

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**  
**Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park**  
**Superintendent's Compendium – Effective September 11, 2026**

**Approved:**

EDWARD WENSCHHOF  Digitally signed by EDWARD WENSCHHOF  
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Edward R. Wenschhof, Jr. Date  
Superintendent (A)

**Revision Requirement:** Annually {36 CFR 1.7 (b)}

**Purpose:**

Title 54 of the United States Code *National Park Service and Related Programs* authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to establish regulations for the National Park System as described in sections 100101, 100751, and 320102. These regulations are promulgated in Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) *Parks, Forests, and Public Property*. Chapter 1 of 36 CFR, *National Park Service, Department of the Interior*, has been established to provide for the proper use, management, government, and protection of persons, property, and natural and cultural resources under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service (NPS) {36 CFR 1.1(a)}

Regulations within 36 CFR will be utilized to fulfill the statutory purposes of units of the National Park System: to conserve scenery, natural and historic objects, and wildlife, and to provide for the enjoyment of these resources in a manner that will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. {36 CFR 1.1(b)}

Within 36 CFR a Park Superintendent has the discretionary authority to establish a schedule of visiting hours, impose public use limits or designate closures, designate areas for a specific use or activity, impose conditions or restrictions on a use or activity, and terminate these actions. {36 CFR 1.5 (a)(1-3)}

The Superintendent is required to compile in writing all the designations, closures, permit requirements, and other restrictions imposed under discretionary authority. {36 CFR 1.7(b)}

This document—frequently referenced as the Superintendent's Compendium—serves as the written determination justifying the implementation or termination of a restriction, condition, public use limit, or closure at the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal NHP). {36 CFR 1.5(c)}

All designations, closures, permit requirements, and other restrictions are addressed below under the appropriate 36 CFR section number and heading where they are applicable. Violations of compendium restrictions are violations of 36 CFR and subject to penalties as stated in 36 CFR 1.3.

## **Public Notice and Information**

All designations, closures, permit requirements, and other restrictions in this compendium will be made available to the public by at least one other method of notification. Methods may include maps, signs, publication, handouts, and/or park web site. {36 CFR 1.7(a)}

The contents of the Superintendent's Compendium will be made available for review on the park website [www.nps.gov/choh](http://www.nps.gov/choh), the Superintendent's Office, Chief Ranger's Office, or a Visitor Center information desk. Additional information or permit applications may be requested by writing or calling:

Superintendent  
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park  
142 West Potomac Street  
Williamsport, Maryland 21795  
301-739-4200  
[choh\\_information@nps.gov](mailto:choh_information@nps.gov)

This Superintendent's Compendium is not a full listing of all park regulations. The actions in this document apply in addition to all other laws that apply to lands and waters administered by the NPS within the boundaries of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park. These include:

- Regulations in 36 CFR and other CFR titles such as Title 43, which contains regulations that apply on public lands administered by the Department of the Interior.
- Statutes codified in U.S. Code, in particular provisions in Titles 16, 18, and 54.

The CFR can be found at [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov).

The NPS uses Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) for law enforcement and security purposes to visually monitor public park areas at the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park. NPS law enforcement rangers are equipped with Body Worn Cameras.

## **Park Purpose**

The below public use limits and determinations are established to support the park's enabling legislation and Park Purpose.

Public Law 91-664, Sec.3. (a)

*In order to preserve and interpret the historic and scenic features of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and to develop the potential of the canal for public recreation, including such restoration as may be needed, there is hereby established the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park . . .*

## **Section 1.5 - Closures & Public Use Limits**

The following areas are closed or restricted as indicated below. Additional locations may be closed or restricted for emergency conditions by the posting of appropriate signs or other methods of notification. Current Park conditions are available at <https://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/conditions.htm>

*Justifications apply to the restrictions or actions listed in the compendium section just above it.*

### **Areas closed to visitation at the C&O Canal NHP:**

- Maryland gold mine enclosures, the interior of the Ford and the Round Top mines.
  - Other Park structures (e.g., barns, mills, maintenance yards, and houses) unless otherwise/elsewhere designated.
    - NPS Tract 17-101 (formerly Whites Ferry Sportsman's Club) is closed to visitors while planning for re-use of the site continues, including demolition of the unoccupied cabins. Access is by special use permit only.
- The access road to and the area within ¼ mile of the Fours Locks firing range (Costlow property).
- The interior of Indigo, Stickpile, and Kessler tunnels associated with the former Western Maryland Railroad.
- Those park areas during emergency situations or construction events as declared by the superintendent and marked by closure signs.
- Lower side of the Inlet Lock in Cumberland, Maryland is closed to the public.
- The six former Western Maryland Railroad bridges over the Potomac River.
- The top of the structure known as the "Potomac Aqueduct," "Old Aqueduct Bridge," or "Alexandria Aqueduct," located at the north end of Water Street, NW, Washington D.C. is closed to public access.
- Dam 4 cave beyond the installed gate.

*Justification - These areas are closed to visitation for security, visitor safety, and protection of park resources.*

### **Areas and activities with public use limits or permitted uses:**

- All park offices, maintenance facilities, and office complexes; Georgetown, Great Falls,

Brunswick, Pleasantville, Williamsport, Hancock, and Cumberland visitor centers; and the Abner Cloud House are closed to the public during non-business hours or when un-staffed.

- Visitor Center Hours and Seasons are provided on the park website: <https://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/hours.htm>
- NPS operated visitor centers in Cumberland, MD; Williamsport, MD; and Potomac, MD (Great Falls, MD) are open 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday from March through October.
  - NPS operated visitor centers are closed on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays (November through February), Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Years Day.
- The NPS & Partner operated visitor center in Georgetown, Washington DC is open seasonally and closes for winter. See the park website for status.
- The partner operated visitor center in Brunswick, MD provides operating hours and seasons on their website: <https://brunswickmuseum.org/>

*Justification - The security and accountability of government property can best be protected by limiting access to these areas to government employees and/or business hours.*

- All of Olmsted Island is closed to public use except for designated walkways, footbridges and overlooks, and a 25-foot-wide area along the river shoreline on barren rock or sand necessary for boaters to portage or rest.
- Olmsted Island may not be used for access to the Potomac River.
- Visitors are restricted to the designated trails within the Gold Mine Tract in the Great Falls area. This location is generally defined as that area bordered by MacArthur Boulevard and Berma Road and depicted on the Great Falls Maryland Hiking Map found on the park website at: <https://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/upload/Great-Falls-Hiking-Map.pdf>
- Visitors are restricted to the designated trail known as the Billy Goat A Trail on Bear Island, which is depicted on the Great Falls Maryland Hiking Map found on the park website at: <https://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/upload/Great-Falls-Hiking-Map.pdf>
- From Georgetown to Seneca, all parklands are closed at dark. Darkness is defined as one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise. Exceptions include vehicle parking for those recreational users on the towpath, Canal Quarters occupants, campers using the Swains Lock hiker-biker site, and registered campers at the Marsden Tract Campground.

*Justification – For public safety and resource protection concerns, the park area between Georgetown and Seneca is closed at dark. Allowance has been made to accommodate the vehicles of those park users participating in authorized recreational activities.*

- From Seneca to Cumberland, parking lots, picnic areas, and developed day use areas and recreational sites are closed at dark. Darkness is defined as one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise. Exceptions include vehicle parking for those recreational users on the towpath, Canal Quarters occupants, campers using reservation-only campgrounds or the 30 hiker-biker campsites, or Potomac River use (e.g. boating, fishing).

*Justification – For public safety and resource protection concerns, the developed park areas from Seneca to Cumberland are closed at dark. Allowance has been made to accommodate the vehicles of those park users participating in authorized recreational activities.*

- The towpath, other foot trails and the Western Maryland Railroad trace are closed to all unauthorized motorized vehicles, and hooped animal-drawn vehicles (except by special use permit). The towpath is closed to horseback riding after dark. Canine-drawn sleds/gigs are permitted on the towpath between November 1 and March 15 between Sycamore Landing (Mile 27.2) and Town Creek (Mile 162.2). Designated horse-riding areas and requirements are included in section 2.16 below.

*Justification - The use of horses and pack animals can be detrimental to natural resources such as plant and animal communities. 36 CFR 2.16 (c) prohibits the use of horses and pack animals on park roads (paved public highways) outside of designated areas, except where such travel is necessary to cross to or from designated trails or areas. The riding of horses after dark is prohibited for public safety.*

- Sections of the Park may be closed with little or no notice when hazardous conditions occur, such as forecasted flooding, snow and ice accumulations, other natural events, or public safety threats.

*Justification – These closures are necessary to protect the public during high water events or other emergencies or to minimize strain on local, state, and federal emergency response resources. Closure notices are generally posted on social media and the park's Alerts/Current Park Conditions page at <https://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/conditions.htm>*

- Pets are prohibited on Olmsted Island, boardwalks, bridges, overlooks, section “A” of the Billy Goat Trail, and all of Bear Island except for the towpath.
- Bikes must be dismounted and walked in some pedestrian areas when signed, such as the

sidewalks around the Great Falls Tavern/Visitor Center or aqueduct walkways. Other areas may be temporarily designated during educational programs involving the mules, during school/youth programs, or other needs.

*Justification - Due to the popular use, often crowded conditions, narrow passage or terrain in some areas, pets are prohibited, and bikes must be walked for public safety.*

- Lock 34 access is a designated drop off only area. No parking is permitted.

*Justification - During the summer months, use of this area exceeds its physical capabilities. The overuse creates hazardous conditions in traffic and pedestrian movements on Harpers Ferry Road. This limitation reduces vehicular traffic in the area by allowing authorized commercial users and the public an area to unload passengers going to the river.*

Ice skating is permitted at your own risk park-wide, except at the Widewater area (Mile Post 12.6 – 13.4) and in areas that may be prohibited by signage.

*Justification - Areas may be closed to protect park visitors, responders, and resources.*

- Golf Equipment – The Park is closed to the use of golf equipment including golf balls.

*Justification - Although the park has a multi-use mission, not all recreational uses are compatible. The use of golf equipment, specifically using open areas in the park for driving golf balls produces several problems. Lost golf balls produce litter in the natural environment. Driven balls fly a great distance, so one person may, by virtue of the potential injury from being struck, exclude other visitors from the use of an entire open field area.*

- Model Aircraft, Rockets, Vessels, and Vehicles – All parklands, waterways, are closed to the use of model aircraft, rockets, vessels, vehicles, and similar motorized devices.

*Justification - Model aircraft are usually propelled by small, gasoline-driven engines. They are usually remote controlled by the operator who does not have complete control over the craft due to winds or operator error. There is potential for injury to bystanders, visitors, wildlife, and vegetation from being struck by a fast-moving aircraft. The use of aircraft may exclude other visitors from the use of an entire open field area. The small engines are noisy and produce exhaust into the air, which affects the quality visit of park visitors. The wildlife is often disturbed due to the noise associated with these devices.*

*Model rockets are usually propelled by small, chemical-driven engines. They are usually not controlled by the operator. There is potential for injury to bystanders, visitors, wildlife, and vegetation from being struck by a fast-moving rocket. The use of rockets may exclude other visitors from the use of an entire open field area. The small engines are noisy and produce exhaust into the air, which affects the quality visit of other park visitors. The wildlife is often disturbed due to the noise associated with these devices.*

*Model vessels are usually propelled by small, gasoline- and oil-driven engines. They are usually remote-controlled, but the operator does not have complete control over the craft due to currents or operator error. The small engines are noisy and leave gasoline and oil residue in the water, which affects the quality visit of other park visitors. The wildlife is often disturbed due to the noise associated with these devices.*

*Model vehicles tend to need a lot of open space, such as a parking lot, to operate. Usage in a parking lot presents a safety hazard to bystanders and traffic alike. There are no acceptable locations in the park for a visitor to use a remote-controlled vehicle in an enjoyable and safe manner. The wildlife can be disturbed due to the noise and movement associated with these devices.*

- Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (UAS) - Launching, landing, or operating an uncrewed aircraft from or on lands and waters administered by the National Park Service within the boundaries of Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park is prohibited except as approved in writing via a permit by the appropriate authority within the U.S. Department of the Interior or National Park Service.

Definition - The term “uncrewed aircraft” means a device that is used or intended to be used for flight in the air without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the device, and the associated operational elements and components that are required for the pilot or system operator in command to operate or control the device (such as cameras, sensors, communication links). This term includes all types of devices that meet this definition (e.g., model airplanes, quadcopters, drones) that are used for any purpose, including for recreation or commerce.

*Justification - This activity closure is necessary to safeguard the requirement of the park’s enabling legislation to preserve and interpret the historic and scenic features of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. When not administered by a permit, the use of uncrewed aircraft may disrupt the desired visitor experience and potentially damage cultural resources. This activity when not covered by a permit may interfere with visitor interpretive programs such as the canal boat tour, the curriculum-based education programs for students, and the existing recreational activities. Through permitting, this use can be approved and managed to protect park resources and the visitor experience. There are several executive orders and policy documents governing UAS use on National Park Service lands and applications will be reviewed to ensure compliance with all requirements. Additional information can be found at [Reference Manual #60: Aviation Management - Chapter 12 - Uncrewed Aircraft Systems](#)*

- Geocaching games – The establishment of geocaches is allowed by permit only.

*Justification - Geocaches typically are hidden in natural areas or archeological sites. The object of this game is to locate well-hidden caches that may be buried. This game*

*encourages participants to move off trail, which leads to vegetative damage and erosion problems. Digging disturbs park resources and damages archeological sites. This activity can be alarming to bystanders who misidentify the individuals when they observe participants hiding or acting in a suspicious manner to avoid detection. Organizers of this type of activity are known to hold events in the park without prior approval or any attempt to obtain a Special Use Permit.*

- Pitching of Horseshoes – Is allowed at the designated area in the Carderock Picnic site. The remainder of the park is closed to this activity.

*Justification - This activity causes damage to the vegetative and soil resources of the park. This activity is confined to those areas developed areas designated for this activity.*

- Firewood - The entire park is closed to the visitor transport or introduction of firewood that did not originate within or adjacent to the boundaries of the park.

*Justification - Exotic insect pests can be introduced through the visitor import of firewood into the park area. These pests can infest park native species.*

- Swimming –
  - The Canal prism and basins are closed to swimming.
  - Persons accessing the Potomac River to swim, in areas where the State of Maryland does not restrict this activity, may not block boat ramps, roadways or impede visitors passing through on the towpath.

*Justification - It is hazardous to swim, wade, or bathe in these waters. Park trails, boat ramps, roadways, and parking areas must remain open for visitor access.*

- Roller skates and skateboards - The Capital Crescent Trail and the Western Maryland Rail Trail are designated for this recreational activity.

*Justification – These two multi-use trails have an asphalt surface, and the activity is suitable to these areas.*

- The use of an Electronic Nicotine Delivery System is prohibited in all buildings owned, leased, or administered by the National Park Service.

*Justification – These devices may produce toxins that pose a risk to public health and safety in confined areas.*

- Jumping or diving from the cliffs upstream of Dam #5 into the Potomac River is prohibited. The NPS access area above the cliffs is closed to the public.

*Justification – Numerous serious injuries have been documented from individuals jumping from these cliffs into the Potomac River. Access to the area by emergency vehicles is limited.*

- Tying objects to aqueducts, bridges or historic structures is prohibited. Jumping from or swinging by rope or other means from aqueducts, bridges, foot bridges (for example, Seneca Creek at Rileys Lock), historic structures, or trees is prohibited. The tying of climbing ropes to trees is permitted in the Carderock Climbing Area. Hammock use is discussed section 2.10.

*Justification – Tying objects to cultural resources can damage historic fabric and natural resources and cause injury to persons. Jumping from aqueducts and bridges can cause injury to persons and obstruct narrow passageways required for through traffic.*

- Boating, Canoeing, Kayaking
  - Waters within the C&O Canal NHP are closed to all unauthorized motorized vessels, except electric motors may be used at Big Pool, Little Pool, Widewater, and in canal waters from Lock 68 to Town Creek Aqueduct.
  - Canoes and kayaks are permitted in watered portions of the canal prism, Big Pool, Little Pool, and Widewater. Closures may be put in place at Great Falls between Lock 19 and Lock 21 and in Williamsport between Lockwood Road and the upstream end of the Conococheague Creek Aqueduct during periods of time when National Park Service mule-drawn or electric boat programs are taking place.

*Justification – The identified areas normally contain sufficient water to use an electric motor. The identified areas normally contain sufficient water for canoe and kayak use. Temporary closures may be required to avoid conflicts with interpretive/educational programs.*

- Lighting and Projecting Images on Resources within National Park System Units
  - The NPS will not authorize external parties to light or project images onto facilities, monuments, or other resources through special use permits, leases, contracts, or any other legal instrument, unless specifically directed by an act, resolution, or proclamation of Congress.

*Justification - Although lighting and projecting images are not intended to permanently change the appearance of a facility, monument or other resource, applicable laws, regulations, and policies make it difficult for the NPS to authorize such activities without unintended Service-wide impacts. The NPS does not consider the exterior surfaces of facilities, monuments, and many other resources to be public fora for purposes of First Amendment activities. This policy will promote public trust in the NPS's ability to manage activities that occur within System units for the protection of visitors and resources. (Reference: NPS Policy Memorandum 25-01 issued 12-15-2025)*

- Filming, still photography, and audio recording activity may require a permit, consistent with 54 U.S.C. 100905.
  - Filming, still photography, and audio recording activity that occurs in closed areas, requires exclusive use of a site or area, or involves a set or staging equipment other than handheld equipment (such as a tripod, monopod, and

handheld lighting equipment) requires a permit, unless the activity is affiliated with an activity or event that has been allowed under a written authorization, such as a special use permit.

- Filming, still photography, and audio recording that involves more than eight individuals requires a permit, unless the NPS has specifically notified an individual or group that a permit is not required, or if the activity is affiliated with an activity or event that has been allowed under a written authorization, such as a special use permit.
- If a permit is required for the reasons stated above, or if the NPS otherwise determines and then notifies an individual or group that a permit is required for a filming, still photography, or audio recording activity, then engaging in that activity without a permit is prohibited. Violating a term or condition of a permit issued by the NPS for a filming, still photography, or audio recording activity is prohibited, and may result in the suspension or revocation of the permit, in addition to any penalties that may apply under 36 CFR 1.3.

*Justification - Federal law at 54 U.S.C. 100905 states that permits and fees are not required for filming, still photography, or audio recording in park areas if certain requirements are met. These requirements address various topics, including, but not limited to, group size, location, equipment, potential impacts to resources and visitors, and the likelihood that the NPS will incur related administrative costs. If any of these requirements are not met, the law allows the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the NPS, to require a permit for the subject activity. Permit requirements are imposed by the superintendent under discretionary authority provided by 36 CFR 1.5(a)(2), which allows the superintendent to impose conditions or restrictions on a use or activity, consistent with applicable legislation, to implement management responsibilities. The general regulations for permits in 36 CFR 1.6 do not apply to permits issued for filming, still photography, and audio recording, which instead are governed by the statutory provisions in 54 U.S.C. 100905. The imposition of permit requirements, on a case-by-case basis, for filming, still photography, or audio recording does not require rulemaking under 36 CFR 1.5(b). Requiring a permit with reasonable terms and conditions in accordance with statutory requirements at 54 U.S.C. 100905 is not highly controversial, will not result in a significant alteration in the public use pattern of the System unit, will not adversely affect the System unit's natural, aesthetic, scenic or cultural values, or require a long-term or significant modification in the resource management objectives of the System unit, because the permit requirement is limited in time and scope to the specific activities authorized by the permit, which contain terms and conditions that protect the values, resources, and visitors of the System unit, and implements federal law.*

## **SECTION 1.6 - PERMITS**

The following is a compilation of activities requiring special use permits or permitting instruments per 36 CFR 1.6 f. Questions on permitting can be directed to the park's permit coordinator at [copermitsoffice@nps.gov](mailto:copermitsoffice@nps.gov) and more information can be found at this link

<https://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/permitsandreservations.htm>.

- Display of commercial notices or advertisements.
- Collection of research specimens and conducting scientific research.
- Still photography.
- Sale or distribution of printed matter.
- Special events.
- Public assemblies, including First Amendment right activities.
- Scattering human ashes: A letter permit is issued and the process can be found at this link <https://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/upload/CHOH-Scattering-Ashes-Permit.pdf>
- Entering closed areas.
- Possession of alcoholic beverages.
- Camping at hiker/biker sites by trail rider groups with more than four horses.
- Operating a public address system or other sound amplified audio devices.
- Conducting commercial business operations: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/cua/index.htm>
- Explosives.
- Non-commercial soliciting.
- Weddings or other civil ceremonies
- Unmanned Aircraft Systems
- Activities requested to take place in an area or during a time identified as closed in section 1.5 of this compendium.
- Some filming, still photography, and audio recording (depends upon the facts and circumstances; contact the park for more information). 36 CFR 1.5(a)(2) and 54 U.S.C. 100905.
  - <https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/news/film-and-photo-permits.htm>

## **SECTION 2.1 - PRESERVATION OF NATURAL, CULTURAL, & ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

(a)(4) Dead wood on the ground may be collected for use as fuel for campfires within the immediate vicinity of designated picnic and camping areas, as permitted by 36 CFR 2.13 and this compendium, and may not be removed from the Park.

- (c)(1) Edible fruits, nuts, berries, and mushrooms may be gathered by hand for personal use or consumption. Commercial use is prohibited. Removal of fruits, nuts, berries, and mushrooms cannot disturb the remainder of the plant. Possession of plant fruits, nuts, berries, and mushrooms are limited to the following quantities:

**Fruit/Nut/Berry**

**Daily per Person Limit**

|                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| Walnuts             | 1 Bushel   |
| Hickory Nuts (sp.)  | 1 Bushel   |
| Acorns (Oak sp.)    | 1 Bushel   |
| Apples              | 1 Bushel   |
| Cherries            | 1/2 Gallon |
| Blackberries        | 1/2 Gallon |
| Raspberries         | 1/2 Gallon |
| Dewberries          | 1/2 Gallon |
| Strawberries        | 1/2 Gallon |
| Huckleberry species | 1/2 Gallon |
| Elderberries        | 1/2 Gallon |
| Wine berries        | No Limit   |
| Paw Paws            | 1/2 Gallon |
| Mushroom species    | 1/2 Gallon |

## SECTION 2.2 - WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Hunters can transport legally taken, properly tagged, and identified wildlife and waterfowl across C&O Canal NHP property.

- (e) C&O Canal NHP is closed to viewing of wildlife with the use of artificial light.

## SECTION 2.4 - WEAPONS, TRAPS AND NETS

- (d)(4) Hunters, during designated state hunting seasons, with traditional bows unstrung, compound bows with arrows un-nocked, and dogs leashed, may cross C&O Canal NHP lands.

## SECTION 2.10 - CAMPING AND FOOD STORAGE

- (a) The following areas are designated as campgrounds or campsites:

**Reservation Only** - Reservations must be made through <https://www.recreation.gov/>

DRIVE-IN CAMPGROUNDS-CAMPER/TENT      LOCATION (Towpath Mile)

|                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| McCoys Ferry       | 110.4 |
| Fifteen Mile Creek | 140.9 |
| Spring Gap         | 173.3 |

WALK-IN CAMPGROUNDS-TENT      LOCATION (Towpath Mile)

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Antietam Creek | 69.7  |
| Paw Paw        | 156.2 |

| GROUP CAMP SITE LOCATIONS | LOCATION (Towpath Mile) |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Marsden Tract             | 11.0                    |
| McCoys Ferry              | 110.4                   |
| Fifteen Mile Creek        | 141.0                   |
| Spring Gap                | 173.3                   |
| Paw Paw                   | 156.2                   |

Camping or overnight use at the Marsden Tract is allowed by organized groups only.

**First Come, First Served Hiker/Biker** – Reservations not required. Each hiker/biker campsite is identified by a sign and contains a portable toilet, picnic table, and fire ring. Site limits are defined by the mowed area. Camping at hiker/biker sites is limited to one night. Camping for longer than the allowed length of stay is prohibited. Camping outside of the designated site is prohibited.

| HIKER/BIKER CAMPSITE | LOCATION (Towpath Mile) |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Swains Lock          | 16.6                    |
| Horsepen Branch      | 26.1                    |
| Chisel Branch        | 30.5                    |
| Turtle Run           | 34.4                    |
| Marble Quarry        | 38.2                    |
| Indian Flats         | 42.5                    |
| Calico Rocks         | 47.6                    |
| Bald Eagle Island    | 50.3                    |
| Huckleberry Hill     | 62.9                    |
| Killiansburg Cave    | 75.2                    |
| Horseshoe Bend       | 79.2                    |
| Big Woods            | 82.7                    |
| Opequon Junction     | 90.9                    |
| Cumberland Valley    | 95.2                    |
| Jordan Junction      | 101.2                   |
| North Mountain       | 110.0                   |
| Licking Creek        | 116.0                   |
| Little Pool          | 120.6                   |
| White Rock           | 126.4                   |
| Leopards Mill        | 129.9                   |
| Cacapon Junction     | 133.6                   |
| Indigo Neck          | 139.2                   |
| Devils Alley         | 144.5                   |

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Stickpile Hill | 149.4 |
| Sorrel Ridge   | 154.1 |
| Purslane Run   | 156.9 |
| Town Creek     | 162.1 |
| Potomac Forks  | 164.8 |
| Pigmans Ferry  | 169.1 |
| Irons Mountain | 175.3 |
| Evitts Creek   | 180.1 |

- Camping or overnight use with vehicles and trailers is permitted only at the following locations and reservations must be made through <https://www.recreation.gov/>.
  - McCoys Ferry Drive-in Campground
  - Fifteen Mile Creek Drive-in Campground
  - Spring Gap Drive-in Campground
- Power mowers and chainsaws are not permitted to be operated in any campgrounds.
- Generators may not be operated between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- Maximum trailer length in drive-in campgrounds is 20 feet.
- Camping at drive-in and walk-in reservation only campgrounds, including group campsites, is limited to 14 consecutive days and may not exceed 30 days in a calendar year. Camping for longer than the allowed length of stay is prohibited. Camping outside of the designated or reserved site is prohibited.
- Check-in time at all drive-in and walk-in campsites is 1:00 p.m. EST and check-out time is 12:00 p.m. EST. Camping for longer than the allowed length of stay is prohibited. Camping outside of the designated or reserved site is prohibited.
- Camping at hiker/biker sites is limited to one night. Camping for longer than the allowed length of stay is prohibited. Camping outside of the designated site is prohibited.
- Overnight use of the buildings designated in the Canal Quarters program is allowed through the established reservation system operated by the C&O Canal Trust. <https://www.canaltrust.org/programs/canal-quarters/>
- The use of hammocks at the C&O Canal NHP is permitted at designated hiker-biker campsites and within campgrounds where reservations are required. If attaching to trees, hammocks must have straps that are at least one inch wide. Plastic zip cords, nails or screws are not permitted for the purpose of anchoring a hammock. Trees with a diameter of 8 inches are recommended. Hammock use in other public use areas is subject to these requirements; however, overnight camping is not permitted in areas not designated as a campground or hiker/biker campsite.

## SECTION 2.11 - PICNICKING

The use of portable engines, chainsaws, generators, and power mowers is prohibited in picnic areas.

## SECTION 2.13 - FIRES

(a)(1) Fires are permitted only in the following areas:

- Designated picnic areas within the park provided grill or fire ring.
- Designated camping areas within the park provided fire ring.
- Canal Quarters areas within the park provided fire ring.
- Personal, self-contained portable grills/stoves may be used off the ground and away from overhanging vegetation.
- A fire may be ignited and maintained only by using fuel sources designed and commonly used for warmth or the preparation of food, such as charcoal briquettes or natural firewood. Lighting or maintaining a fire with other materials including, but not limited to, flammable liquids, garbage, fireworks, plastics, aerosol canisters, batteries, or other manufactured or synthetic materials, is prohibited.

*Justification - This action is necessary for the maintenance of public health and safety, protection of environmental or scenic values, protection of natural or cultural resources, and the implementation of management responsibilities. Materials other than approved combustibles – especially fire accelerants and substances prone to wind transport or explosion – creates serious risks when used to light or maintain fires. These combustibles can ignite or spread wildfires that directly threaten people and valuable resources and assets. The burning of manufactured or synthetic materials can contribute to air pollution, contaminate soil and water, and be toxic to humans and the environment. Less restrictive measures, such as an education campaign informing visitors of the risks of using certain materials to light or maintain a fire, would not be commensurate with the substantial risks associated with those activities and could lead to adverse outcomes that might be prevented by establishing an enforceable condition.*

## SECTION 2.15 – PETS

(a)(5) Visitors with pets in the park are required to pick up and dispose of their pet's excrement by carrying it out of the park. Pets are prohibited on Bear and Olmsted Islands, section “A” of the Billy Goat Trail, boardwalks, bridges, and overlooks. (See section 1.5 descriptions)

(e) Pets are prohibited in government buildings including the buildings utilized by the public in the Canal Quarters program. Service animals are excepted.

## **SECTION 2.16 - HORSES AND PACK ANIMALS**

- (b) The following trails, routes or areas are designated for the use of horses:
- The C&O Canal Towpath from Swains Lock (Mile 16.6) to the Offutt Street crossing at Candoc (Mile 181.8) in Cumberland
  - The Tunnel Hill Trail over the top of Paw Paw Tunnel
  - River access points (boat ramps) for watering
  - Parking lots for loading/unloading from a trailer
- (g) Conditions established by the superintendent:
1. Horses are not allowed in the Paw Paw Tunnel, drive-in and walk-in reservation campgrounds, or picnic areas.
  2. All manure must be removed from the park.
  3. Riders must dismount and walk their horses across the aqueducts. Horses are restricted from crossing narrow wooden footbridges as they are not designed to carry the concentrated weight of the horses.
  4. Horses/riders are not to exceed the speed of a slow trot.
  5. Water by use of a bucket or other container, may be taken from park hand pump wells and used for watering horses.
  6. Horses may be loaded/unloaded and enter/exit the towpath at public access points only. Access from private property is prohibited.
  7. Horseback riding is prohibited after dark.
  8. Check park website alerts for areas closed to horse use for a period following towpath resurfacing.

## **SECTION 2.20 – SKATING, SKATEBOARDS, AND SIMILAR DEVICES**

- (a)A Roller skates, roller blades, and similar coasting devices as defined in 36 CFR §1.4 are allowed only on the Capital Crescent Trail and the Western Maryland Rail Trail.

## **SECTION 2.21 - SMOKING**

- (a) The use of any lighted tobacco products within the boundaries of C&O Canal NHP shall be in accordance with the Directors Order 50D dated 06/29/2009, entitled "Smoking Policy."

## SECTION 2.22 - PROPERTY

(a)(2) Visitors on multi-day trips are permitted to leave vehicles unattended for the period of their park trip. It is recommended that visitors provide their vehicle description and license plate information to the park at [copermitsoffice@nps.gov](mailto:copermitsoffice@nps.gov) for awareness of park rangers/park police.

## SECTION 2.23 - RECREATION FEES

(a) Areas where recreation fees are established:

1. Carderock Pavilion (Recreation Fee)
2. Great Falls, Maryland (Entrance Fee)
3. Marsden Tract Group Campsite (Recreation Fee)
4. Antietam Creek Campground (Recreation Fee)
5. McCoys Ferry Campground (Recreation Fee)
6. Fifteen Mile Creek Campground (Recreation Fee)
7. Fifteen Mile Creek Group Campground (Recreation Fee)
8. Paw Tunnel Campground (Recreation Fee)
9. Spring Gap Campground (Recreation Fee)
10. Canal Quarters Program (Interpretive Fee)
11. Georgetown Canal Boat trips (Interpretive Fee)
12. Great Falls Canal Boat trips (Interpretive Fee)

## SECTION 2.35 - ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

(a)(3)(i) The possession of open and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages including beer, wine, or spirituous liquors within the C&O Canal NHP is prohibited except under a permit issued by the park superintendent. This does not apply to Canal Quarters (within the structure), leased structures, and those being used as residences.

***Justification** - Pursuant to 36 CFR 2.35 (3)(I)(B), the park superintendent may close all or a portion of a public use area or facility to the consumption of alcoholic beverages and/or the possession of a bottle, can or other receptacle containing an alcoholic beverage that is open, or has been open, or whose seal is broken or the contents of which have been partially removed. Provided that such a closure may only be implemented following a determination made by the superintendent that incidents of aberrant behavior related to the consumption of alcoholic beverages are of such magnitude that diligent application of the authorities in this section and 1.5 and 2.34 of 36 CFR, over a reasonable time period, does not alleviate the problem. Since the mid-1980s, the park has restricted the use of alcoholic beverages in picnic areas, parking areas, boat ramps, campgrounds, Monocacy Aqueduct to Mile 42.5, Mile 106.8 to*

*107.4, Mile 87.6 to 88.6 and the shoreline and waters of Town Creek to deter alcohol related incidents. Furthermore, to coincide with local restrictions and regulations consumption of alcoholic beverages are prohibited in Washington D.C. and Montgomery County, and the towns of Brunswick, Williamsport, Hancock, and Cumberland. These restrictions have reduced the number of alcohol related incidents in some areas, but problems continue to exist. Restrictions posed in some areas have forced additional problems on unrestricted areas. The regulations and restrictions are not clear to the visiting public or those faced with enforcing them. A permit is now required from the park superintendent to possess and/or consume alcohol in the park to maintain consistency within the park and local adjoining jurisdictions, to further reduce the number of alcohol-related incidents, and to control the consumption of alcohol in the park.*

## **SECTION 2.50- SPECIAL EVENTS**

Permits for special events, public assemblies, and for distribution of printed matter will be issued pursuant to standards established in Director's Order 53 (Special Park Use Guidelines).

### **Permit Conditions:**

- In addition to public assemblies/special events and meetings, gatherings, parades, demonstrations, or other public expressions of views are subject to the conditions of this regulation.
- A public assembly/special event may be canceled at the discretion of the superintendent when emergency or potentially hazardous conditions exist.
- All costs incurred by the park, because of a special event, will be recovered from the permit holder.
- Public assemblies/special events shall not interfere with normal public use or pedestrian flow.
- Public assemblies/special events shall not take place during hours of darkness, except by permit.
- Noise levels must not exceed the limits established in 36 CFR 2.12, Audio disturbances.
- The commercial sale of items, other than the printed matter approved for sale with a permit, is prohibited.
- The permit holder is responsible for cleaning the public assembly/special event area upon the completion of the event.

## **SECTION 2.51 - PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES, MEETINGS**

A permit issued by the superintendent may be required for public assemblies, meetings, gatherings, demonstrations, parades, and other public expressions of views. Suggested locations to conduct these activities include Great Falls Tavern area, Monocacy Aqueduct, Brunswick, Williamsport (Cushwa), Little Tonoloway (Hancock), Fifteenmile Creek, Paw Tunnel, North Branch, and Oldtown.

Other areas of the park are potentially available for these activities. The superintendent will consider requests for permits on a case-by-case basis considering the criteria listed in 36 CFR 2.51(c). Applications may be submitted no earlier than one year before the request date of the permit.

\*Permit conditions for park areas in Montgomery County, Maryland and the District of Columbia are found in 36 CFR 7.96g.

## **SECTION 2.52 - SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATTER**

A permit issued by the superintendent may be required for the sale or distribution of printed matter. Printed matter is defined as textual printed material such as books, pamphlets, magazines and leaflets whose primary purpose is the advocacy, definition, or explanation of a group's or individual's political, religious, scientific, or moral beliefs. Suggested locations for the distribution or sale of printed matter include Great Falls Tavern area, Monocacy Aqueduct, Brunswick, Williamsport (Cushwa), Little Tonoloway (Hancock), Fifteenmile Creek, Paw Tunnel, North Branch, and Oldtown. All other areas of the park are potentially available for the sale or distribution of printed matter. The superintendent will consider requests for permits on a case-by-case basis considering the criteria listed in 36 CFR 2.52 (c). Applications may be submitted no earlier than one year before the request date of the permit.

## **SECTION 3.8-LAUNCH OR RECOVERY OF VESSELS**

(a)(2) Designated sites to launch or recover vessels by trailer.

1. Edwards Ferry
2. Monocacy
3. Nolands Ferry
4. Point of Rocks
5. Brunswick
6. Lander
7. Dargan
8. Snyders Landing
9. Taylor Landing
10. Big Slackwater

11. Four Locks
12. McCoys Ferry
13. Little Tonoloway
14. Fifteen Mile Creek
15. Spring Gap

## **SECTION 3.16 -SWIMMING OR WADING IN PARK WATERS**

- (a)(1) Areas closed to swimming and wading
- Areas designated in 36 CFR section 7.96 (e)
    - Wading to fish in the Potomac River is according to Maryland state law which in restricted areas requires the wearing of a U.S. Coast Guard approved flotation device.
  - Waters of the canal prism and basins.

## **SECTION 4.21(b) SPEED LIMITS**

- 1.0 Carderock Entrance Road  
15 mph
- 2.0 Great Falls Entrance Road  
25 mph from Falls Road to the VFW  
15 mph from the VFW to the entrance station
- 3.0 Pennyfield  
15 mph
- 4.0 River Road  
25 mph
- 5.0 Monocacy Road  
15 mph from Railroad crossing to parking lot
- 6.0 Nolands Ferry  
15 mph
- 7.0 Lander Road  
15 mph
- 8.0 Brunswick Campground Road  
15 mph
- 9.0 Canal Road
  - 9.1 30 mph Rt. 34 to Antietam Campground
  - 9.2 25 mph from Antietam Campground to Harpers Ferry Road
- 10.0 Snyders Road  
25 mph
- 11.0 Taylors Landing Road  
25 mph
- 12.0 Dam #4 Road  
25 mph
- 13.0 Four Locks Road

- 25 mph
- 14.0 Ankeney Road
- 25 mph
- 15.0 McCoys
- 15.1 25 mph Entrance Road
- 15.2 15 mph Campground
- 16.0 Berm Road
- 25 mph
- 17.0 Town Creek Aqueduct Road
- 15 mph
- 18.0 Deneen Road
- 25 mph

#### **SECTION 4.30 - BICYCLES**

- (a) Bicycle riding is permitted only on the towpath, Burma Road, Capital Crescent Trail, and the Western Maryland Rail Trail from Polly Pond to Little Orleans. Bicycles must be dismounted and walked across aqueducts and all foot bridges providing access to the Towpath. The maximum speed on designated routes within the park is 15 m.p.h.
- (g) (2) The use of helmets is subject to the requirements of state, county, and local regulations.
- (i) (1) E-bikes are allowed in the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park where traditional bicycles are allowed. E-bikes are prohibited where traditional bicycles are prohibited. Except where use of motor vehicles by the public is allowed, using the electric motor to move an e-bike without pedaling is prohibited. The Superintendent has designated these areas open to electric bicycles:
  - Trail areas where e-bikes are allowed include the Canal Towpath, Berma Road, and the Capital Crescent Trail (Pedaling required). The maximum speed on these routes is 15 mph.
  - Public roads and parking areas used by motor vehicles.

#### **SECTION 4.32 – POWERED MICROMOBILITY DEVICES**

- (a) Powered micromobility devices are defined in 36 CFR §1.4. Examples of powered micromobility devices include e-scooters, Segways, and electric self-balancing devices. The devices are allowed in the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park in the following designated areas:
  - The Canal Towpath, Berma Road, and the Capital Crescent Trail. The maximum speed on these routes is 15 mph.
  - Park roads and parking areas used by motor vehicles.

-End-