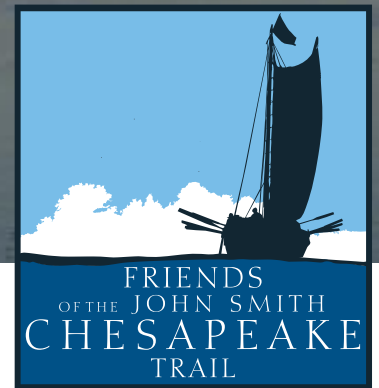


FRIENDS OF THE JOHN SMITH CHESAPEAKE TRAIL

CELEBRATING THE BAY,
ITS HISTORY
AND CULTURE



2009 YEAR IN REVIEW: A BANNER YEAR FOR THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND THE FRIENDS

THIS HAS BEEN A MONUMENTAL YEAR FOR THE CHESAPEAKE BAY and a year of progress and success for the Friends. The Capt. John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail has flourished along the Chesapeake's Great Rivers. President Obama signed the first ever Executive Order on the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. Strategies for the conservation of the Bay's treasured landscapes have emerged. The convergence of these events has created unparalleled opportunity for the Bay and the Capt. John Smith Chesapeake Trail.



SADIE RUNGE

The Capt. John Smith Chesapeake Trail offers great opportunities to enjoy the Chesapeake's treasured landscapes. We work to protect these landscapes and create access to the Trail, providing paddlers like these on Four Mile Creek off the James River the chance to get out and enjoy our Bay and rivers.

CONSERVING THE BAY'S TREASURED LANDSCAPES

Conserving sweeping landscapes along the Chesapeake's Great Rivers—landscapes that evoke a time when John Smith explored the Bay—is a central objective of the Friends. In 2009, the Friends assisted the Conservation Fund in the acquisition of more than 4,500 acres along the John Smith Trail on behalf of the state of Maryland. These historic lands, acquired by the Jesuits in the 17th century, include 20 miles of shoreline on the Potomac River and will provide tourism, recreation, and interpretation opportunities associated with the

Capt. John Smith Chesapeake Trail. In addition, the Friends assisted partners to conserve an additional 400 acres on the Trail along the Potomac and Nanticoke Rivers.

Funding remains a key to conservation, and the Friends worked with its partners to help secure \$500,000 for the Rappahannock River National Wildlife Refuge (Fones Cliffs); \$1 million for the James River National Wildlife Refuge; \$2 million for the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (Harriet Tubman). We continue to work towards full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which could support Chesapeake conservation.

PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDER

It would be difficult to overstate the opportunity for conservation and public access contained in President Obama's Executive Order for Chesapeake Bay Restoration. The Friends recognized this even before the order was issued and quietly and persistently worked to shape both the order and subsequent responses to it.

The Friends began work with the Department of Interior, the Environmental Law Institute (ELI), National Geographic Society, and state partners to shape the response to the Order. First, the Friends worked with the ELI to analyze more than 25 federal and state conservation programs for a special report that defines treasured landscapes and a framework to establish a Chesapeake Treasured Landscapes program. National Geographic then produced a Chesapeake Treasured Landscape map that highlights the inextricable link between the Chesapeake's Great Rivers and the region's Treasured Landscapes. The report and map provided the foundation for the draft strategy developed in response to the Executive Order.

The Friends is now working with federal, state and local governments, funders and interested groups to develop a treasured landscape program and to explore creating new units of the National Park and National Wildlife Refuge systems. This work holds great promise for significant conservation; conservation that celebrates our history while expanding public access and protecting water quality, wildlife habitat, and the working farms and small towns that are the Chesapeake's identity and lead to healthier waters, people, and places.

BUILDING THE TRAIL

The Friends is working closely with the National Park Service to develop the Trail's comprehensive management plan, providing planning and mapping assistance and promoting and staffing planning workshops around the region.

The Trail is coming alive as the public learns of opportunities to explore it. The Friends has developed featured trips for the Trail and supported development of a boater's guide. We helped develop and publicize trips run by Sultana Projects and the James River Association. We have worked with the Maryland Watermen's Association and others to establish a program to train watermen to guide trips on the Trail and to educate modern-day explorers about the Bay's natural, cultural and historic assets.

EXPANDING THE TRAIL

The Chesapeake's Great Rivers and their connection to the region's history provide opportunity to expand the Trail, and the Friends has nearly completed a comprehensive study along five rivers conducted by accredited historians in partnership with American Indians, businesses and others. The analysis will provide the National Park Service information to consider these rivers as connector trails for the John Smith Trail. The rivers are the Anacostia, Chester, Susquehanna, upper James, and upper Nanticoke. Connector trails provide opportunities to offer the benefits of the Capt. John Smith Trail to other parts of the Bay.

MARKING THE TRAIL WITH SMART BUOYS

Marking the 3000-mile Capt. John Smith Trail is no small task. However, working with partners, the Friends secured funding for the Trail, for the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, and for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Doug Wilson, NOAA Oceanographer, Rep. John Sarbanes, and Peyton Robertson, Director of NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Office, celebrated the launch of the Annapolis "smart buoy" that joined the Capt. John Smith Trail system in November.





Lotus flowers bloom on the Sassafras River. The river's red banks and open shores epitomize the Chesapeake's Treasured Landscapes.

Administration's Bay program, including the "smart buoys." Powered in part by the technology of Verizon Wireless, the seven buoys in the system mark the Trail and provide real-time information for scientists, boaters, and students. Two more buoys come on line in early 2010, including a buoy funded by the Dominion Foundation. The Friends is supporting legislation to provide consistent annual funding for the program.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The Friends signed a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service in support of the development of the Capt. John Smith Trail. The agreement establishes the Friends as the principal non-profit partner in advancing conservation, access and stewardship of the Trail. Over the coming years we will work with the Park Service to ensure that the Trail system meets its full potential in promoting tourism, public access, recreation, education and stewardship of the Bay and its history and cultures.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Friends has built partnerships with organizations including the National Geographic Society, The Conservation Fund, The Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Environmental Law Institute, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, James River Association, the Anacostia Watershed Society, Sultana Projects, the Nanticoke Watershed Association and others. In addition, the Friends is working with the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, the Bay states, and the Chesapeake Bay Commission to expand opportunities throughout the region.

THANK YOU

Our work would not be possible without our funders, and we thank them. We have been fortunate to receive inspiration and generous support from major local, regional and national funders, corporations and the public sector. Our funders included the National Park Service, the Rauch Foundation, the Fair Play Foundation, the Stephenson Pope Babcock Foundation, the Richard King Mellon Foundation, Verizon Foundation, Lockheed Martin and citizens across the Bay watershed.

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