
Maps/ atlas/ gazetteer	<input type="text"/>
Newsletter from outfitters	<input type="text"/>
Paddle club newsletter/message board	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

(If you answered other, please specify)

19. In addition to paddling, I also participate in the following outdoor recreation activities...(Check all that apply)

- ☐ Walking/ Running
- ☐ Hiking
- ☐ Mountain biking
- ☐ Road biking
- ☐ Climbing
- ☐ Backpacking/Orienteering
- ☐ Horseback riding
- ☐ Fishing
- ☐ Hunting
- ☐ Birding/Wildlife watching
- ☐ Camping
- ☐ Snow sports
- ☐ Motorized water sports/boating
- ☐ Four-wheel driving/off-roading
- ☐ Other (please specify)

20. Please check the appropriate boxes below to estimate how much money your party spent on your last paddling trip OUTSIDE your local area (50 mile radius).

	<\$50	\$51-100	\$100-149	\$149-200	\$200-300	\$300-400	\$400-500	>\$500	N/A
Airfare	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation/Gas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lodging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guided trip fees and/or rental equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purchased paddling gear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities/Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(If you answered other, please elaborate)

21. Please check the appropriate boxes below to estimate how much money your party spent on your last paddling trip WITHIN your local area (50 mile radius).

	<\$50	\$51-100	\$100-149	\$149-200	\$200-300	\$300-400	\$400-500	>\$500	N/A
Transportation/Gas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lodging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guided trip fees and/or rental equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purchased paddling gear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities/entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(If you answered other, please elaborate)

22. If a web based log (BLOG) were available for monitoring paddling conditions for an area in which you paddle, would you... (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Contribute information to it
- ☐ Use it as a reference
- ☐ Refer it to others
- ☐ Not participate

23. Which of the following would you support as a means for funding improved and increased paddle access? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Canoe/kayak registration
- ☐ User fees
- ☐ Sales tax on equipment
- ☐ Paddling license
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Other (please specify)

24. Do you feel that paddle trail development is a viable form of economic development for North Carolina?

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ Maybe (please elaborate)

25. What can we do to improve a visitor's paddling experience in North Carolina?

26. Thank you for taking the N.C. Paddle Trails information survey!

If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns that were not addressed in this survey, please list them below.

Happy Paddling!

27. If you would like to be entered into the drawing for the \$200 gift card to Great Outdoor Provision Co. or \$200 to a participating outfitter of your choice, please fill out the following contact information. This information will be stored separately from your survey responses so that they remain anonymous.

Name

Preferred Phone

E-mail

Appendix B
Senate Resolution 143
2011 Session

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 143 Session of
2011

INTRODUCED BY PIPPY, FONTANA, SOLOBAY, BOSCOLA, RAFFERTY, ARGALL, ALLOWAY,
DINNIMAN AND BREWSTER, JUNE 17, 2011

REFERRED TO ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY, JUNE 17, 2011

A RESOLUTION

Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the economic impact of recreational water trails on local communities in this Commonwealth.

WHEREAS, The Great Outdoors America report published by the Outdoor Resources Review Group recommended development of a nationwide water trails network; and

WHEREAS, This Commonwealth has an abundance of natural resources that are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike with 86,000 miles of rivers and streams; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is a recognized leader in the development of water trails with an active Statewide water trails effort and more than 20 water trails developed or under development totaling nearly 2,000 river miles; and

WHEREAS, Several of this Commonwealth's water trails have gained national attention with National Recreation Trail designation; and

WHEREAS, Tourism, including outdoor tourism, is the second largest industry in Pennsylvania, generating \$5.1 billion in payroll and jobs for this Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission are partners in these efforts along with other public and private entities to develop water trails in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Several studies have demonstrated the significant economic importance to local communities of land-based recreational trails; and

WHEREAS, This Commonwealth should have a full appreciation of the economic value of water trails on its communities to help target future investments; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the economic impact of recreational water trails on local communities in this Commonwealth; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly within a year of the passage of this resolution.

TAB # 8

Access Development and Permitting Process Outline

Final			
I. EARLY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT: Preliminary scoping of new access project			
	Steps	Process for Completion	Information and Resources
A.	Outline project need, purpose and description, and estimate initial project budget. Determine project size and specific location.	<p>The first step in providing new water access is to determine market demand -- how many access points are needed and where they should be located. This can be accomplished through an inventory of existing sites as well as a survey of users asking where improved access is needed. This information should be taken into account when determining the number, size and location of new access sites. Once the needs for new access have been determined, identify the best way of meeting those needs.</p> <p>To begin the consultation process as you develop an access project, it is essential to describe the specific project location. In many instances, specific latitude and longitude coordinates are helpful. There are a variety of online tools available to help specify project location.</p>	http://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ http://www.pasda.psu.edu/ http://www.fish.state.pa.us/accessplan.htm http://www.fish.state.pa.us/county.htm
B.	Consider and conduct early consultations, as needed, to properly scope project.	At this very initial phase, advice may be needed from experts, such as County Watershed Managers, to help prepare for preliminary site selection and planning.	http://pacd.org/your-district/find-your-district/
II. PRELIMINARY SITE SELECTION AND PLANNING: Gathering information to develop the most successful project			
	Steps	Process for Completion	Information and Resources
A.	Identify natural and cultural resources and related concerns	There is a lot of information about a new access project that needs to be collected before going to design. Complete familiarity with the project site is essential and will require going into the field to evaluate sites as well. Collecting this information ahead of time can save a lot of work later. Following are some of the things to consider: land uses adjacent to the project site (including servicing roads), water depth and fluctuation, fish and wildlife, environmental and historical conditions and presence of protected species. Take historical and environmental considerations into account. The existence of wetlands, historical artifacts and protected species may preclude the development of an access site.	
	1) Complete Wetland Identification	<p>Wetlands are protected by both state and federal regulations and are important to identify early in the planning process. General information, including a <i>Clues to Wetland Identification</i> factsheet, can be found on DEP's website.</p> <p>Although PAMAP, LiDAR and infrared imagery can more accurately show the presence of wetlands, use of this tool requires a GIS mapping system and some specialized skills.</p>	http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/wetlands/10635/fact_sheets_publications/554347 http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/topogeo/pamap/
	2) Run PA Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) search	<p>The PNDI is the main source of information utilized by DEP during the permit application review process for the identification and protection of species and resources of special concern. Running a PNDI search helps to identify potential impacts and minimize impacts to endangered and threatened and special concern species and resources, (i.e. plant and animal species classified as rare, tentatively undetermined or candidate as well as other taxa of conservation concern, significant natural communities, special concern populations (plants) and unique geologic features) in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.</p> <p>The PNDI search results will also provide specific recommendations for consultation with permitting and coordinating agencies necessary to address potential impacts.</p>	http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/

	3) Run Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS) search	<p>CRGIS is a map-based inventory of the historic and archaeological sites and surveys stored in the files of the Bureau for Historic Preservation (BHP). Run a CRGIS search to identify historical and cultural resources that may be affected by your project. Web access to all of the historic resource data is open to the public. Access to archaeological site locations and detailed site information is restricted and password protected and will be granted to qualified individuals (for planning and archeological purposes) through the CRGIS website. New sites are added to the CRGIS database on a consistent basis. Review of projects that are run through a CRGIS search are evaluated based on known and also potential resources.</p> <p>CRGIS is the first step in project planning, but there may be additional impacts beyond the CRGIS search.</p>	https://www.dot7.state.pa.us/ce/default.asp
	4) Evaluate other site selection criteria (e.g. road accessibility, utility service)	<p>At this step project managers should think about the other factors for selecting the best project site. In particular, road accessibility and the presence of utilities are critical considerations.</p> <p>Regarding roads, project managers should evaluate: Is there an existing access road to the site? Will an access road need to be developed? Will a Road Occupancy Permit be required? (Consult with the Township or municipal Road Manager or the local PennDOT office; they will be able to advise you on permitting requirements.)</p> <p>Regarding utilities, coordination with utility companies may be needed to locate service corridors and existing access to the project site. The PA One Call System will facilitate this process.</p>	<p>Township/municipal Road Manager</p> <p>PennDOT local office http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Internet/Bureaus/pdBHSTE.nsf/BHSTEHomepage?OpenFrameset&Frame=main&src=Permits?readform</p> <p>PA One Call System: http://www.pa1call.org/POCS/index16.aspx</p>
B.	Develop preliminary design or concept drawing	The design/construction process is largely based on the type of access being developed and the source of funds for construction. The key is to develop the access infrastructure appropriate to the need and site conditions. In general the more extensive the development, the higher the cost and the difficulty of the permitting and consultation processes. The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission's Technical Guidance Program is a great resource for assistance with the construction process.	Bureau of Engineering & Property Services 814-359-5152 (request info about the Technical Guidance Program for Boat Access)
C.	Coordinate with property owners to secure accessibility (via easement, etc)	Once a site is judged suitable for a new access point, based on both the in-office and in-field evaluations, action may be taken to acquire the property if it is not already secured. Generally there are several ways of gaining control of the property including purchase, lease, easement, gifts and condemnation. Many project managers are able to work with public agencies including municipalities to provide access.	http://conserveland.org/modeleasesments
III.	PRE-APPLICATION: Proactively seeking guidance to resolve issues and address necessary permitting requirements		
	Steps	Process for Completion	Information and Resources
A.	Review results for potential issues, required consultations and permitting needs.	Make arrangements for required coordinating and regulatory agency consultations identified in Preliminary Site Selection and Planning process. The PNDI search will identify agency coordination needed to resolve issues. Having a clear understanding of the required agency interactions and permits early can help project managers move more smoothly through the planning process.	

1)	Coordinate with regulatory agencies (DEP, CCD) and others identified by PNDI and CRGIS	Applicants are urged to contact DEP to schedule a pre-application conference. These meetings improve the communication between the potential applicant and DEP staff. Although a pre-application conference requires an investment of time, the results often include improved applications submitted by applicants and a better understanding of the project by DEP staff. Be prepared to provide specific information in order to receive specific guidance.	DEP Regional Offices http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/regional_resources/13769 County Watershed Managers http://pacd.org/your-district/find-your-district/
2)	Coordinate with appropriate entity for public road access and road occupancy permitting	The road access evaluation and consultation during the preliminary site selection and planning phase may have identified the requirement of a road occupancy permit.	Township/municipal road Manager PennDOT local office http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Internet/Bureaus/pdBHSTE.nsf/BHSTEHomepage?OpenFrameset&Frame=main&src=Permits?readform
3)	Make PA One call and coordinate with utility companies to locate service corridors and access to project site	PA One Call may be necessary to coordinate with utility companies to locate service corridors and access into your project site.	http://www.pa1call.org/POCS/index16.aspx
IV. Final Site Selection and Planning: Making the commitment to move forward			
	Steps	Process for Completion	Information and Resources
A.	Reassess all collected information to confirm the site selected for the project	If all has proceeded smoothly to this point, then the project is ready to proceed to permitting and implementation. If all has not proceeded smoothly, there may be fundamental issues with the selected site and unavoidable natural and/or cultural resource conflicts. At this point, a new site may need to be considered.	
B.	Finalize project scope and design	Complete final scope of proposed project, including preliminary design plans and construction drawings and map with project location.	
V. PERMIT APPLICATIONS AND APPROVALS / PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: Processes necessary to complete project			
	Steps	Process for Completion	Information and Resources
A.	Obtain required permits:	In Pennsylvania various state agencies are involved in permitting for new access projects. Listed below are potential permits and related information and resources that may be required to complete the respective permitting processes.	
1)	Request to Initiate Consultation (BHP)	Submit a "Request to Initiate Consultation in Compliance with State History Code and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act" to the PA Historic & Museum Commission.	http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/review_process/5071

2)	GP2 or Individual Ch 105 permit	<p>In most cases the GP-2 General Permit (General Permit BDWW-GP-2 Small Docks and Boat Launching Ramps) will be needed to create a new access site.</p> <p>***Note: The following conditions prohibit use of GP-2 and projects would require an individual Ch. 105 permit: a) Known historic, cultural or archeological sites published PA Inventory of Historic Places or the National Register of Historic Places; b) Sites identified in National Registry of Natural Landmarks; c) Areas within 100 feet of designated wild National or State Scenic Rivers system; d) Construction activities in trout stocked waters from 3/1 - 6/15 and wild trout streams from 10/1-12/31 unless written approval obtained from PAFBC; e) Projects impacting state or federal species of special concern; f) Exceptional value waters (including EV wetlands) listed in Ch 93; and g) Projects requiring excavation of mudflats in the tidal waters of the Delaware River.</p>	http://www.elibrary.dep.state.pa.us/dsweb/Get/Document-77336/4000-BK-DEP0341.pdf
3)	Erosion and Sedimentation Plan	Projects involving construction, land development, and earthmoving may require permits by County Conservation Districts. PA Code Title 25 Chapter 102 requires all earthmoving projects in the Commonwealth to develop an erosion and sediment pollution control plan and implement best management practices for the control of sediment pollution during construction. In addition, the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for earthmoving activities exceeding five acres.	http://www.elibrary.dep.state.pa.us/dsweb/View/Collection-9428
4)	Township or State Highway Occupancy Permit	Site evaluation and consultation during the preliminary site selection and planning phase may have identified the requirement of a Township or State Highway Occupancy permit.	<p>Township/municipal road Manager</p> <p>PennDOT local office http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Internet/Bureaus/pdBHSTE.nsf/BHSTHomepage?OpenFrameset&Frame=main&src=Permits?readform </p>
B.	Implement project consistent with permits and approvals	The permit issued for new access projects may include specific performance stipulations (e.g. prohibited construction work within the water during spawning season, reseeding of disturbed acres, etc). These performance best management practices must be incorporated into construction management.	
C.	Complete Pre- and Post-Construction Notifications as directed in the permit(s)	The permits issued may also direct project managers to provide advance notification when projects are implemented and/or follow-up information upon project completion.	

TAB # 9

**Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Bureau of Forestry**

**Guidelines for Establishing
Water Trail Designated Island & Lakeshore Campsites**

MANAGEMENT GOALS

- ❖ Manage campsites individually and as part of the water trail system;
- ❖ Plan campsite development and maintenance activities to preserve the wild character of islands and riverine ecology;
- ❖ Promote safe, ethical and responsible use; and,
- ❖ Identify an organization to perform routine camp site maintenance and site inspections *prior* to development.

GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING CAMPSITES

- ❖ Identify key user groups and other stakeholders to create stewardship partnerships and “adopt” an island;
- ❖ Solicit input from user groups and other stakeholders to determine needs;
- ❖ Identify potential water trail campsite areas and prioritize development according to needs;
- ❖ A designated dispersed campsite is designed to create minimal impact to the site. It is a relatively small, distinctly defined area where there is space for a camping unit. Each site shall be identified with a flexible, vertical post facing the water (such as Carsonite®) indicating the site and island number at its entrance. Island numbers are based on the mileage of the islands position upstream from the mouth of the river;
- ❖ Standardized, 6”x8” metal signs (Attachment A) will be posted on islands owned by DCNR at locations upstream, downstream, and on each side from the water indicating the number of the island. The face of the signs must be clearly visible from the water;
- ❖ Use trailheads and entry ways to campsites for informational postings;
- ❖ *Seasonal* visitor log boxes (Attachment A) may be provided at the entrance to the site. Map production is a coordinated effort with other established trail groups maintaining the water trail and the Department; and,
- ❖ Harden access points where needed to prevent erosion to stabilize shoreline and banks utilizing natural materials approved by the Department.

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING CAMPSITES

- ❖ **ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT**
 - Post the Leave No Trace (LNT) placard near the site;
 - Remove obstructions, such as overgrown limbs or blow-downs at the campsite or access trail unless otherwise deemed unusable following a flood or major disturbance;

- Proactively establish and maintain paths to water trail campsites to encourage the use of existing trails and to discourage the creation of new footpaths;
- Use the "Indicators & Standards for Campsite Conditions" (Attachment B) when establishing an informal data collection process and document impact and catalogue changes to campsites utilizing the Monthly Island Maintenance Report (Attachment C);
- A campsite will be closed or rehabilitated when resource damage or social encounter levels exceed established standards of Class 4 per the Indicators & Standards for Campsite Conditions; and,
- When environmentally monitoring, emphasis should be placed on: soil compaction, erosion, depletion of wood source, loss of vegetation, campfire impacts, forest health, and wildlife disturbance.

❖ SOCIAL/CAMPER MANAGEMENT

- Water trail sites should be accessible from the water only;
- Camping will be limited to ten or less individuals per campsite;
- Larger, group camp sites can be identified capable of accommodating 4 to 5 tents;
- Camping is limited to two nights per campsite per individual and/or group; and,
- Camping permits are not required.

❖ HUMAN WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Portable bathroom facilities are located at many PA Fish and Boat Commission developed water access areas;
- Solid human waste and toilet paper should be carried out and disposed of properly; and,
- While the individual "cathole" technique (a small hole 6" to 8" deep) is acceptable in most higher elevation areas, this method *may* not be appropriate on the water trail because of the characteristics of the river islands.

Attachment A



Attachment B
INDICATORS & STANDARDS
FOR CAMPSITE CONDITIONS

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Mineral Soil Exposed	None to 250 sq. ft.	No more than 800 sq. ft.	No more than 800 sq. ft.	No more than 800 sq. ft.
Tree Roots Exposed	None to 25%	Less than 50%	Less than 50%	Greater than 50%
Erosion Level	None to *	Campsites with little erosion on campsite or access trail or at shoreline which is not pronounced *	Campsites with erosion on campsite or access trail or at shoreline which is not pronounced *	Campsites with erosion on campsite or access trail or at shoreline which is pronounced *

* = campsites with erosion either on the campsite, access trail, or at the shoreline resulting in the loss of soils which is not pronounced, gravel on the site, or obvious loss of soil at the landing or along the shoreline.

Attachment C

Monthly Island Campsite Maintenance Report

*Maintenance Reports should
be performed monthly, April
through October*

Volunteer Group Name: _____

Volunteers: _____

Evidence of vandalism (signage, trees, marker post): _____ Yes
_____ No

If yes, please describe: _____

Human was visible or evidence of human waste disposal (cat-hole)?
_____ Yes _____ No

Number of new entries in logbook: _____

Evidence of recent use: _____ Yes _____ No

Evidence of campfire use: _____ Yes _____ No

Are any new campsites or clearings apparent: _____ Yes
_____ No

Describe evidence of illegal campsite development (i.e. structures):

Check the items that were performed as maintenance:

_____ Trim emerging vegetation in clearings and around signs to
maintain visibility

_____ Remove trash from island

_____ Remove human waste

_____ Disperse accumulated charcoal / ashes

_____ Dismantle new fire rings or campsites

Island #: _____

Hours Worked: _____

Date: _____

Notes:

Campsite Condition Class:

Return form to:

xxxx State Forest District #

ATTN: XXXX XXXX

xxx

xxx, PA xxxxx

TAB # 10

Building Effective Localized Water Trail Management and Stewardship

Background

Water trails have been a focus of recreation development throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed over the past decade. Establishing a water trail can be a great approach to enhancing recreational access and fostering interest in and stewardship of local water resources. Pennsylvania Water Trail Partners (PA WT Partners) have been critically involved in promoting the development of water trails and many have been designated as Pennsylvania Water Trails; likewise many within the Susquehanna River system have also been designated by the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network (CBGN). Water trails are nominated for designation as Pennsylvania (or CBGN) Water Trails by a local WT managing organization. These local organizations take onto themselves the tasks of developing and sustaining the trail infrastructure, maintenance and programming. Since the inception of water trails in Pennsylvania, the state and federal agencies that are the Pennsylvania Water Trail Partnership have played a role in supporting these locally based recreational assets by providing financial resources and technical assistance.

- **Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC)** has provided official designation of PA Water Trails, layout and printing of water trail map and guides, assistance with boat access and signage and promotion of water trails through their web site.
- **Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR)** has been a consistent funder of water trail projects and **partners** with other state and federal agencies in promoting water trails in Pennsylvania. DCNR has awarded grants through its Community Partnership Conservation Program to develop water trails.
- Dating from its 1998 authorization, the CBGN has been an impetus for water trail development in the Susquehanna River basin. The National Park Service (NPS) has provided financial and technical assistance through both the CBGN and the Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA). Financial assistance has traditionally supported projects to develop public access, interpretation and resource stewardship.
- The Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) joined the program as a statewide, non-profit partner in 2003 with the hiring of staff dedicated to work on the Pennsylvania Water Trails Program.

An early accomplishment to assist developing trails was the creation of a “Water Trails Toolbox.” Developed by CBGN, in collaboration with North American Water Trails, Inc., the toolbox is an online resource that provides step-by-step guidelines—the “ABCs” of planning, building and managing water trails.

More recently, the PA WT Partnership developed the Water Trail Checklist to provide guidance on what activities should be undertaken to implement a water trail. The two-tiered Checklist works in tandem with the Toolbox to provide the fundamental “123s” of water trail development; as well as initiatives that should be considered to optimize the development of a water trail.

Through the Toolbox, the Checklist, and other technical assistance, we help provide a “roadmap” for water trail development. Still at the local level water trails develop more organically, and local managers look for ways to address

development needs as they occur. Local WT managers value networking opportunities for peer-to-peer exchange and face-to-face mentoring; and workshops have proven an effective tool to address training needs that many have in common. CBGN and other PA WT Partners have provided training workshops on topics such as volunteer recruitment and management, natural resource management and stewardship, public access site development, and low impact development.

We have also provided financial assistance in support of specific local projects. These projects address both specific local needs and also programmatic goals of the funding agencies. CBGN funding, for example, has historically been available to support public access development, interpretation and resource stewardship projects with additional consideration given to engaging citizen volunteers and building working relationships among partners. For several years, priority was given to projects that furthered the development and sustainability of water trails. Most recently, as directed by the *Federal Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*, priority was given to public access site development projects. Over the years CBGN has funded 20 water trail-related projects in Pennsylvania totaling nearly \$700,000. Each \$1 of Federal money awarded has been matched by \$1.21 in non-federal funds.

Issue

In order to strengthen and continuing to build our statewide system, the PA Water Trails Partnership has positioned itself to assist local WT managing organizations to add skills and capacity. The PA WT Partners set several objectives to:

- Provide more technical assistance to promote key developmental needs
- Integrate TA into established agency functions as part of on-going programs
- Involve the local partners in defining their needs to assure we are targeting the right responses

In reality, all of the designated Pennsylvania water trails are under development. While the rivers are there, the utility of the water trails for trail users is very much a work in progress. The clear expectation of the PA WT Partners is to have local/partnership management and local/citizen stewardship for every water trail. The role of water trail manager calls upon many skills and few if any of the managing organizations have all the capacity and skill sets to address the array of management needs they confront. Most of the local WT managers have taken on water trail development as a secondary or tertiary interest. At their core they may be paddling enthusiasts or environmental advocates; others are focused on heritage protection and storytelling, tourism or economic development. Any of these are legitimate primary interests leading to involvement in water trails; and, in fact, all of these perspectives should be engaged. The PA Water Trail Partnership encourages local WT management organizations to expand their partnership coalitions as the means to add capacity and skill sets. Volunteer recruitment is promoted as a means to supply the labor to build and sustain the water trails. To be the local WT manager is more to be the coordinator and facilitator, and to embrace the necessity of expanding the coalition to include many partners who will bring all of these perspectives, add capacity and bring fresh energy.

Many PA water trails and their local WT managing organizations—having taken the first steps in trail development—are beginning to confront the more complex set of issues and challenges related to cooperative stewardship and sustainable management. With increasing use, the conservation, maintenance, and long-term stewardship of these water trails will become even more challenging. Local WT management organizations are looking for all the help and guidance that they can find.

Need

The need for both technical and financial assistance persists. Technical assistance has provided sound guidance on the fundamental process of water trail development, but funding has also been critical to help local water trail managers in developing their trails.

The PA WT Partners conducted a survey of local water trail managers, as part of a benchmarking process, to define their needs. Key observations by the local managing organizations resonated with our expectations and include:

- There is an ongoing need for technical assistance with basic water trail development (access, signage, other amenities and facilities). Partner, staff and volunteer turnover within organizations creates a recurring need for basic training.
- Generally stewardship and conservation activities are accomplished through partnerships. There is a need to promote the importance of coalition building to fulfill the complete definition of what it means to be a PA Water Trail. None of the organizations can do every task on their own. Water trail development needs a coalition to accomplish all of the tasks of water trail development.
- There is a need for more maintenance volunteers. And there is need for guidance on how to build and maintain a strong volunteer group.
- Funding for long-term maintenance and stewardship (often in the guise of ongoing operations or staffing) can be hard to secure.

Suggested Action Items

- PA WT Partners should continue to provide technical assistance workshops that address the needs of local WT partners. Also continue to present topics that support the basic development needs that we know are in recurring demand.
- Examine technical assistance—Are we overt about the diverse objectives—conservation, interpretation, recreation, tourism and economic development—of water trails? Develop a list of operational roles & responsibilities for water trail managers. Build this into water trail technical assistance.
- Continue to ask water trail managers what their needs are and address contemporary and emerging needs. At present it seems that topics such as Water Trail 101 (especially public planning and coalition building) and Volunteer Program Development merit our attention.

Future Challenges

The Right Business Model for Management

We are also starting to see some of the limits of technical and financial assistance. Where the rubber meets the road the work is challenging, and some partners haven't figured out the organizational business model to sustain their interest in water trails or support the financial requirements of such operations.

The foundation of the model for the development of water trails in Pennsylvania is volunteerism, and this can have an important collateral benefit since we desire to stimulate citizen stewardship of locally valued water resources. Volunteer trail stewards are the eyes and ears of the **water trail**; the worker bees that perform the tasks that maintain and improve the **water trail**. However, we have to understand the cost in staff time and money—the capacity—of our local water trail managing organizations. While volunteers may not draw pay, the recruitment, screening, selection, tasking, evaluation and recognition of volunteers all follow the basic principles of good management. Alas, the management itself costs.

PA WT Partners need to find or develop local WT managing organizations that have the business model that will sustain their interest in water trails and support the financial requirements of such operations.

The Appropriate Geographic Scale

Local WT managing organizations must be cautious to pursue their interests at a manageable geographic scale, as it is a huge part of a successful equation for building and sustaining water trails.

Organizations must work with local segments of the river and water trails that they know and care enough about to make a sustainable commitment.

The challenges of water trail management should not be understated; and they can become untenable if the local managing organization overreaches. Capacity and skill sets can be addressed with hard work, resources and assistance, but the organization must not overstep its own mission or geography of interest in relationship to its water trail responsibilities. The potential of the water trail will immediately be limited by their over-stretched business model. So again, local WT managing organizations must be cautious to pursue their interests at an appropriate scale.

Management Case Study

In 2007 a CBGN grant was provided to the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy for development of a Stewardship and Conservation Plan for the Susquehanna River Water Trail – West Branch. Project planners identified two management priorities: 1) working with volunteer trail stewards who are willing to accept responsibility for maintenance and recorded observations at specific sites or segments of the water trail, and 2) developing and strengthening relationships with access site landowners to better secure long-term public access. Trail managers hoped that by developing a volunteer-based stewardship plan that clearly defined roles and responsibilities, volunteer activity level could be increased. An important component of the strategy was to parse the full length of the water trail into several subsections. The subsections corresponded to a more manageable geography for which the coordinator would have the sense of investment and appropriately scaled capacity to build the partnerships and muster the volunteer workforce necessary for ongoing trail development and maintenance.

For the nearly 240-mile long West Branch this process of cutting things down to size was essential. While other water trails may already be more appropriately scaled, there were key aspects of the project that may be more transferrable. The localized planning began the important process of identifying opportunities for collaboration and partnerships that would help to support and sustain water trails in Pennsylvania. Unfortunately in this instance the organizational capacity came into question, and important second phases of planning are on hold. Still, the underlying process of the West Branch Stewardship & Conservation Plan may become a model for others to reference.

Selling System Aspirations Locally

PA WT Partners have aspirations of not only individually great water trails, but also for a great Pennsylvania water trail system. We at the Partnership level have grander schemes of statewide and national systems, 300 new access sites by 2025, and landscape conservation. The scale of these aspirations are not necessarily in sync with the more discreet scale that tends to be successful locally where managers are most often focused on the next specific project. PA WT Partners are left to ponder both how to facilitate local water trail success and how to bridge the gap between our statewide (or Chesapeake) aspirations and the ability of stretched and stressed local WT managers to deliver projects that add up in support of the big picture.

PA WT Partners should anticipate the continuing need to provide the kinds of technical and financial assistance that local partners need to sustain their efforts. Workshops will continue to be a valuable tool. Since we have some top down expectations we should anticipate the need to continue to promote these needs (such as public access site development) through workshops and other training and networking venues.

Outstanding Questions

- We're trying to develop systems, but local WT partnerships need to be sustainable at the site level.
 - Can the PA WT Partners effectively bridge top down all the way to local WT managing partnerships?
 - Do we need intermediaries to effectively promote our large-scale priorities into local priorities?
- **Water trail development and management is best at the appropriate geography and scale.**
 - How can we get the West Branch stewardship plan implemented and replicate it across Pennsylvania?
 - What are the funding considerations?
- **There are staff costs (operational needs) to manage a volunteer development program that funders need to be aware of.**
 - Should we consider ongoing funding support for water trail operations and management?
 - Alternatively, might we consider one time "project" funding to support foundational planning as a means to engage partners, build coalitions and identify locally sustainable business models?
- **What is the business model that is most successful for sustainable water trail management?**
 - How can we encourage organizations to work water trail tasks/roles into the regular operations of their organization?
 - How can we emphasize and facilitate the development of effective local partnerships for water trail development?
 - Why are some local WT managing organizations dropping out? And what happens when they do?
- **Water trail development is a means to an end. Water trails are about a better quality of life in a community.**
 - How can we marry the conservation/economic development/interpretation/tourism roles of water trail management so that local partners are embracing water trails for all that they can be?

TAB # 11

Getting the Message Out: PA Water Trails Communications Planning

Background

In the ever-changing world of online communications there are many ways to reach people who are interested in visiting or developing water trails. A communications plan will first identify the audience and then provide strategic direction about the ways to best reach the audience. A communications planning process will explore all of the resources that are currently available, recommend how existing tools can work together and identify new marketing tools that may need to be developed.

PA Water Trails are important recreational resources in the Commonwealth with positive benefits on local communities and residents, similar to land trails. In response, the 2009-2013 Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan includes several goals and implementation items related to PA Water Trails. The implementation items are primarily focused on providing improved information about water trails. Nationally, water trails were included as an important component of the America's Great Outdoors Report. The National Park Service (NPS) is putting together a National Blueway Trails Initiative to be launched in 2012.

The desire to successfully communicate the importance of water trails was included as one of the seven goals of the PA Water Trails Partnership (Partnership) Statement of Purpose that was signed in 2008. "To better market and promote Pennsylvania's water trails as a recreational resource to residents and visitors alike." Since 2008 the Partnership and individual organization have taken some actions related to marketing and communications. The identified action by the Partnership was to develop a communications plan that integrates strategies for public relations, marketing, education and stewardship across multiple agencies and organizations. The comprehensive communications plan has not yet been completed.

An early part of the vision set by the Partnership was to focus on the statewide marketing of PA Water Trails. The Partnership identified the following items as important to the PA Water Trails Program, meriting continued work by the Executive Committee and other partners:

5 Year Vision – What the Partnership wanted to work toward... (dated 2008)

- Public Recognizes WTs
- WTs Thought of as Part of the Recreation infrastructure
- PA WTs Program Identity and Branding
- Increased Visibility for WTs
- Cohesive, Comprehensive and Consistent
- Seamless Connection – Packaging the System
- Increased Event Programming on WTs

Changes & Improvements Needed – Based on existing resources... (dated 2008)

- Provide education & interpretation: awareness through marketing
- Ensure marketing to motorized and non-motorized users
- Need to improve signage
- Need to improve website
- Improve messaging
- Institute a sense of recreational stewardship
- Keep it simple for the user
- Get people on the water: Don't scare people off; keep them safe
- Seamless visitor experience

The PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR) surveyed water trail managers about their communications needs in 2008. Respondents to the survey felt it was important to concentrate communications efforts on **1)** water trails planners and potential planners to make things happen at the ground-level, **2)** beginner paddlers to spread the word about water trails and foster a stewardship ethic, **3)** experienced paddlers to get involved in water conservation efforts and volunteer projects, and **4)** local government and tourism agencies to partner, promote, and the grow the system. The top deliverables that need to come out of the communications plan, according to respondents, include a portal website for all water trails across the Commonwealth, uniform/standard trail signage templates for use on bridges and access areas, a comprehensive style guide for signs, publications, and marketing materials, and wider-scale production of trail guides and maps. One of the main messages identified as currently missing from communications about water trails is stewardship ethic.

Issue

In the fast moving world of online communications the PA Water Trails Program is quickly falling behind in communicating to visitors and managers about our statewide system. Some of this is due to existing resources. We do not have current funding specific for communications related initiatives and major tourist promotion partners and efforts, such as the PA Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED), are seriously limited due to existing state budget issues. There are several ongoing communications initiatives that, if tied together well in a comprehensive strategy, will improve the overall marketing and communications efforts of the PA Water Trails Program.

The **PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC)** has historically been the repository for water trail information for visitors about how to access PA Water Trails. This includes a web presence, printing of water trail map and guides and region guides. The PFBC continues to make improvements to the information that they are providing about water trails. This includes both interactive mapping on their web site and also integrating water trails more prominently into the printing of their region guides. The PFBC is not as active in printing individual water trail guides as they historically have been, but many of these tasks are being done by local water trail managers.

The **Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC)** has historically been the source for technical assistance materials about how to develop water trails. Early on these were fact sheets about specific topics. PEC has also published the PA Water Trails Handbook and also conducted a series of technical assistance and statewide workshops and conferences. PEC has put technical assistance materials onto www.pawatertrails.org so that they are more widely accessible. To better reach the mobile user, PEC has also worked with smart trail app technology. We have two water trails in PA who now have smart trail apps available for users.

PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR) has launched and continues to make improvements to their online trails resource, www.explorepatrails.org. This includes some work with smart phone technology and the development of an application. There is not currently a huge amount of water trail content on the site, but the opportunity exists to improve the use of this web site for water trails marketing. The goals for their site, which relate to our goals, are:

1. to build and maintain a shared data environment which leverages the best available, existing trails data and provides for new information and updates from a variety of sources across the enterprise;
2. to establish a one-stop shop for the best available and easy-to-find trails information to the public via the internet; and
3. to respond to public demand for trails data and information.

Need/Opportunity

In light of new communications and marketing tools, reduced funding resources and increasing interest in water trails at the national and statewide levels, there is a need to develop a communications plan for the PA Water Trails Program to better tie together existing initiatives and to identify the work that still needs to be done.

Suggested Action Items

1. Schedule a meeting with the ExplorePA Trails team and local water trail project managers to explore ways to better integrate online water trails information. Is there an ability within this site to provide partner information? Is there an ability to grow the water trail information that is on the site? How does www.explorepatrails.com relate to individual water trail web sites and the PFBC web site?
2. Complete a communications plan for the PA Water Trails Program with existing resources, if possible. Use the outline that is provided below. Many of the items that should be included have been discussed at previous meetings and workshops so there is a baseline of information that exists to begin putting the plan together. We also have a lot of expertise on the committee who can be helpful in providing information. The end result should be a list of projects/initiatives with costs associated with activities or a yearly communications plan budget. The PA Water Trails Partnership can then work on filling that budget.
General process:

- a. Explore & Discover
 - b. Communications Planning
 - c. Identify Strategies
 - d. Budget
3. Implement social media strategy for PA Water Trails.
 4. Identify communications plan initiatives that will require additional funding to complete. Some of the things that we have talked about may require additional funding (i.e., design work for a style guide, printing of publications or improved web sites)

Outstanding Questions

1. What currently exists in terms of communications resources related to water trails? Develop a comprehensive list. We know about PFBC, PEC, and DCNR. What, if any, DCED resources are available?
2. Where should partner resources reside (technical assistance materials for water trail managers)? Think this through as part of planning for future online communications efforts.
3. Several water trails have developed good web sites for individual water trails (www.tidaltrail.org, www.susquehannariverwatertrail.org, www.susquehannarivertrail.org). What is the best way to relate statewide communications/online developments to individual water trail web sites? Where do individual water trail web sites get linked?
4. Where is the “one stop shop” site for user information about PA Water Trails? Currently the PFBC site is the “one stop shop”, but there are some newer resources with www.pawatertrails.org and www.explorepatrails.com. How do these sites fit together?
5. How do improved online resources relate to print materials and what are the outstanding needs for PA Water Trails print materials?

Communications Planning – Key Questions to Answer

- **Define our problem statement**
 - Where are we now?
 - What is working? What’s not working?
 - What are our opportunities?
- **Define our Target Audience**
 - Can we define them more specifically?
 - What do they care about (values and core concerns)?
 - What are the desired behaviors and results? And, by when do we need them to do it?

- **Define our Goals and Objectives**

- What is our Program Goal? What are we trying to do?
- Who are our decision makers (people we are ultimately trying to reach that can say 'yea' or 'nay' to our goal)?
- How will we measure success?
- What are measurable objectives we can define?
- What can we try to accomplish in next 12 to 18 months?

- **Refine our Messaging**

- What are our messages? What are we going to say to our target audiences
- Who is our messenger?

- **Internal Scan**

- What resources do we have (people, dollars)?
- What challenges do we have (such as lack of funding or data)?
- What are our strategies and tactics?
- What is our budget and schedule?

- **External Scan**

- What are known facts, misperceptions, and players?

Next Steps:

Developing a communications plan that integrates strategies for public relations, marketing, education and stewardship across multiple agencies and organizations.

TAB # 12

Funding for PA Water Trails

Background

Pennsylvania's twenty-two water trails are recreational and educational corridors between specific locations that can be used for both single day and multiple day trips. They are comprised of access points, boat launches, day use sites, and -- in some cases -- overnight camping areas. They provide safe access to and information about Pennsylvania's waterways while also providing connections to our diverse history, ecology, geology, heritage and wildlife.

Pennsylvania water trails provide information to users about general boating safety and also local information that's necessary for enjoying the specific water trail. Information is provided through a combination of materials including a trail map and guide, signage, web site, or other format.

Water trails are positive contributors to local communities by providing economic stimulus and also protecting resources that are important to the quality of life of Pennsylvania residents. Water trails promote an ethic of caring that makes the Commonwealth a better place. Pennsylvania water trails embrace the "Leave No Trace" code of outdoor ethics that promotes the responsible use & enjoyment of the outdoors.

Pennsylvania has a statewide program to support the development of water trails. The partners include: PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR), PA Environmental Council (PEC), PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC), National Park Service (NPS) - Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Watertrails Network (CBGN) and NPS - Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA). The partners are available to assist with local water trail efforts and to advance projects at the statewide level.

Identify Issue

Since the inception of water trails in Pennsylvania, the state and federal water trail partners have played a role in supporting these locally based recreational assets by providing financial resources and technical assistance.

PFBC has provided official designation of PA water trails, layout and printing of water trail map and guides, assistance with boat access and signage and promotion of water trails through their web site.

DCNR have been a consistent funder of water trail projects and partner with other state and federal agencies in promoting water trails in Pennsylvania. DCNR has awarded grants through its Community Partnership Conservation Program to develop water trails.

Dating from its 1998 authorization, the CBGN has been an impetus for water trail development in the Susquehanna River basin. The NPS has provided financial and technical assistance through both the CBGN and the RTCA. Financial assistance has traditionally supported projects to develop public access, interpretation and resource stewardship.

The PEC joined the program as a statewide, non-profit partner in 2003 with the hiring of staff dedicated to work on the Pennsylvania Water Trails Program. PEC continues to manage water trails at the local level on the Youghiogheny River Water Trail and Tidal Delaware River Water Trail in addition to statewide responsibilities.

While these partners have provided funding, a designated funding source for water trails has never been identified. In addition, current budget issues at both the state and federal level have impacted the ability of these governmental agencies to continue to provide funding at pre-recession levels.

Identify Need

Water trails require basic funding to develop and maintain access facilities, signage, and marketing tools. Although water trails rely extensively on volunteers to maintain the water trail, a local managing organization is required, and that organization incurs costs in managing a water trail. A local water trail managing organizations' staff spends time and resources meeting with property owners to establish access on private lands to fill in the gaps between public launch locations. In addition to installing initial signage, signs have a 5 to 10 year life span requiring the organization to replace signs as they deteriorate or content needs refreshing. There are also costs incurred managing a volunteer program. Providing training and the scheduling of volunteers are just two examples of the many elements of a volunteer program. Finally, managing organizations incur costs developing and maintaining marketing tools whether web based or other mediums.

There has been a decline in the availability of state and federal project funding and technical assistance from the PA Water Trail Partners due to current budget constraints. In addition, state and federal agencies are unable to provide funding for ongoing operations or maintenance, thereby requiring local water trail managing organizations to find other funding sources to support these costs. Local water trail managing organizations have had varying degrees of success in attracting on-going funding to attend to these operations and maintenance needs. For these reasons, local water trail managing organizations are looking for new sources of funding and technical assistance.

Opportunities

At the same time that available grant funding has been reduced, there is heightened interest in providing public access to waterways for recreation at the state and federal level as a result of several key initiatives.

PA Statewide Outdoor Comprehensive Recreation Plan

The PA Statewide Outdoor Comprehensive Recreation Plan included several goals related to strengthening the PA Water Trails Program.

1. Establish an official and recognized trails committee to recommend trail policy and coordinate standardized planning, trail information and evaluation of trail efforts in Pennsylvania.
2. Standardize trail planning guidelines, information and funding decision criteria to build a sustainable statewide trail system.
3. Standardize and improve existing electronic information available for data collection and trail planning and launch the interactive trails website.
4. Improve the accessibility and use of trails by enhancing the quality, quantity and visibility of access points and printed and electronic information.

5. Develop self-guided and interpreter-led educational and programming opportunities at trailheads and on trails statewide.
6. Build the capacity of local and regional land and water trail groups in planning, stewardship and programming.

Pennsylvania's Fishing and Boating Access Strategy

The recently developed *Pennsylvania's Fishing and Boating Access Strategy* prioritizes the Commonwealth's HUC 8 Watersheds for the purpose of enhancing boating and fishing access. Of the watersheds ranked in the top ten, eight have water trails. The Strategy identified over 600 stretches on waterways or water bodies that need access improvement. Many of the locations identified were on water trails.

The Strategy also cited the Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership and its important role in coordinating the designation of water trails in the Commonwealth. One of the action steps in the Strategy is continuing the implementation of the Statement of Purpose for the Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership by DCNR, PFBC, NPS CBGN, and PEC.

Americas Great Outdoors Initiative

The Americas Great Outdoors Report released in February, 2011 called for empowering communities to connect with America's great outdoors through their rivers and other waterways. It noted that Americans are working together to establish recreational opportunities on their rivers and other waterways and to access their local aquatic resources and adjacent green spaces. There is federal interest in helping to empower local communities to restore and connect with their rich water-based natural resources. The report recommended establishing a National Recreational Blueway Trails Initiative to increase access to recreation. It is anticipated that the National Blueway Trails initiative will be announced in fall 2012.

The AGO report also supported restoration and conservation of rivers, bays, coasts, lakes, and estuaries for recreation, healthy fisheries, and wildlife habitat. It stated that the federal government should integrate federal water resources projects with locally driven watershed protection efforts and expand support for community-based restoration and conservation of water resources. These locally supported restoration projects may result in enhanced fish passage, habitat restoration and connectivity, water-based recreation, flood control, traditional uses, and adjacent land-based recreation. The report recommended enhancing and restoring local waterways and the surrounding land by partnering with state, local, and tribal government, and the private sector to support community efforts.

Chesapeake Bay Executive Order

In May 2009, President Obama signed Executive Order 13508, which tasked a team of federal agencies to draft a way forward for protection and restoration of the Chesapeake watershed. This team—the Federal Leadership Committee for the Chesapeake Bay—developed the *Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*, which was released in May 2010. Following the structure of the EO Strategy, the Action Plan is organized into four goal areas (“restore water quality,” “recover habitat,” “sustain fish and wildlife,” and “conserve land and increase public access”) and four supporting strategy sections (“expand citizen stewardship,” “develop environmental markets,” “respond to climate change,” and “strengthen science”).

In fall 2010, federal, state, local, nongovernmental, and community partners will begin crafting a regional public access plan to inform and guide expansion of Chesapeake watershed public access sites. Due for completion by 2012, the plan will help focus access funding efforts. NPS has made development of public access the priority in its CBGN matching grants. This program is already supporting projects along the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania (along with the James, Nanticoke, Rappahannock, and York rivers in the other Bay states) that will increase public access sites within the

Chesapeake Bay watershed. Funding for CBGN grants was deleted from the FY11 budget, but the President's budget for FY12 again proposes \$2 million for CBGN. Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley has specified CBGN funding as a top state priority. Reauthorization of CBGN is also pending. Congressman John Sarbanes (D-MD) has introduced "The Chesapeake Gateways and Water trails Network Continuing Authority Act of 2011" proposing permanent authorization.

Suggested Action Items

While all the stars seemed to have aligned from a policy perspective to continue the advancement of water trails, funding has become more difficult for grant making and technical assistance. We need to renew our efforts to voice support for the authorization and appropriation of both state and federal programs that support water trails. We need to remind state partners of the federal goals established in the Chesapeake Bay Executive Order and America's Great Outdoors initiatives.

The emphasis on improving recreational access to waterways at both the state and federal levels creates an opportunity to cultivate new partnerships. Community foundations, non-profit organizations, and corporate partners should all be evaluated as potential sources for funding support and technical assistance. Managing organizations need technical assistance in developing a relationship with these potential partners.

Suggested action items to maximize the federal and state policy emphasis on recreation and waterways include the following:

1. Pennsylvania is represented on the Chesapeake Bay Executive Order Access Committee and should continue to play an active role in that planning process so federal and state priorities for public access and water trail development are aligned.
2. A meeting of the new senior executives of the agencies represented in the Partnership should be briefed on the federal planning process and other related initiatives to insure state priorities can be aligned.
3. Foundations and local governments should be educated on this new emphasis and encouraged to participate in the planning and implementation processes.
 - a. An assessment of foundation interests should be completed for agencies and local water trail managing organizations to increase understanding of funding priorities and identify best matches.
 - b. Grant writing and fund raising assistance resources should be researched that could be utilized by local water trail managing organizations. The Partnership should consider sponsoring a workshop on this topic using organizations like Conservation Leadership to conduct the training.
 - c. A template "ask" presentation should be developed for local water managing organizations to use when approaching potential partners and funders.
4. Using the PA Water Trails report as its basis, a case statement for funding water trails and access improvements should be developed by the members of the PA Water Trail Partnership that could be used by local groups.
 - a. As part of the case statement development process, undertake a funding needs survey directed to local water trails managers and research water trail costs in other states.
 - b. Identify economic and social benefits of water trails. Obtain passage of the legislation to fund an economic benefits study, or actively pursue other funding options.
 - c. Identify the negative results of water trails not having a local water trail managing organization. Answer the question so what?
 - d. Identify why local water trail managing organizations are dropping out.

5. As part of the SCORP process, a Trails Committee has been developed to help implement the trail-related recommendations in the plan. Water Trail Partners, as members of the Committee, should emphasize the increasing role and importance of water trails within this group, and incorporate water trail needs as they discuss funding issues and strategies.
6. The Chesapeake Bay Executive Order FY11 Action Plan outlines the actions to “convene a meeting of state and federal fund managers to coordinate public access funding” in 2011. This meeting, yet to be scheduled, would be an opportunity to discuss water trail funding.

Outstanding Questions

1. What’s the best way to educate foundations and local governments?
 - a. And if we get our foot in the door, do we know what to ask for? What is the wish list?
 - b. How do we best articulate the spectrum of need (from system down to local level)?
2. Do we want to ask for a specific funding commitment or specific items to be funded from the state agencies to insure we can take advantage of the federal and state priorities?