

October 31, 2022

PA Water Trail Program Water Trail Extension Process

The Executive Partner Committee of the Pennsylvania Water Trail Program recognizes that current and future projects to add, improve, and enhance waterway access for recreational boating will likely lead to opportunities to expand the length of existing designated Water Trails- a goal we all share!

The Committee also recognizes the need for a consistent, fair, and feasible process for the proposal and approval of designated water trail extensions. This memo will serve to present the general criteria, policies, and process that will be used to approve Water Trail Designation Extension requests.

Extension Criteria:

The organizations and agencies on the Committee play various roles in waterway management and regulation and have established criteria for water trail extension requests. Since situations will vary, individual requests will be reviewed carefully based on the criteria and manager's responses to the elements detailed below. An extension request should include and address the following:

1. The new "end point" should be a public access point that:
 - is owned by local, state, or federal government or a nonprofit organization whose mission encompasses providing public access or that are subject to an easement or long-term lease, license, or permit whose terms provide for public access;
 - includes permissible parking in close proximity; and
 - has at least one access, wayfinding, or safety sign, marker, or symbol.
2. Consider and address the relevant Pennsylvania [Water Trail Designation Criteria](#) (page 1) and provide responses to any criteria that do not apply.
 - a. Extension requests that include distances of more than 5 river miles between access points must demonstrate that paddlers have adequate opportunities to stop, rest, and safely exit the trail, if necessary, between access points.
 - b. If it is anticipated that the extension would also serve motorized boats, this information must be part of the request.
3. Propose a timeline for developing and making available a new water trail map including the extension and relevant safety and access information. A description of how the manager plans to inform the public about the extension and related information until a new map is available should also be provided.
4. Confirm that the Water Trail Manager will be capable of advancing the existing eight [water trail principles](#) on the extended portion of the trail.
5. Address when and how the manager intends to notify emergency service providers and organizations about the trail extension, new access(es), any other information relevant to emergency response on the extended portion of the trail.

Extension Process:

A request to consider extension designation can be made at any time if the water trail manager feels that a designation would benefit the water trail, support a funding request, or for other reasons. Requests must be made in writing and sent to the PA Water Trail Coordinator at PEC. The Executive Partner Committee will review requests within one month of submission and respond with an approval

or a request for additional information. The Committee may grant tentative approval conditioned upon completion of follow up actions and submission of an updated written request. Contact the Coordinator at PEC if there are extenuating circumstance regarding your request and/or your timeline. Managers are encouraged to contact the Coordinator to discuss the request at any time.

Upon approval of an extension request The PA Water Trail Program will promote the extended PA Water Trail through updated online mapping (*provided by the water trail manager*), promotion to fellow managers in the water trail network, a press release, and other outreach media as appropriate.