



# River Voices

## *The History of the Water Trail Systems*

### What is a Water Trail?

by Dave Getchell



What do you mean, a water trail?

There are 369 water definitions, from “water” to “water yam,” in my *Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary*, and only one—“waterway”—bears any relation to “water trail.” So it’s a made-up description, just as are thousands of other words in today’s maritime lexicon.

Right up until recently, waterway was the proper word to describe a route over water. Native Americans, voyageurs and Lewis-and-Clark types, in general traveled by water because land trails were few or non-existent, but they didn’t call them water trails. Let’s see if we can trace the name to its modern meaning.

Since World War II, a number of recreational waterways have been developed, many along ancient inland routes, such as Maine’s Allagash Wilderness Waterway and Minnesota’s Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, to name just two of the best known. In 1987, the Maine Island Trail, a 325-mile-long waterway winding along the state’s island studded coast, was established. It differed from all others, however, in that a private membership organization—the Maine Island Trail Association (MITA)—was created to operate it for its parent organization, the nonprofit Island Institute. Although the State of Maine was closely involved in the creation of the Maine Island Trail, care for the state’s wild islands in the trail became the responsibility of the users and not a government authority.



At the heart of the trail system were some two dozen state-owned wild islands for which MITA assumed care. Within a few months, three privately owned islands were added to the trail and were open only to members of the association, a powerful incentive for boaters to join MITA. The organization grew rapidly, and in the early ‘90s, spun off from the Island Institute to become an independent nonprofit. By 2005, it served 3,500 members and listed 156 sites on islands and the mainland.

MITA’s unusual approach emphasizing personal stewardship and responsible use of the resource prompted others to follow suit, and water trail organizations were soon established in Seattle (Washington Water Trails Association) and on New York’s Hudson River (Hudson River Watertrail Association). Notice that “water trail,” either as one or two words, was already in use. As near as this writer can determine, the word(s) seemed to cover the waterfront, so to speak, and had a natural, unremarkable and unknown birth.

What was important, one can see in hindsight, was the development of water trails specifically for (a) recreational use, that (b) emphasize stewardship and (c) are cared for by the users, the latter frequently members of a private organization set up for this task alone. Time, location and different circumstances saw this simple definition further broken down as water trails were created on salt water, lakes and rivers, and even over land/water routes such as the impressive 700-mile-long Northern Forest Canoe Trail. Some were started by private groups, others by state or regional government entities, but most by an amalgam of partnerships of



# River Network

*Connecting People, Saving Rivers*

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### NATIONAL OFFICE

520 SW Sixth Avenue, Suite 1130 • Portland, OR 97204-1511  
503/241-3506 • fax: 503/241-9256  
info@rivernetwork.org • www.rivernetwork.org

### D.C. OFFICE

3814 Albemarle Street NW • Washington, D.C. 20016  
202/364-2550 • fax: 202/364-2520  
DC@rivernetwork.org

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## From The President



What's in a name? In the case of the term “water trail,” a lot.

About twenty years ago I became involved in an effort to protect my hometown river. One of our goals was to conserve the forested river corridor. Another was to establish hiking and biking trails through the corridor to promote recreation, education and greater support for conservation.

But there was a problem: if heavily-used hiking and biking trails were established through the entire steep-sloped corridor, they could easily be abused or overwhelmed, and the river could easily be “loved to death.” I called a Park Service planner whose advice I valued. After hearing me explain our concern, he said that I should think of the river *itself* as a trail.

I must admit that even though I was an avid boater, this was a new concept to me. But it made good sense. The idea stuck with our group, and we changed the focus of our emerging plan accordingly.

In the years since, the term “water trail” has gained much currency. Today, there are extensive water trails being developed and protected from coast to coast. In many cases, they are a critical piece of an overall plan for watershed education, recreation, protection and management.

This issue of *River Voices* features some of the best thinking of leaders in this emerging field, as well as, some inspirational case studies. I hope you find it useful.

*Don Elder*



credit: © River Network Collection

## What is a Water Trail?, cont.

cont. from page 1

one sort or another. Among many other places, water trails now run through Washington, DC, and Chicago; along the beautiful Columbia River; in the headwaters of the Mississippi; over the black water rivers of South Carolina; on the Great Lakes; and on many of Canada's mighty rivers.

This burst of development had its start in 1993 when the National Park Service's Rivers and Trails section, working with Washington Water Trails, the Hudson River Watertrail Association and MITA, sponsored the first water trail conference at Mills-Norrie State Park on the Hudson. Interested parties from across the continent attended, and from it came an informal organization called the North American Water Trails Conference set up to continue the enthusiasm generated by the gathering. This

credit: RTCA



Paddlers enjoying an afternoon on water trails.



credit: RTCA

group eventually gained nonprofit status as North American Water Trails, Inc., and since then has sponsored conferences at Shepherdstown, WV; San Destin, FL and South Portland, ME.

Because each water trail is unique due to the conditions at hand, both political and physical, as noted above, the definition has become fuzzy, to say the least. Some have been established by state agencies, usually a department of natural resources; others by national agencies such as in Canada; and a

few by private groups (NGO's or non-governmental organizations in today's parlance) such as land trusts, clubs or MITA-like groups. Self policing and stewardship may or may not be expected, although one likes to think simply being there inspires a

modicum of care for the environment. One thing is certain, and that is on a continent gifted with all kinds of water resources, there is a need and untold opportunities for new water trails.

Let me inject here something that's easily overlooked by enthusiasts thinking about creating a water trail. Many believe such trails are primarily for kayaks, canoes and other human powered craft. Sometimes limiting the type of craft may make sense, but consider the ramifications. Restricting types reduces numbers so there may not be enough users to support the trail. Limiting may also polarize paddlers verses the rest of



the boating world, bringing on that nasty word “elitism.” Originally, many thought the Maine Island Trail was for kayakers only (unfortunately, some still do), but it was laid out by two guys in their outboard motorboats and lists among its membership yachtsmen, power boaters and even a couple of jetskiers. What is more important than boat types is the positive attitudes of their owners, and in MITA’s case, at least, that has been a rousing success.

So how does one go about starting a water trail? Before anything is done, a perceived need, a suitable water resource, and one or more persons with a bit of vision and preferably with fire in their bellies to see the project carried through, are required. From there it may be simple—but don’t count on it. Any trail needs a beginning and an end and, depending on its length, may need stopping off points in between. This will probably mean dealing with government agencies and private landowners; and if you think this is always easy, you’re smoking a pipe of high-test dream-weed. Persistence, diplomacy, patience and a large dollop of luck are givens. The Rivers & Trails section of the National Park Service, mentioned above, is a good source of information.

There is no need to be put off by these words of caution, which are offered only to alert you to possible bumps in your trail.



credit: RTCA

Dedication Ceremony  
on the Northern  
Forest Canoe Trail

We’ve seen projects come and go, and some with great promise that were never started. Today, changes in the recreational scene are coming at a baffling rate with restrictions on what you can do and where you can go seemingly in the forefront. Fortunately, water trails can help counter these chilling effects, a major argument for their creation—to say nothing of the tremendous pleasure they can offer.

Information in considerable detail on the how-to aspects of starting a water trail can be found at [americaswatertrails.org](http://americaswatertrails.org). It’s worth a look.

*Dave Getchell, Sr., was co-founder of the Maine Island Trail and North American Water Trails, Inc. He is presently Trails Advisor of the Georges River Land Trust, helping that organization develop a 60-mile-long hiking trail, the Georges Highland Path, through the river’s watershed.*



# Water Trails in Northern America

## Guiding Principles

by National Park  
Service's River Trails  
and Conservation  
Assistance Program  
&  
North American  
Water Trails  
[www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)



### The Vision

Water trails are rocky seacoasts, a wooded river-bend, sandy shorelines, a quiet marsh and a busy harbor. They are recreational waterways between specific locations containing access points and day use sites. They are launch ramps and overnight campsites. They are boats and paddles and cameras and field guides. Water trails are blue ribbons following the wayside sights and sounds of people and nature throughout the continent, with diverse users enjoying this network of liquid pathways from sea to shining sea and from tropic gulf to icy fjord.

But water trails are more than a geographical phenomenon; they are alive. They are animated by the pursuits of their builders and their users. Water trails connect people with places and simultaneously enrich and protect both. By identifying and interpreting places, both natural and constructed, the water trail brings the user into contact with the whole ecology of the corridor. The interpretation and preservation of our cultural heritage is no less important than the protection and conservation of the earth, the sky and the plants and animals with which they are intertwined. In the process, the user learns and grows physically, mentally and emotionally, while the community grows in spirit, in economic health and in vitality.

Water trails are individualistic. Each water trail exists in a unique natural setting, is inhabited by unique wildlife and serves a unique human population. Thus, a carefully wrought set of local purposes greatly enlarges the contributions that a water trail makes to its indigenous human and natural surroundings.

Water trails don't just happen. Most trails reflect the work of a committed trail coalition. To realize the potential beauty and liveliness of each water trail requires the

active intervention of trail builder, trail manager and trail user from the beginning and their continuing vigilance throughout the life cycle of the trail.

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. Use them wisely to steer your course, to inspire your local purposes and to gauge your progress. Guided by these "Principles," every water trail will manifest a spirit—an expression of values that capture the essence of community, of exploration and of growing and of caring that is so characteristic of North America and its people.

## WATER TRAIL PRINCIPLES

### 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 a successful water trail with broad-based and long-term support.

### 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 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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **WELLNESS AND WELL-BEING**

### *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 in health promote the wellness and well-being of all water trail users.



## Do It Right from the Start

# Traits of Successful Water Trails

by National Park  
Service's River Trails  
and Conservation  
Assistance Program



North American  
Water Trails

[www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)



Creating a water trail takes time, energy and various other resources. Fortunately, those interested in water trails can learn from the experience and expertise of others who have been involved in the creation of existing water trails.

It probably goes without saying that the establishment of a water trail will most likely require a collaborative effort, and that the process is usually enhanced if and when a specific partnership or organization is designated as the leader. Below is a list of other characteristics common among some of our country's most successful water trails.

## PHYSICAL SUPPORT

### Facilities and Infrastructure

- Safe and legal launch and landing sites and facilities (general guidelines: every 5-8 miles for long-distance, wilderness paddling/camping trails; every 1-2 miles for urban, day-use trails).
- Safe and ample trailhead parking (at launch sites).
- Places to rent boats and equipment and learn about safety
- Lock-up facilities for boats and equipment at community access points
- Facilities for storing small, non-motorized boats along the trail
- Places to stay overnight (camp sites, hotels, B&Bs)
- Places to visit and explore along the trail (such as interpretive sites, museums, restaurants, retail stores, hiking trails, parks and picnic areas, bird and wildlife viewing spots).

## ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

### Possible ROLES to Coordinate and Manage a Water Trail:

- Serve as a clearing house.
- Provide a regional voice.

- Serve as a liaison with stakeholders, neighbors, officials, landowners, and public (communities, park boards, tourism offices, outfitters, recreation groups, politicians, etc.)
- Develop and implement an action plan.
- To pool resources and set priorities.



### Possible TASKS to Coordinate and Manage a Water Trail

- Agree on an action plan (with vision, goals, recommended actions, and a time frame).
- Develop a master plan for the Water Trail (inventory of existing resources, recommendations for future).
- Produce and distribute maps of the Water Trail.





● Advocate safety along the trail:

- ▮ Establish a regional system of signs marking launch, landing and camp sites.
- ▮ Promote boating regulations.
- ▮ Develop a trail etiquette (code of ethics).
- ▮ Provide emergency contact information.

● Promote education and stewardship along the trail.

- ▮ Work to instill an environmental awareness of the river corridor, such as:
  - ◆ Endangered Species Act messages;
  - ◆ water quality, wildlife habitat and other resource protection messages; and
  - ◆ respect for private property rights.
- ▮ Provide trail orientation and wayfaring information.



- ▮ Promote and coordinate stewardship activities, such as:
  - ◆ resource monitoring and inventorying,
  - ◆ habitat restoration work,
  - ◆ remove invasive species,
  - ◆ clean-up events, and
  - ◆ adopt-a-trail for sections and/or reaches of the river.
- ▮ Provide interpretation of sites and resources along the trail.
- Coordinate volunteers and service programs (*for stewardship, education, marketing, etc.*), including:
  - ▮ community and school efforts,
  - ▮ Earth Share, and
  - ▮ Student Conservation Service.
- Organize promotion and publicity.

- ▮ Establish a regional identity (logo) for the trail.
- ▮ Produce a trail overview and regional map showing trail sections or reaches based on geography, jurisdictions, landscape character, etc.
- ▮ Assemble a media/press kit (flyer, photos, human interest stories, etc.).
- ▮ Put out a newsletter or Monthly Calendar of Events.
  - ▮ Sponsor trail dedication events.
  - ▮ Sponsor on-going trail events.
  - ▮ Encourage and support local and regional history and stories (*Native Americans, Pioneers, Early Explorers, Settlers, Transportation/Shipping, Fishing/Processing, Timber, Community Treasures, etc.*).



## Visioning Success

### What is a Water Trail Plan?

by *Jordan Sector*

*Landscape Designer/Planner  
Alta Planning & Design  
Portland, Oregon*



Throughout history, water trails have been an important way to move people and goods along waterways. Today a revival of water trails is being driven by increasing demand for water based recreational and educational opportunities.

Planning a water trail requires maintaining a careful balance between protecting the resource and responding to the needs of landowners and trail users. Most importantly, water trail planning requires a coordinated vision between the community, affected jurisdictions and agency representatives.

A water trail plan should include two primary planning efforts: a long term vision as well as short, medium and long term action items. The components of a **vision plan** should:

- ◆ work to communicate why the trail is important,
- ◆ define a trail identity and theme,
- ◆ identify stakeholders and community leaders,,
- ◆ identify site opportunities and constraints,
- ◆ include an inventory of trail features and facilities,



- ◆ develop a framework for maintenance and natural resource protection, and
- ◆ provide recommendations to be explored in greater depth in the action plan process.

Moreover, water trail vision plans can be adopted by local jurisdictions and integrated into their comprehensive plans and capital improvement programs.

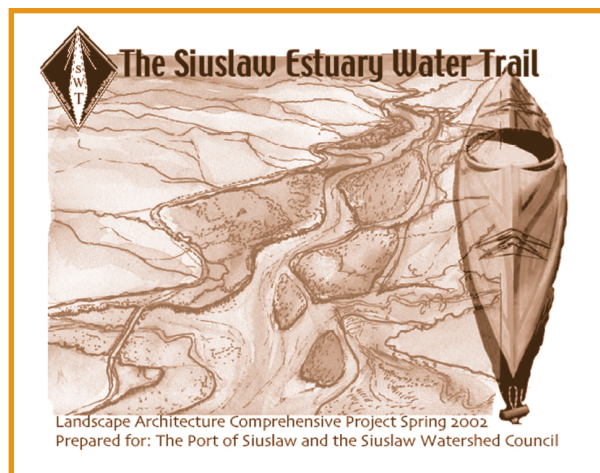
The action plan helps provide a framework for prioritizing enhancement opportunities and linking them to funding sources.

Most importantly, the **action plan**:

- ◆ addresses the feasibility of individual projects,
- ◆ describes proposed site improvements such as, retrofit of docks for non-motorized watercraft and adjustment of path systems to support universal access and easy entry to the waterway,
- ◆ sets a schedule for implementation, and
- ◆ provides related connections to local, state and regional planning efforts.

Most plans start from grassroots advocacy efforts. For example, Oregon's Siuslaw Estuary water trail started as a grassroots effort to improve opportunities for water quality and estuary monitoring. The creation of a water trail plan helped to sustain the vision and showcase the potential benefits of the trail beyond the initial intention of the planning group. Such groups provide foundation, energy and vision that are needed to see the planning effort through to implementation.

Coordination and writing of water trail plans need a specific set of planning and design expertise. The importance of enlisting planning and design expertise is to





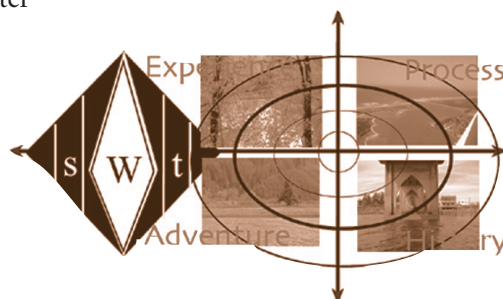
A clear informative map should be an integral piece of any water trail project.

craft a product that can show a vision and to make connections to other local, regional or state wide planning efforts. Currently, the City of Wilsonville staff and consultants, a suburb south of Portland Oregon, are working to developing water trail concepts as part of a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan for the city's portion of the Willamette River. This plan also makes reference and shows connections to the Willamette River Water Trail Plan being developed by the Willamette Riverkeepers of Portland, Oregon.

The water trail plan connects water and land based trail systems, ultimately forming a network of transportation, recreation and resource conservation opportunities. A water trail plan should become part of a

jurisdiction's non-motorized transportation plan, an element of a parks and greenways plan and part of a natural resource plan. By providing these connections, the water trail becomes a

value-added recreation and natural resource experience that will be rooted in the community for years to come.





## Building the Partnerships to Design, Fund and Create Your Trail

### You're Never Paddling Alone...

by Corita Jones

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Service's River Trails  
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addling down a quiet stretch of river, Charlotte *thinks* she's alone. Her boat (*rented at the local kayak shop*) barely stirs the calm water (*protected upstream and down by the watershed association*); her gaze eagerly soaks up the peaceful view (*conserved by an area land trust*) when she spies a sign marking her camping site (*sign - water trail organization; site - Department of Natural Resources maintained*). It turns out she isn't really alone! Successful water trails engage multiple, diverse partners to help create new stewards, stimulate economies, provide recreational access and connect communities all around one purpose—establishing a successful water route where they can paddle, float or boat with good access and even overnight locations.

blueways, range from multi-use trails on the Great Lakes to rivers meandering through Western natural areas to Northeastern urban paddling opportunities, but they all have a strong partnership as a feature.

#### Building Partnerships

Solid partnerships are the key to successful water trails. Traditional partners on water trail projects include local paddling clubs and paddlers, watershed associations and local government agencies. Thinking outside the boundaries, literally and figuratively, helps a water trail thrive. By bringing in new partners, like local economic development and land conservation organizations, chambers of commerce, local university students or businesses (retailers, vendors and outfitters), a group gains a novel outlook for their water trail visions. Each partner has a unique perspective: nonprofit groups offer flexibility and volunteer power; local and state governments provide financial and legal stability; landowners contribute access points; and businesses supply community resources.

#### Finding Funding

Successful water trails embody an impressive combination of values that serve users, local communities and the ecosystem. This broad appeal helps water trails secure a variety of funding sources as they are seen as win/win propositions by all. Water trail goals include creating public access, providing recreational boating opportunities, promoting minimum-impact practices, offering natural, historical and cultural education, enhancing community economic vitality and connecting people with each other and natural resources.

Sometimes unlikely partners and funders turn up in the most unexpected places; like Charlotte, we all must open our eyes to the possibilities water trails provide!

#### Potential Funding Sources:

- ◆ Federal Recreation Trails Program
- ◆ Land Trusts
- ◆ Coastal Zone Management Program
- ◆ State Government Grants
- ◆ Hydropower Companies
- ◆ Private Foundations
- ◆ Community Foundations
- ◆ Homeowner Associations
- ◆ Chambers of Commerce
- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Tourism Districts
- ◆ Resorts, Outfitters
- ◆ Landowners
- ◆ National Outdoor Recreation Organizations
- ◆ State Historical Society
- ◆ Native American Tribes
- ◆ Watershed Councils
- ◆ University Sea Grant
- ◆ Underwriters; members
- ◆ Local Businesses
- ◆ Transportation Enhancements

The community assistance arm of the National Park Service, the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program provides technical assistance to help communities realize their conservation and outdoor recreation goals. We have been working for the last 13 years helping build partnerships to design, create and find funding for water trails in every region of the country. These water trails, or





## PADDLE MANATEE

By Jaime Doubek-Racine, NPS RTCA

Manatee County and the National Park Service RTCA Program worked together in a collaborative partnership to create a series of over 75 miles of paddling trails through wondrous area waterways.

### Impetus

The paddling trails offer opportunities for paddling and nature appreciation, education about the coastal/riverine environment, GPS information and a paddling guidebook, *Paddle Manatee*. The guide, along with designated routes, helps direct paddlers through mangrove and open water terrain.

### Partners and Financial Assistance

From 2000-2002, RTCA worked with Manatee County to develop a master plan for a county-wide system of trails, greenways and blueways; additional planning, grant writing and technical assistance were also made available. The Florida Coastal Management Program provided \$25,000 for *Paddle Manatee* and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission assisted in the permit review and approval process, allowing for the installation of the mile markers.

Interagency cooperation and community involvement made the trail a success. Volunteers on a citizen's advisory committee worked with Manatee County and RTCA to map routes, assist with planning, and coordinate public workshops and the dedication ceremony. In 2005, RTCA and Manatee County collaborated to create a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Paddle Manatee*.

## THE MILWAUKEE URBAN WATER TRAIL

By Angie Tornes, NPS RTCA

Not just comprised of concrete and steel, the water trail is a route through urban Milwaukee and neighboring communities enshrouded by lush vegetation along 25-miles on the Milwaukee, Menomonee and Kinnickinnic Rivers.

### Impetus

The Milwaukee Urban Water Trail was created in response to a gap between increased interest in river recreation and limited information on safe and legal access to Milwaukee's rivers. Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers recognized this need and saw this project as an opportunity to also educate paddlers about the river's history and encourage its stewardship.

### Partners and Financial Assistance

RTCA provided technical assistance in developing a work plan, a broad partnership, a map and a brochure; providing gap analysis reports; and finding funding. Partners include Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers (lead), Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, PDI Site Engineering, the Badger State Boating Society and individual boaters. Financial assistance was provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, Wisconsin Energy Foundation, Bert L. and Patricia S. Steigleder Charitable Trust, Milwaukee River Revitalization Council, American Canoe Association, L.L. Bean, Inc., Badger State Boating Society, the Milwaukee River Riverwalk District and members of Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers.



## Getting Access on Private Lands ~ Working with Landowners

### Private Land Access

by *Dave Mention*

*Maine Island  
Trail Access*

*info@mita.org*



The Maine Island Trail Association (MITA) doesn't own any property. Since 1987, it has relied on permission from public and private landowners for access to the 156 islands and mainland sites that comprise the Trail. Fortunately, getting that permission has not been an obstacle for us. MITA has managed to establish enduring annual "handshake relationships" with island owners, which allow member access while providing stewardship to the islands.

In Maine, private property extends to the low water mark. The recreational boater has no legal right to come ashore unless he/she has permission. Some landowners don't mind respectful visitors coming ashore, as long as they follow the guidelines of the owner.

Private land comes in two flavors: individual land owners, such as families, and organizational owners, such as land conservation organizations. Our approach has been the same in both cases.

Often we discover an interesting piece of property because the owner shares our values and contacts us. In the event that we want to talk about a property and we haven't been contacted, we identify the owner from town tax maps. We research any common connections. The Trail Director then calls the property owner and makes an appointment. Generally, coastal land owners have heard about the Maine Island Trail Association. We talk about how

our members follow Leave No Trace guidelines, how the owner can remove the site from the trail at any time, how we will find adopters and schedule cleanup visits to the property. We offer references from other private land owners. We give examples of stewardship visits we have made to other nearby islands, and we make estimates of what the MITA traffic is likely to be, based on similar islands. Sometimes we have to overcome misperceptions about MITA, and we are not always successful. But often the owners realize that MITA and its members share a love of the islands and the inclusion of their property on the Trail provides more care and stewardship than they can provide alone.



Creosote Inventory on Blake Island, Washington

In 1991, we had 65 sites: 37 public and 29 private; in 2006 we have 156 sites: 67 public and 89 private. Thirty-three are mainland sites and the remaining 123 sites are islands. Members are expected to follow Leave No Trace guidelines, and the overwhelming majority

complies, including carrying off human waste. When a site is included on the Trail, there is often just a recommendation of where to pitch a tent. So our maintenance is limited to cleanup visits (usually sea-borne flotsam, only rarely camper waste), visitor education and monitoring for excessive use.

Risk management insurance is not an issue, as Maine state law provides that landowners are not liable for accidents that occur on

private land, if no money has changed hands. This is a benefit of living in a state that has an extensive history of hunting and permissive trespass for hunting on private lands.

Landowners rarely take property off the trail. When they do, most often it is because they are selling the land, or they wish to build on the property. Occasionally, we take properties off because of nesting birds.

With each passing year, more and more Maine land is being purchased by conservation organizations. MITA can provide them with an expanded set of caretakers for their property. We see our collaboration with private and organizational land owners as being a win-win collaboration for all parties.

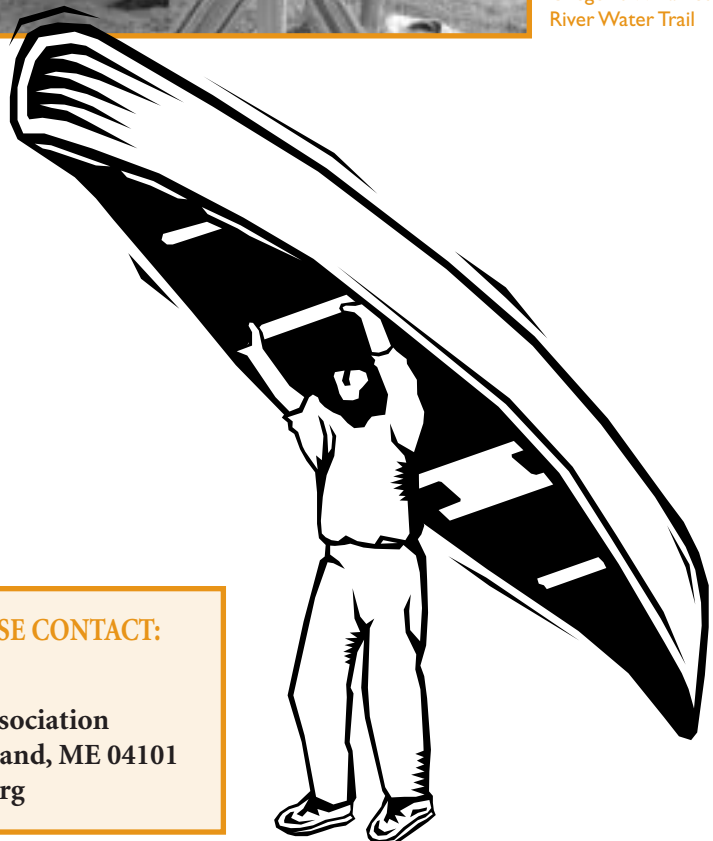


**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

**DAVID MENTION**  
Trail Director, Maine Island Trail Association  
58 Fore Street Building 30, 3rd floor, Portland, ME 04101  
207/761-8225 ~ [trail@mita.org](mailto:trail@mita.org)



Opening day of  
Oregon's Willamette  
River Water Trail



## Northern Forest Canoe Trail

### Interpretive Signs and Maps

by *Kate Williams*

Northern Forest  
Canoe Trail  
Executive Director

[www.northernforestcanoetrail.org](http://www.northernforestcanoetrail.org)



Water trails are a unique bird in the flock of recreational trails. The actual trail part of water trails is, well, *there*, and typically has been for a long time. In fact, the rivers, streams and lakes that are the basic elements of water trails have, in many cases, created the topography through which they pass. No sweaty trail-building effort needed here, just millennia of melt and erosion and geological morphology.

So what transforms these fundamental waterways into *water trails*? At the Northern Forest Canoe Trail (NFCT), it is our belief that it all comes down to a good story, translated onto the ground through signs and maps. The Northern Forest Canoe Trail is a 740-mile water trail traversing New York, Vermont, Québec, New Hampshire and Maine. The Trail connects 22 rivers and streams, and 56 lakes and ponds, as it traces traditional watershed travel routes used by Native Americans and subsequent European trappers and settlers in the region. The story—still being told—is a fascinating one, which follows the movement of people in boats on the water for purposes of exploration, trade, hunting, fishing, visiting, occasionally pursuing or escaping conflict

and, increasingly, seeking solace and recreation.

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail has created a series of 13 interpretive maps and an extensive set of signs and kiosks that identify the framework of this story on our waterway route.

#### NFCT Maps

The NFCT route is divided into 13 sections, each of which is hosted by a local organization. From the outset, NFCT staff have worked closely with these host organizations to develop a strong base of local volunteers who are the on-the-ground drafters of the maps. These volunteers—paddlers, local historians, field scientists, retired schoolteachers and all committed residents of communities along the Trail—provide the raw material for the maps. They describe the best portage around the old dam; they hunt down photos of the rare St. John Tansy; they tell us the old logging stories whose evidence is still apparent on river banks. In this way, the story of the route is brought into our maps, with NFCT serving as the collator of the overall tale.

NFCT maps contain both detailed route information on a water- and tear-resistant, fold-out format, and interpretive information about the geology, flora and fauna, as well as, a mix of the stories and lore that characterize each section. The sections range from 40 to 75 miles, enabling us to include considerable detail, while also providing interested paddlers with a manageable chunk of information to work with.

The sectional design also underscores in a tangible way NFCT's desire that the Trail be understood as an interconnected set of stand-

Rangeley Kiosk on  
the Northern  
Forest Canoe Trail



credit: RTCA



alone experiences. Each waterway, even within sections, is described in a downstream direction, and contact information for local chambers of commerce is provided on each map to facilitate access to lodging, guiding and other services for each section. And, while NFCT certainly supports and applauds interested through-paddlers—those hardy paddlers who wish to pursue the entire trail as an expedition—our maps reflect our recognition that for most of us, a pleasant afternoon, weekend or maybe a week with family or friends is the story we most want to hear.

### NFCT Signs

In support of our maps, NFCT posts well-placed, minimal signage on the route to indicate access points, portage trails and campsites. Where possible, we coordinate with existing signage, and place our signature medallions on signs put up by partners, with whom we have made arrangements. Our goal with this level of signage is to provide “confidence markers” for paddlers, letting them know they are on the route, and enabling them to better identify where they are in relation to features identified on the maps: “Oh, there’s a campsite marker—that must be the one just before the bridge where we wanted to pull over for lunch.”

NFCT is also developing a series of trailhead kiosks at key locations where the Trail and local communities intersect. The kiosks include map and route information on one side, along with photos and text describing the region and the Trail. The other side includes photography and brief interpretive text about key attractions in the area. The kiosks also include “changeable document” panels, where both NFCT and local partners can place and update information relevant to the Trail and the local area. These panels typically include everything from local area

regulations, to Leave No Trace Principles, to key community events for the season.

The kiosks are developed through a process similar to that involved in drafting our maps. Local individuals help identify the stories they

want to tell and the photos that might work well to convey a broader sense of the area. The goal is to have both the process and the product represent a coming together of the Trail and the community. We address this goal directly at the completion of each kiosk by hosting local dedications and celebrations where we thank community partners and share our excitement about the partnership opportunities that lie ahead. The story continues.

### An Ongoing Story

We have learned a great deal in the last five years as we have developed a water trail from the grassroots. We welcome opportunities to share what we’ve learned, and to benefit from the experience of others.



credit: NFCT

Northern Forest  
Canoe Trail  
Medallion



### FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

#### NORTH FOREST CANOE TRAIL

802/496-2285 ~ email: [info@northernforestcanoetrail.org](mailto:info@northernforestcanoetrail.org)

*NFCT maps are printed and distributed by Mountaineers*

*Books and are available for sale on our website.*

## Management & Maintenance of Your Trail

### Protect Your Staff, Protect Your Mission

by *Reed Waite*

*Executive Director  
Washington Water  
Trails Association*

[www.wwta.org](http://www.wwta.org)



Planning and developing a water trail can be heady stuff. The excitement of gaining new partners and ribbon-cuttings cap an extended period of intense planning. It's now when the real work begins. Management and maintenance of your water trail will extend decades into the future. Are you ready?

The thought of human management or care for a river, lake or ocean seems a bit counterintuitive. These places should be natural. People want to experience wild places or primal rhythms of water, away from human influence. One has only to explore a small section of high water detritus before spotting pieces of plastic, Styrofoam and bright packaging—tell-tale signs of human impact.

Dave Castor, Manager of Washington State Parks San Juan Marine Area, a popular section of the Cascadia Marine Trail, knows there are other unwitting human effects. "Kayakers are energetic people. Unlike boaters who come to shore briefly from their moored 35-foot sail or motor boats, kayakers walk the shore, set up tents and actively explore the area. It has an impact." Protection of endangered flora and fauna are reasons to limit human activity during some

seasons, requiring education, signage and enforcement.

Riverine and marine shores display durable and fragile faces to the many forces working upon them. Rugged coastlines withstand pounding waves for thousands of years, while rivers may change course annually. Certain campsites and launching areas will require more maintenance or even the use of temporary facilities. Landowners or managing agencies may have different standards or regulations that call for more, or less, maintenance than neighboring areas.

Leave No Trace, for many, is the best first maintenance activity. It spreads routine daily maintenance to every user. Its outcome is a positive experience for the next visitor—with a site left cleaner each time it is visited. Think of your own reaction when this isn't the case: boating in to find a fire ring filled with burned bottles or area "flowered" with white toilet paper. Leave No Trace ethics demonstrate a respect for human, cultural and natural values. Education is key and should be a cornerstone of any water trail effort.

Winter storms, winds, flooding, vegetative growth and human activity can alter sites yearly. A "Site Steward" program is one way to monitor the need for maintenance. Many parks have residential managers or are visited routinely by park or agency staff that take care of maintenance. This may be once a year at some remote islands, owing to the cost of getting there and the amount of use this wilderness-type site gets. Urban sites may require weekly or daily checking and care.

As most water trails pass political boundaries, cooperation between a water trail organizing group and various land managers, safety responders, enforcement agencies and other groups with interests along the trail is a necessity. Water flows

Nez Perce Clearwater  
River Cleanup





Columbia River Island Site Survey

downhill as do management directives. Getting buy-in from the top level of your cooperators helps greatly. Water trails should be win-win. Agencies and paddle clubs change over time as well, so keep track of personnel, policies and master plans to maintain relationships.

The need for maintenance may come quickly—graffiti on an outbuilding or sign appearing overnight. Other wear takes years. Analyze and approach each situation with care: “First, do no harm.” Medical practitioners help, or at least do no harm to, those to whom they give care. Will the upgrading of a facility create more use and have downside potential? Each camp or launch site has its own unique set of issues to consider. Slope, soil type and rain are a few factors to consider in maintaining land trails. Many water trail facilities are near or in wetlands, requiring special care. Find knowledgeable resources to plan and carry out maintenance. (See Resources and References)

The need for volunteers increases every year. People volunteering require their own care and recognition. The summer is a hard time to recruit volunteers, as they are vacationing or on the water. Park managers may not be able handle help when their parks are busiest. In the coastal Pacific Northwest,

most restoration work takes place in the fall. Winter rains water naturally, making the fall an ideal time for new native plants. Spring is the time to repair damage from the stronger storms of winter, to prepare campsites for the upcoming heavier use of summer and to get a jump on invasive plants before they have a chance to grow. People are anxious to get outdoors in the spring and are willing to help improve places they may be thinking of visiting later in the year.

Good development is part of maintenance. Finding the best location and putting in facilities that match the location will lessen the amount of maintenance. It’s a fluid world, so don’t be afraid to return to your original plan and modify it in light of experience. Keeping your water trail running smoothly extends your ability to sustain, and grow, a water trail.



Top right: Blake Island Campground Maintenance.



Bottom: Planting native grasses on Blake Island.



# LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES

## PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- ▶ Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
- ▶ Prepare for extreme weather, hazards and emergencies.
- ▶ Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- ▶ Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
- ▶ Repackage food to minimize waste.
- ▶ Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

## TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

- ▶ Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- ▶ Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- ▶ Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
- ▶ In popular areas:
  - ◆ Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
  - ◆ Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
  - ◆ Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
- ▶ In pristine areas:
  - ◆ Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
  - ◆ Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.



## DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- ▶ Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter.
- ▶ Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- ▶ Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- ▶ To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water

200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

## LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- ▶ Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- ▶ Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- ▶ Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- ▶ Do not build structures, furniture or dig trenches.

## MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

- ▶ Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
- ▶ Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans or mound fires.
- ▶ Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- ▶ Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

## RESPECT WILDLIFE

- ▶ Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- ▶ Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- ▶ Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- ▶ Control pets at all times or leave them at home.
- ▶ Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young or winter.

## BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

- ▶ Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- ▶ Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- ▶ Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
- ▶ Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- ▶ Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

*Reprinted From: [www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org)*



## Making the World a Better Place to Paddle

### The ACA's Water Trails Program



As part of its Strategic Agenda for 2004-08, the American Canoe Association (ACA) has begun a program to support the development and promotion of water trails, thereby improving recreational paddling opportunities. Water trails serve the important function of providing paddlers with information on where to go, what to expect when they get there, how to be safe and where to get more information. Through its program, the ACA will:

- ▶ Assist with the development of new trails;
- ▶ Provide resources for the maintenance of existing trails;
- ▶ Connect paddlers to established trails; and
- ▶ Celebrate the successes in water trail development.

The ACA's Water Trails Program has accomplished a lot since its start in July 2005. To connect paddlers to trails, the ACA developed a database of 400+ water trails throughout North America, now available on the ACA's website. This database gives users information on the trails in their state, and tells them how to get trail maps. It will be continually expanded and refined so that paddlers everywhere will be able to access information on water trail paddling opportunities.



Second, in July 2005, the ACA designated twelve trails as ACA-Recommended Water Trails. ACA-Recommended trails satisfy five basic criteria and stand out as particular good destinations for paddlers. The five criteria are:

- ▶ The trail is a contiguous or semi-contiguous waterway or series of waterways open to recreational use by paddlers;
- ▶ The trail has public access points for paddlers;
- ▶ The trail is covered by a map, guide, signage or a website of reasonable quality and detail that is available to the public;
- ▶ Published or printed materials for the trail (e.g., guidebook, map, signs, website) that communicate low-impact ethics to trail users; and
- ▶ The trail is supported and/or managed by one or more organizations.

ACA-Recommended Water Trails earn the right to use a special ACA logo in maps, signs and other printed material related to the trail. Visit the ACA website for a listing of the ACA-Recommended Water Trails. The ACA will expand this list by designating new trails each year.

Finally, the ACA has recognized the organizations responsible for the development of the 2005 ACA-Recommended trails as Champions of Water Trails. These organizations receive assistance in promoting their trails through local media outlets, and also earn the right to display a special ACA logo recognizing their status as a Water Trails Champion. The ACA congratulates these organizations for their success in providing safe, enjoyable access to our nation's waters, and for their commitment to sound stewardship of our natural environment.

by *Paul Sanford*  
*Director of Stewardship  
and Public Policy*  
*American Canoe Society*  
[www.americancanoe.org](http://www.americancanoe.org)



## Just to be Safe

# Water Trails Risk Management

by *Leslie White*

Croydon Consulting

<http://croydonconsult.com>



Water trails provide valuable services for all paddlers—water access, opportunity for outdoor recreation, creating education opportunities, helping the local economy and enhancing the quality of life. Unfortunately, as with all aspects of life, there are both rewards and risks that can threaten the survival of the trail. Risks include the possibility of someone getting hurt while paddling or working on the trail, paddlers damaging private or public property, misunderstood contractual obligations and the challenges of fundraising, partnerships and collaborations with other entities. The good news is that water trails' risks are manageable enhancing the positive experience of water trails.

### Collaborations

Water trails' organizers partner and work with many diverse groups, such as negotiating use rights for public and private land, developing maps and trail guide, maintaining the trail and funding the operation. The main risk of collaborations is disagreement among the parties on the duties, rights, responsibilities and recourses of each party. The disagreement can lead to allegations of breach of contract, as well as, having an unexpected and uninsured loss.

Proper planning and good documentation of the agreement between the parties should be your goal. Here are some tips for negotiating your collaborative agreements.



### Program Guidelines

**Develop guidelines for evaluating or analyzing prospective partners, including:**

- ◆ Identify any unacceptable types of programs or partners.

- ◆ Identify the person(s) responsible for negotiating with potential partners.
- ◆ Determine who must approve any proposal or project.

### Project Planning

- ◆ What are your expectations? Their expectations?
- ◆ Who is responsible for overseeing each project?
- ◆ What are the start and end dates of the project or collaboration?
- ◆ When and where will the project or activities occur?
- ◆ How can the agreement be modified, terminated or extended?
- ◆ Which organization is responsible for:
  - ◆ Training participants
  - ◆ Providing any tools and/or materials
  - ◆ Supervising the activity or project (create a written supervision agreement or plan if needed)
  - ◆ Transportation (if needed)

- ◆ What kinds of records will each party need?
- ◆ How will the parties work together to enforce rules, boundaries and/or limitations?

- ◆ What are your and their emergency plans, including emergency medical care?
- ◆ Are there crisis management plans?
- ◆ How are incidents or accidents reported?



### Insurance and Releases

- ◆ Who is responsible for purchasing insurance?
- ◆ What are the insurance requirements of the respective parties?
- ◆ Are there any hold harmless and/or indemnification agreements between the parties?
- ◆ Are waivers, releases or informed consents required? Who will develop the form and maintain the records?

### Project Evaluation

- ◆ How and when will you evaluate the project or program?
- ◆ How do you define success?
- ◆ Did the project or partnership meet your expectations? Theirs?
- ◆ What would you do differently?
- ◆ How could you improve the process or project?
- ◆ Were there any significant problems, successes?
- ◆ Did the project or partnership further your organization's goals and mission?
- ◆ Should the project or partnership be continued or terminated?



These are just some of the issues your organization should consider when beginning or revising a collaboration agreement. Discussing all of the difficult issues in the beginning will avoid problems later in the project, especially if an accident or injury occurs. The collaboration does not require a contract, but a memorandum of understanding is an excellent framework for documenting everyone's expectations.



*Leslie T. White, CPCU, CIC, ARM, CRM. Founder and president of Croydon Consulting, LLC, Leslie T. White brings more than 30 years' experience within the insurance and risk management industry to the table. For the last 10 years, she has chosen to specialize in serving nonprofits as an insurance and risk management consultant. Email: [Lwhite@croydonconsult.com](mailto:Lwhite@croydonconsult.com)*

## CASE STUDY

### *The Susquehanna River Trail*

### *Adventures in Water Trail Development*

by *Brook Lenker*  
Susquehanna River  
Trail Association  
[www.susquehanna  
rivertrail.org](http://www.susquehanna<br/>rivertrail.org)



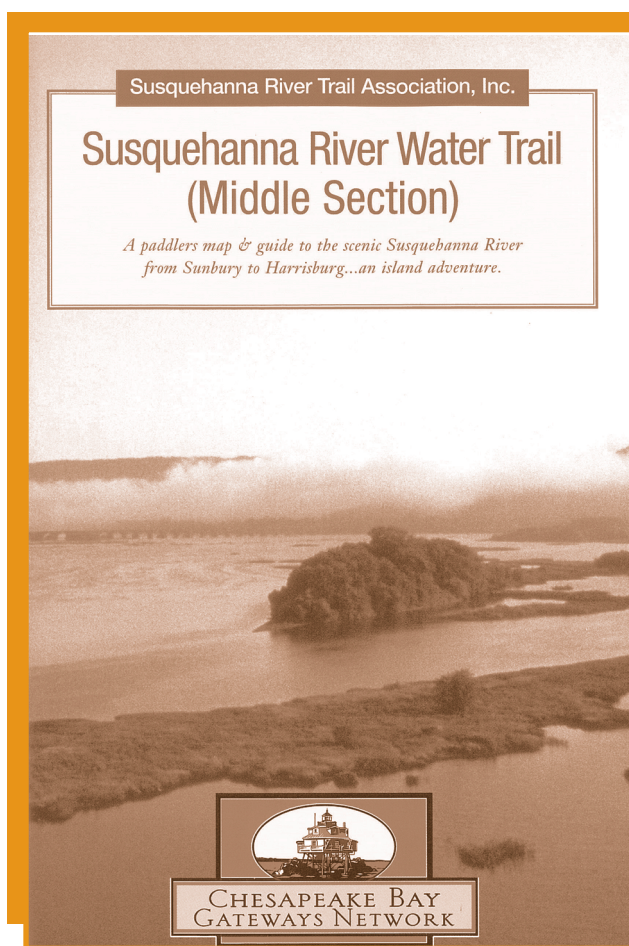
It was those damn islands. I affectionately blame them. Those lush, low-lying lands bejeweling the wide river by the hundreds tickled my imagination aided by reflections of the Maine Island Trail I had learned about a few years earlier. That 325-mile coastal water trail connects rocky islands clad in spruce. The 444-mile long Susquehanna River, mother river to the Chesapeake Bay, constructed silty islands canopied by river birch and silver maple - beckoning respites for paddlers, Huck Finn campsites eastern style.

sixteen months later, we cut the ribbon. Working for the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, I was paid to father the trail-building process with the fortification of grant funding and a family of planning team members. The 24-mile trail terminating in Harrisburg consisted of 10 islands, property of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, each with a designated camping area. Add a handy map and guide and “trailhead” signage at a few access points and the first formal water trail in Pennsylvania had been born, but the parents were ill prepared.

Caring for a water trail, especially one with campsites in need of routine maintenance, isn’t for the timid. A sound organization with clear policies, dedicated volunteers, and ample resources is required. The management question hadn’t been answered. We were heading downstream without a paddle.

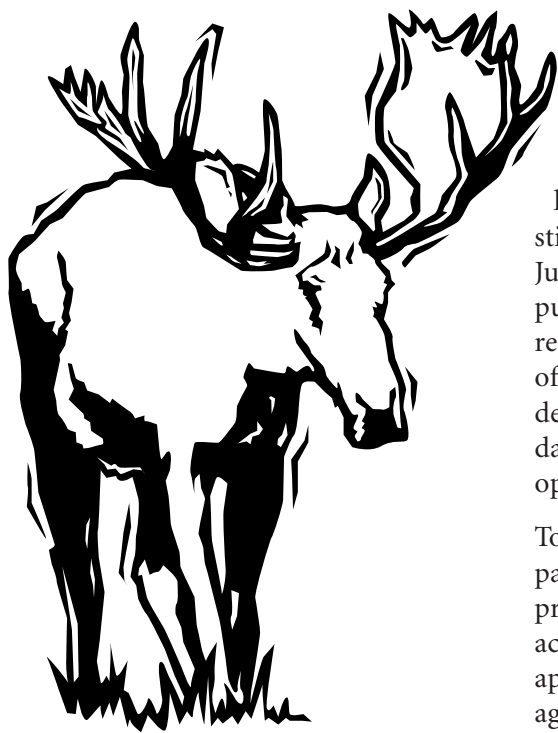
Rivers bring out an unquenchable can-do spirit in the people they touch so within months by-laws were being drafted and the groundwork laid for the Susquehanna River Trail Association (SRTA). Just as during the gestation period for the trail itself, this organization’s building period, call it the preschool years, was aided by several state and local partners—agencies, business, and nonprofits—who accelerated and leveraged our efforts. Like obstetricians, they were there for the delivery and then they became the pediatricians, helping us grow even though occasionally we questioned the advice or the prescription.

The elementary years followed, marked by a 27-mile expansion of the trail north to Sunbury. Ten new islands were added and a comprehensive new waterproof map and guide was created for the entire 51-mile corridor. The SRTA matured, quietly and unceremoniously, like bourbon in a barrel. The potential was exquisite.



The islands and the glorious river, cleaner than it had been for decades, inspired me to collaborate with other river enthusiasts to conceive a water trail. In June of 1998,





The Susquehanna River Trail tremored the imaginations of others in Pennsylvania and surrounding states starting a ripple that rose to a regional water trail wave. Today, two National Park Service programs—the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network and the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program—provide support for water trail efforts throughout the 64,000 square-mile Chesapeake Bay watershed in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, which work together to coordinate a statewide water trail program.

The Susquehanna Water Trail has grown to an interconnected system of locally managed trails covering nearly every reach of the river. While the other trails haven't yet pursued the SRTA's island campsite model, informative trail guides and signage unify the segments encouraging river exploration

for all. In 2005, the American Canoe Association recognized the collective Susquehanna Water Trail as one its nationally recommended water trails.

We revel in our accomplishments but know much work remains. The SRTA is still in school, a secondary student at NGO Junior High struggling in organizational puberty, striving to improve at member recruitment, fundraising and the efficiency of its maintenance duties. With continued dedication, time and creativity, graduation day is on the horizon. The barrel can be opened.

To others on this watery trail, I share this parting wisdom: be promiscuous and proactive in your water trail thinking; accept medicine judiciously and appreciatively; stay in school and learn aggressively; and, eventually, drink in the shared blame for the wonderful things that have happened.

*Brook Lenker is the co-founder of the Susquehanna River Trail and a past President of North American Water Trails, Inc. He lives in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania and serves as the Director of Community Relations for the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.*



# Resources & References

## ORGANIZATIONS

**America's Watertrails** is a forward-thinking communications and support project to promote and publicize the development of water trails throughout the Americas.

[www.americaswatertrails.org](http://www.americaswatertrails.org)

**American Trails** is the only national, nonprofit organization working on behalf of all trail interests—including water trails. They support local, regional and long-distance trails and greenways, whether they be in backcountry, rural or urban areas. Their goal is to support America's trails by finding common ground and promoting cooperation among all trail interests. [www.americantrails.org/resources/trailbuilding/index.html](http://www.americantrails.org/resources/trailbuilding/index.html)

The National Park Service's **Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance Program** is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. NPS RTCA staff provide technical assistance to community groups and local, state and federal government agencies, so they can conserve rivers, preserve open space and develop trails and greenways. RTCA has been working to develop partnerships for water trails for the past 13 years.

[www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)

The **National Park Service** has an online water trails resource page. This page provides narrative examples of water trail projects and lists several valuable online resources for water trails. [www.nps.gov/ncrc/portals/rivers/proj/pg/watertrails.htm](http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/portals/rivers/proj/pg/watertrails.htm)

The **National Park Service Rivers and Trails Program** has a list of reference materials at [www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/ht\\_publications.html](http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/ht_publications.html)

Your state park, natural resource, environmental or ecology agency is sure to have some good references. The **Washington Department of Ecology** has a wide range of guides and educational materials at [www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/publications.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/publications.htm)

## TOOLS AND STUDIES

**Logical Lasting Launches** - this guide

provides design guidance for developing canoe and kayak launches; case examples, designs and photos are included.

[www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/ht\\_launch\\_guide.html](http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/ht_launch_guide.html)

**Case Studies of Water Trail Impacts on Rural Communities** by Lindsay Johnson.

This paper examines the economic benefits and social impacts of water trails in rural communities. It includes a literature review, several case studies from across the country and recommendations for rural economic development. This paper was completed with the help of RTCA staff input.

[www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/wtimpacts.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/wtimpacts.pdf)

**Survey of Sea Kayak Owners in Minnesota: Kayaking the North Shore of Lake Superior.** In an effort to understand the demographics, needs and user patterns of sea kayakers along the North Shore of Lake Superior, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources surveyed a sample of Minnesota's registered sea kayak owners. [www.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/kayaking\\_study.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/kayaking_study.html)

**Use and Economic Importance of the Chattooga River** by Roger Moore and Chris Siderelis, North Carolina State University. This report presents the results of a comprehensive study of the 57 miles of the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River, flowing through northwestern South Carolina, northeastern Georgia and southwestern North Carolina. [www.ncrc.nps.gov/portals/rivers/proj/pg/chatt.pdf](http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/portals/rivers/proj/pg/chatt.pdf)

## STATE SPECIFIC ONLINE TOOLS

**How to build a paddle trail in your community.** North Carolina's Tourism Extension has partnered with the NC DENR State Trails program to develop a videoconference series on building paddle trails in North Carolina, along with the NC Paddle Trails Association. Online at [www4.ncsu.edu/~cskline/index.htm](http://www4.ncsu.edu/~cskline/index.htm).

Pennsylvania's water trail website. This web site, developed by **Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission**, is an excellent source of information on boating safety and Leave No

Trace principles. Some of its section headings include: Important Boating Safety Information, Know the Law - Boating Regulations, Low Impact Use Information, Human Waste Disposal Guidelines and Canoe Camping checklist. [http://sites.state.pa.us/PA\\_Exec/Fish\\_Boat/watertrails/trailindex.htm](http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/Fish_Boat/watertrails/trailindex.htm)

**The River Alliance of Wisconsin** has information on their website about water trails, which addresses the basic what, why and how questions, as well as, providing links to other water trail sites, links to funding resources and links to technical resources. [www.wisconsinrivers.org](http://www.wisconsinrivers.org)

Your state park, natural resource, environmental or ecology agency is sure to have some good references. The **Washington Department of Ecology** has a wide range of guides and educational materials. [www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/publications.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/publications.htm)

**Water Trails: Building A Statewide System** is a PowerPoint presentation developed as part of the Pennsylvania Water Trails Program that walks you through the ins and outs of developing a statewide water trails system. [www.pecwest.org/WaterTrailsPresentation.pdf](http://www.pecwest.org/WaterTrailsPresentation.pdf)

**Water Trail Toolbox: How to Plan, Build, and Manage a Water Trail.** The Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network provides step-by-step guidelines—the ABCs of planning, building and managing a water trail. Each of the three sections has a brief opening page and a list of links that examine the subjects in greater detail. The additional resources include supporting background information. Online at [www.baygateways.net/watertrailtools.cfm](http://www.baygateways.net/watertrailtools.cfm)

For information on invasives, contact your local county extension service, weed board or download **The Watershed Project's Weed Workers' Handbook**. [www.cal-ipc.org/ww\\_handbook/](http://www.cal-ipc.org/ww_handbook/)



# LET RIVER NETWORK HELP YOU KEEP YOUR HEAD ABOVE WATER.

Join the River Network Partnership and connect to the information and resources you need to stay afloat!

- **Access our River Source Information Center with the 1-800 hotline:** Let us help you research a particular issue and put you in touch with the necessary contacts and resources through one-on-one consultations.
- **Log onto our Partner-only website:** Browse the updated postings of funding sources, upcoming events and trainings, and download river clipart.
- **Receive the myriad of Partner benefits,** including subscriptions to *River Voices* and *River Fundraising Alert*, a copy of the *Directory of Funding Sources for River and Watershed Conservation Organizations*, and a copy of either *Starting Up: A Handbook for New River and Watershed Organizations* or *How to Save a River...*and more!



[www.rivernetwork.org](http://www.rivernetwork.org)

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☐ *Starting Up: A Handbook for New River and Watershed Organizations*

☐ *River Talk!*

☐ *Listening to Watersheds*

☐ *Testing the Waters*

Please make your check payable to River Network and return this form to:

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River Network works to support you and your needs. We provide training and technical assistance to our Partner groups.

River Network does not promote legislation or represent your organization in legal matters.



# River Network

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