



2009 Year in Review

CHESAPEAKE BAY OFFICE

A wide-angle photograph of a Chesapeake Bay landscape. In the foreground, a small motorboat with two people is on the water. The middle ground is dominated by a large field of green marsh grasses. In the background, a white lighthouse with a blue top is visible on the left, and a small structure is on the right. The sky is clear and blue.

THE CHESAPEAKE'S TREASURED LANDSCAPES

The National Park Service helps connect people to the natural and cultural heritage of the Chesapeake region through the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail.

Letter from the Superintendent

2009 was an energizing and inspiring year for us and we hope for you. It was a year in which the President issued an executive order that has focused and validated our work and that of our partners. The President declared that —

“The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure constituting the largest estuary in the United States and one of the largest and most biologically productive estuaries in the world. The Federal Government has nationally significant assets in the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed in the form of public lands, facilities, military installations, parks, forests, wildlife refuges, monuments, and museums.”

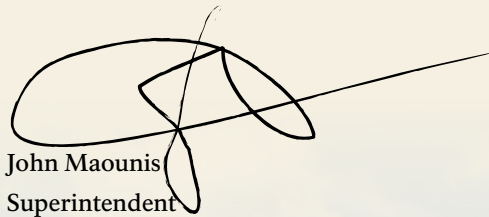
We were inspired when the new Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, spoke again and again of the Chesapeake as a nationally significant treasured landscape. He reminded us that “America’s national character—our optimism, our dreams, our shared stories—are rooted in our landscapes.”

The executive order cited and recognized the importance of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail. The established and developing partnerships through the trails and the network are the foundation of our work to improve public access, foster citizen stewardship, and conserve special places throughout the watershed.

We began vital new relationships with the Friends of Chesapeake Gateways and the Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail. We began a campaign to promote visiting Gateway sites as requested by our partners, made significant progress on the management planning efforts for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT and the Star-Spangled Banner NHT, worked towards the launch of a geocaching trail, provided over \$1 million in financial assistance to our partners to further the goals of the network and the trails, conducted eight capacity building workshops for our partners, began work with American Indian communities to identify lands of

particular significance to indigenous peoples, launched a new state of the art website to connect visitors to the John Smith trail, its stories and experiences, and its many partner sites. Hundreds of stakeholders throughout the region met with us to discuss their wishes and future plans for the Network, John Smith trail, and the Star-Spangled Banner trail. We worked with the Maryland Park Service and Office of Tourism Development to plan the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park, and six more partners were added to the Gateways Network. We worked with Virginia State Parks to establish the Chesapeake Youth Corps to engage volunteer teams and supervisors in improving public access at Gateways along the John Smith trail. We worked closely with the Susquehanna Greenway, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to further development of the Susquehanna River Water Trail.

And we developed goals and a long term action plan for significantly increasing public access and conserving treasured landscapes throughout the region. In so many ways the executive order put into focus the wealth of opportunities that our work with you, our partners, provides for connecting citizens with these important places, stories, and values. 2009 was an energizing and inspiring year for us.



John Maounis
Superintendent
National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office

Chesapeake Treasured Landscape Initiative

Executive Order 13508 requires development of a federal strategy “to protect and restore the health, heritage, natural resources, and social and economic value of the Nation’s largest estuarine ecosystem and the natural sustainability of its watershed.” We here at the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office have been responsible for preparing the Department of the Interior report on conserving Chesapeake landscapes, improving public access to the Bay and its tributaries and developing the related goals and elements of the implementation strategy. The Executive Order states that we “shall coordinate any recommendations with state and local agencies in the watershed and programs such as the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail.”

From the time the Executive Order was issued in May 2009, all the office’s staff contributed to the work required in researching and preparing a thorough response. We collected and analyzed data from local and state governments, federal agencies, and non-governmental partners regarding points of public access to the Bay and its tributaries and high priority landscapes requiring protection. In July, we hosted a workshop in Annapolis to engage nearly 50 state and federal agency and non-governmental representatives in drafting recommendations for land conservation priorities. Throughout the year we collected and incorporated public comments received from citizens and partners.

Bolstered by Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar’s declaration that the Chesapeake was a nationally significant “treasured landscape,” we worked with our partners to develop broad criteria for identification of treasured landscapes within the Chesapeake. As we and our partners have come to think of them, treasured landscapes are special places we revere as individuals, as communities and as a people for their ecological, cultural, historical or recreational values — for their role in maintaining and renewing our identity and spirit as a people. Most of these landscapes are large; they are the settings or surroundings in which life in the Chesapeake region plays out. Some are protected or formally recognized as parks, wildlife refuges, historic sites or heritage areas, but others are not; they are sweeping segments of the countryside — forests, farming communities, and natural areas (many linked to the water) — that we recognize as creating the sense of place that is the Chesapeake region.

Key recommendations of the land conservation and public access report include establishment of a Chesapeake Treasured Landscape Initiative that would coordinate and increase funding for conservation of landscapes within the region, identify landscapes of cultural and historical significance, expand public access to the Bay and rivers, create a public-private partnership to leverage land conservation funding, and develop landscape level approaches to land conservation, including the potential for expanding and establishing units of the national wildlife refuge system and the national park system.

The final strategy will be released on May 12, 2010.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
ON EXECUTIVE ORDER 13508**
<http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net>

KEY STRATEGIES

Fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund for state and federal land protection at \$900M by 2014.

Develop a landscape-level approach — a “partnership park” — to land conservation (including working landscapes), public access, interpretation and recreation.

Work with communities and partners on James, York, Patuxent, Rappahannock, and Susquehanna Rivers to achieve mutual land conservation goals.

Create a public/private partnership to leverage federal and possibly state conservation funding and coordinated priorities.

Deliver coordinated community assistance in targeted priority conservation landscapes.

Develop watershed-wide strategic, publicly accessible land conservation and restoration database and targeting system to support sound decision-making.

Conduct a survey of landscapes with states and other stakeholders with focus on American Indian landscapes, other ethnically significant landscapes, working landscapes, ecological connectors, and other identified gaps.

Create 20 new public access sites per year over the next 15 years along national trails, on existing federal lands and at partnership sites.

In concert with states, develop public access plan to inform and guide development of Chesapeake watershed public access.

Expand conservation corps workforces (Federal and state) to create jobs and carry out conservation/restoration projects in targeted watersheds. Develop model in consultation with states and other partners and carry out pilot project(s).

Expand model master watershed stewards program for training citizens to organize and carry out restoration in a specified number targeted watersheds; stewards recruit and organize corps work projects. Develop model in consultation with states and other partners and carry out pilot project(s).

Initiate a robust elementary and secondary environmental literacy initiative, engaging federal and state partners, including the U.S. Department of Education

Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network



Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network (CBGN) is a growing partnership system of 166 parks, refuges, museums, historic sites and water trails in the Bay watershed. Gateways sites are located across the Chesapeake watershed in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, West Virginia and New York. Through a memorandum of understanding with the National Park Service, these partners work with us to provide meaningful Chesapeake experiences, interpret their Chesapeake connections, co-market the Network, and promote citizen stewardship.

Through a cooperative agreement with Friends of Chesapeake Gateways (FCG) we offered three series of workshops in 2009. Four regional workshops in the first series combined a half-day of discussion about current and future Network activities with a half-day of training on conservation messaging. A second series of workshops focused on using new technologies in interpretation and education. The third series focused on training in methods of program evaluation. As part of our agreement with FCG, new program director Eleanor Mahoney implemented a coordinated outreach and promotional campaign, including a weekly newsletter, “Chesapeake Trips & Tips,” a new website, and frequent newsletters and press releases.

In 2009, six new Gateways were added to the network: Delmarva Discovery Center, Deltaville Maritime Museum and Holly Point Nature Park, Onancock Historic District and Town Wharf, Seaford Museum, Upper James River Blueway, and Emperor’s Landing at Vienna Waterfront Park.

We distributed one million dollars in 2009 to our partners. Gateway sites received the funding they needed to improve public access, plan water trails, develop educational programs, create interactive websites, write guidebooks and enhance history programming. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and ten Virginia state parks benefitted through a cooperative agreement for financial assistance. The Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership, which includes National Park Service and Pennsylvania state resource agencies, is encouraging the development and sustainability of water trails; the Pennsylvania Environmental Council assists the Partnership to prioritize and deliver on-the-ground technical assistance to trail partners.

In 2009, Congressman John Sarbanes (D-MD) and Senator Benjamin Cardin (D-MD) introduced legislation to permanently authorize the CBGN program. The legislation was passed by the House and remains awaiting action in the Senate. Permanent authorization is supported by the findings of the Chesapeake Bay Special Resource Study (SRS) and recommendations in response to Executive Order 13508.



Projects Funded in 2009

Adkins Arboretum, Pickering Creek Audubon Center, and Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (\$52,608)

The Chesapeake Land Stewardship Initiative

Bladensburg Waterfront Park (\$35,280)

The Battle of Bladensburg: A Sailor's Perspective

Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine (\$49,500)

Education Program Enhancement

Gwynns Falls Trail and Greenway (\$20,620)

Interpretive Kiosks and Educational Outreach

James River Water Trail (\$27,000)

The Virtual James River Interactive Map

Mount Harmon Plantation (\$37,350)

Tidewater Education Program

Parkers Creek Watershed Nature Preserve (\$20,000)

Master Plan for Facilities and Interpretation

Schooner Sultana (\$45,871)

The Chester and Sassafras River Water Trail

Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (\$31,515)

Contee Watershed Trail

Susquehanna River Water Trail (\$62,258)

Interpreting and Fostering Bay Stewardship Along the Susquehanna River Water Trail

Susquehanna River Water Trail West Branch (\$13,275)

Building a Stewardship Network for the Susquehanna River Water Trail

Susquehanna River Water Trail Lower Section (\$10,000)

Susquehanna River Water Trail – Lower Section Interpretation Enhancements

Belle Isle State Park, Caledon State Park, Chippokes Plantation State Park, First Landing State Park, Kiptopeke State Park, Leesylvania State Park, Mason Neck State Park, Shenandoah River State Park, Westmoreland State Park and York River State Park (\$150,000)

Chesapeake Bay Gateways Youth Corps

Projects Completed in 2009

Adkins Arboretum (\$22,852)

Chesapeake Gateways Volunteer Interpreter Training Project

Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center (\$25,068)

Enhancing Public Understanding of Environmentally Friendly Building Components

Chippokes Plantation State Park, First Landing State Park, Kiptopeke State Park and York River State Park (\$51,720)

Recreation and Stewardship along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail

Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum (\$30,000)

Reading the Signs: Changes to the Chesapeake Bay since its Exploration by Captain John Smith

Juniata River Water Trail (\$51,000)

Phase II Orientation and Interpretation

Maryland Zoo (\$14,986)

Interpreting the Maryland Marsh Aviary

Mason Neck State Park (\$12,800)

Captain John Smith's Explorer's Camp

Monocacy River Water Trail (\$64,062)

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Interpretation at the Frederick Visitor Center

Piscataway Park (\$20,000)

American Indian Interpretive Brochure

Rappahannock National Wildlife Refuge (\$6,000)

Mt. Landing Creek Interpretive Water Trail

Sailwinds Visitor Center (\$7,000)

Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Signage at Vienna

Susquehanna River Water Trail (\$56,200)

Phase II Trail Signage Implementation

Susquehanna River Water Trail – West Branch (\$18,317)

West Branch Stewardship and Conservation Plan

Trap Pond State Park (\$25,000)

Revitalization of the Bald Cypress Nature Center

Virginia Living Museum (\$150,000)

Living "Green" in the Watershed



2009 MILESTONES

Held eight public workshops to present alternative concepts for development of the trail.

Completed the draft Interpretive Plan for the trail.

Began development of an alternative transportation plan through the Volpe Center.

Held a day-long cultural landscape workshop with state partners and subject experts.

Initiated work with American Indian tribal communities to identify significant sites.

Began an assessment of Smith voyage landing sites for the critical resources inventory.

Developed management alternatives for the trail and a strategy for public presentations.

Worked with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to develop John Smith's Adventures on the Rappahannock.

Worked with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Friends to develop a boater's guide.

Began development of a signage plan and graphic standards for the trail.

Completed a project to combine archeological research and educational programming at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum.

Completed a project to install interpretive signage at the town of Vienna on the Nanticoke River.

Funded the Chesapeake Youth Corps to engage volunteer teams and supervisors in improving public access along the trail.

Funded a project to offer educational field trip opportunities at Mount Harmon Plantation.

Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail



The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the first national water trail, was designated by Congress in 2006 to commemorate the 1607–1609 voyages of Captain John Smith. At nearly 3,000 miles along the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, and with associated land sites, the scope and complexity of this trail present challenges in planning, development and management. While we and our partners are engaged in developing parts of the trail, our major focus has been on working with our partners to complete the trail's comprehensive management plan.

We launched a new state-of-the-art website and worked with the Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail on the debut of theirs. We signed memoranda of agreement with 54 Gateway sites along the trail to formally recognize the sites as trail partners. We conducted public scoping meetings as well as eight public workshops to present management alternatives. Public engagement is a key component in developing the comprehensive management plan.

The partnership between the National Park Service and the Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail was significantly advanced with the hiring of the Friends first president, David O'Neill, and the signing of a cooperative agreement. The cooperative agreement establishes the Friends as a major non-profit partner in advancing conservation, access and stewardship of the Trail. We benefitted greatly from their help in planning public participation and outreach as we advanced our work on the trail's management plan.

Exciting new youth programs were developed and implemented including the Junior Ranger Program, the Captain John Smith Explorer Camp (with Virginia's Mason Neck State Park) and John Smith Trail Expeditions (with Sultana Projects, Inc. in Chestertown, Maryland). We launched a website during the summer, "Join the Adventure," which links children and teachers to resources associated with the trail. In addition, we developed the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Youth Corps with Virginia State Parks which will generate 15,600 volunteer hours, 1,200 hours of Chesapeake Bay education for students beginning in mid-2010, and improve public access along the trail.

Our assessment of archeological resources along the trail in Maryland and Virginia was completed. We held workshops with experts in cultural landscapes. We hosted two meetings of the trail's Advisory Council and entered into cooperative agreements with Virginia and with Delaware to plan trail components on the Rappahannock and Nanticoke rivers. We convened meetings with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service refuge managers, National Park Conservation Association, Preservation Virginia, and others to explore potential collaborations.

Thanks to our partners, public participation, and the groundwork we have laid, we anticipate the completion of the comprehensive management plan in mid-2010.

Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail



The Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail preserves the stories, landscapes and lessons of the Chesapeake Campaign of the War of 1812. The trail includes approximately 290 miles of water trails and overland routes in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. The U.S. Congress designated the trail in 2008.

Suzanne Copping joined us as project manager for the trail in January. In our first full year of planning work, the Star-Spangled Banner Trail has collaborated with Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C. to initiate a coordinated management planning process for the trail and the geographically overlapping Star-Spangled Banner National Scenic Byway. Educational resources such as lesson plans, teacher and docent training, travelling exhibits and web-based curricula were developed for implementation in 2010. We have worked closely with key partner Maryland's Office of Tourism Development on many activities including watertrail planning with funding from the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network.

We held eight public interpretive planning workshops with partners to learn the stories, locations, significance and preferred visitor experiences for the trail. Staff participated in locally initiated discussions among sites, municipalities and organizations in the Chesapeake region to identify local interest and capacity. As we move forward, public engagement will guide completion of the interpretive plan and development of the comprehensive management plan.

Portions of the trail overlap the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and 62 sites on or adjacent to the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail are already designated as Chesapeake Bay Gateways. This continuity of places and partners, and close coordination with Fort McHenry, a crucial partner in development of the trail, has enabled us to make rapid progress on planning and early implementation.



PHOTO: DONNA DICKSSON

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
ON THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL**
www.nps.gov/stsp

2009 MILESTONES

Began development of the comprehensive management plan.

Worked with the Maryland Office of Tourism Development and the Maryland Scenic Byway program to begin planning of the Star-Spangled Banner Scenic Byway in conjunction with the trail's comprehensive management plan.

Developed outreach materials and brochure.

Conducted stakeholder interviews to discover trail perceptions and interest.

Documented existing interpretation and public access at Gateway sites.

Began to identify priority areas for investment in interpretation and visitor experiences.

Began development of the trail's interpretive plan.

Completed inventories of lesson plans and teacher resources; identified gaps and initiated new lesson plans and teacher training projects for 2010.

Awarded \$49,500 for curriculum development at Fort McHenry to complement exhibits and to include an online component.

Led eight regional public and partner workshops in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia to inform our work on the trail's comprehensive management plan.

Awarded \$35,280 to Bladensburg Waterfront Park for development of an interpretive boat tour "The Battle of Bladensburg: A Sailor's Perspective."

Funded a traveling exhibit on the War of 1812 by the Baltimore National Heritage Area.

With Friends of Chesapeake Gateways and Maryland Geocaching Society, initiated development of a geo-caching trail highlighting 30 sites with a War of 1812 connection to launch in 2010.

Began work on a travel guide jointly funded with Maryland's Office of Tourism Development and with assistance from Maryland Historical Trust.

Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance

We are fortunate to have Wink Hastings of the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) stationed here in the Chesapeake Bay Office. RTCA serves as the community assistance arm of the NPS and provides technical assistance for community led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation plans. From the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office, RTCA helps communities at the grassroots level with strategic planning for green infrastructure projects, watershed management, conservation, and trail planning.

In 2009, Chesapeake region RTCA-assisted programs conserved 1,593 acres of land, leveraged \$355,000 to support projects, and assisted 115 organizations with conservation or trail development.

2009 RTCA-ASSISTED PROJECTS INCLUDE:

Carr's Creek Watershed

Sidney Center Improvement Group (New York)

Cheverly Green Plan

Town of Cheverly Green Infrastructure Steering Committee (Maryland)

North Point Heritage Greenway Trail

North Point Coordinating Council (Maryland)

Frederick County Land Protection Workshop

Potomac Conservancy (Maryland)

Moyaone Reserve Land Protection Strategy

The Moyaone Association (Maryland)

Morgan County Land Protection

Potomac Valley Audubon Society (West Virginia)

Cacapon Voices

Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust (West Virginia)

Mill Creek Watershed Management Plan

Page County Water Quality Advisory Committee (Virginia)



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IMPORTANT WEBSITES FOR NPS CHESAPEAKE BAY OFFICE PROGRAMS AND PARTNERS:

www.nps.gov/cbpo
www.baygateways.net
www.nps.gov/cajo
www.smithtrail.net
www.nps.gov/stsp
www.friendsofchesapeakegateways.org
www.friendsofthejohnsmithtrail.org
<http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net>

SOCIOECONOMIC ATLAS FOR THE CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED

In 2009 we released *A Socioeconomic Atlas for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and its Region* to NPS units in the watershed, federal, state and local partners, and interested stakeholders.

The atlas describes the spatial character of human activities and land use trends in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Six categories of socioeconomic indicators are displayed in the atlas: general population, economy and commerce, social and cultural, recreation and tourism, administration and government, and land use indicators. This is a tool with many uses, such as new staff orientation, planning, public participation, and research.

The atlas was prepared beginning in 2008 for the National Park Service by Principal Scientist Jean McKendry, Ph.D., of the University of Idaho's College of Natural Resources. A consistent county-level design makes it easy to draw comparisons and narrow the area of interest.

To view the atlas, visit:

<ftp://ftp.chesapeakebay.net/parkservice/atlas/>

