

# Great Falls Park

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
George Washington Memorial Parkway



# Junior Ranger Activity Book



This book belongs to: \_\_\_\_\_





# WELCOME, EXPLORERS!




Welcome to Great Falls Park, a part of George Washington Memorial Parkway. With this book in your hands, you're already on your way to becoming a Junior Ranger! To become a Great Falls Park Junior Ranger, follow the directions below to begin your adventure.

1

## Complete this booklet



- Complete both pages marked with  icon.
- Complete at least 5 additional activities.
- *Complete all the activities to earn a special button!*

2

## Check your work

Show your completed booklet to a Park Ranger, friends, or family.

3

## Get your Junior Ranger badge!

- Complete at the park: Return your completed book to a ranger at Great Falls Park.
- Complete at home: You can also mail your completed book with your return address to:

**George Washington Memorial Parkway  
Headquarters**

**ATTN: Junior Ranger Program**

700 George Washington Memorial Pkwy  
McLean, VA 22101

**Your address:**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



# 1

## Staying Safe in Our Park



*While National Parks are wonderful places to visit, explore, and learn about the world, it is important to do so safely. These rules are here to keep everyone safe: you, other visitors, your pets, and the wildlife who call this place home.*



Draw a line between the rule and the symbol that matches it.  
Follow these rules while you are in the park.



No swimming or wading



Stay back from the cliff edge  
and shore edge



Do not take any plants, rocks,  
or animals



Keep pets on a 6 foot leash



No littering or leaving  
behind trash







# 2 What Makes Our Park Special

*Great Falls Park is filled with many things to discover. We get our name from the massive waterfall of the Potomac River, but this park is more than just a place to look at the waterfall.*



As you explore the park today, use your senses to find these special features. Check them off the list below once you find them!

Great Falls



Mather Gorge



Patowmack Canal



Flood Pole



Matildaville Ruins



A Natural Pothole



Local Wildlife



Plants



Draw or list something else you discovered



# 3

## Home Sweet Habitat



Great Falls Park is a very biodiverse area. This means our park is the habitat for many species of animals and plants. At least 150 different species of birds rely on our park for food and shelter. Each plant and animal has a slightly different role in the community.



Look at each picture below, use the word bank to complete the sentences!



I am a.....  
I eat .....  
I can .....



I am a.....  
I eat .....  
I can .....



I am a.....  
I eat .....  
I can .....



I am a.....  
I eat .....  
I can .....



I am a.....  
I eat .....  
I can .....



I am .....  
I eat .....  
I can .....

### Word Bank:

- Names:** Bluebells - Bald Eagle - Squirrel - Frog - Red Fox - Deer  
**Foods:** Bugs - Mice - Fish - Plants - Sun - Nuts  
**Skills:** Jump - Fly - Climb - Run - Bloom - Walk



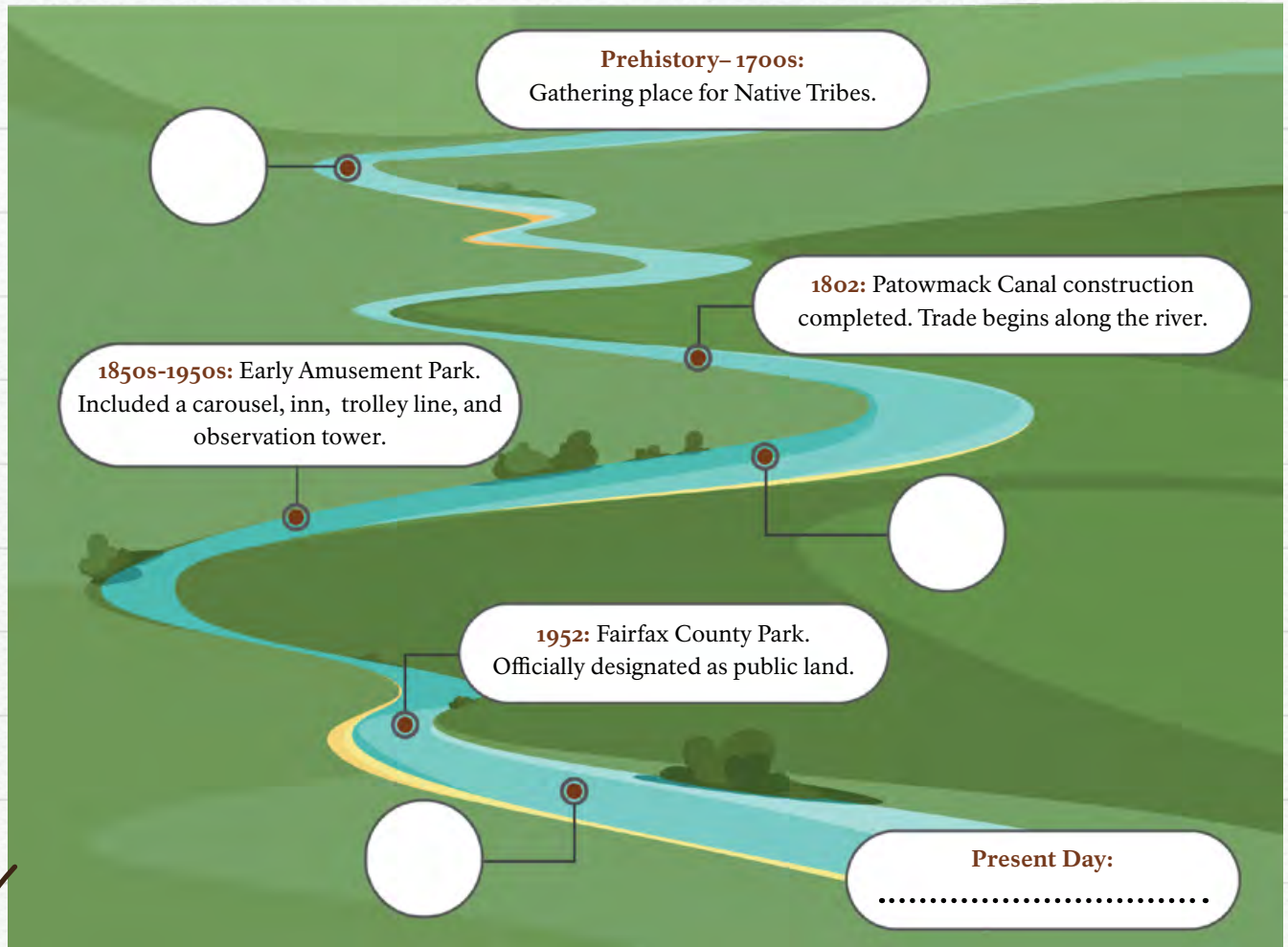


# 4 One Long Journey

*Just like the river below the overlooks, time is always flowing. We can learn a lot from the past. It shows us who we are today and how one event can lead to another.*



Place the number from the missing timeline event listed below in the correct circle.



## Missing Timeline Events:

- 1** 1828: Patowmack Canal closes down, The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal began construction as a replacement.
- 2** 1966: National Park: Joins the National Park Service.
- 3** 1785: Patowmack Canal construction starts, the first canal system built in the United States.



Which event of our journey is most interesting to you and why?

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# 5

## How Locks Work

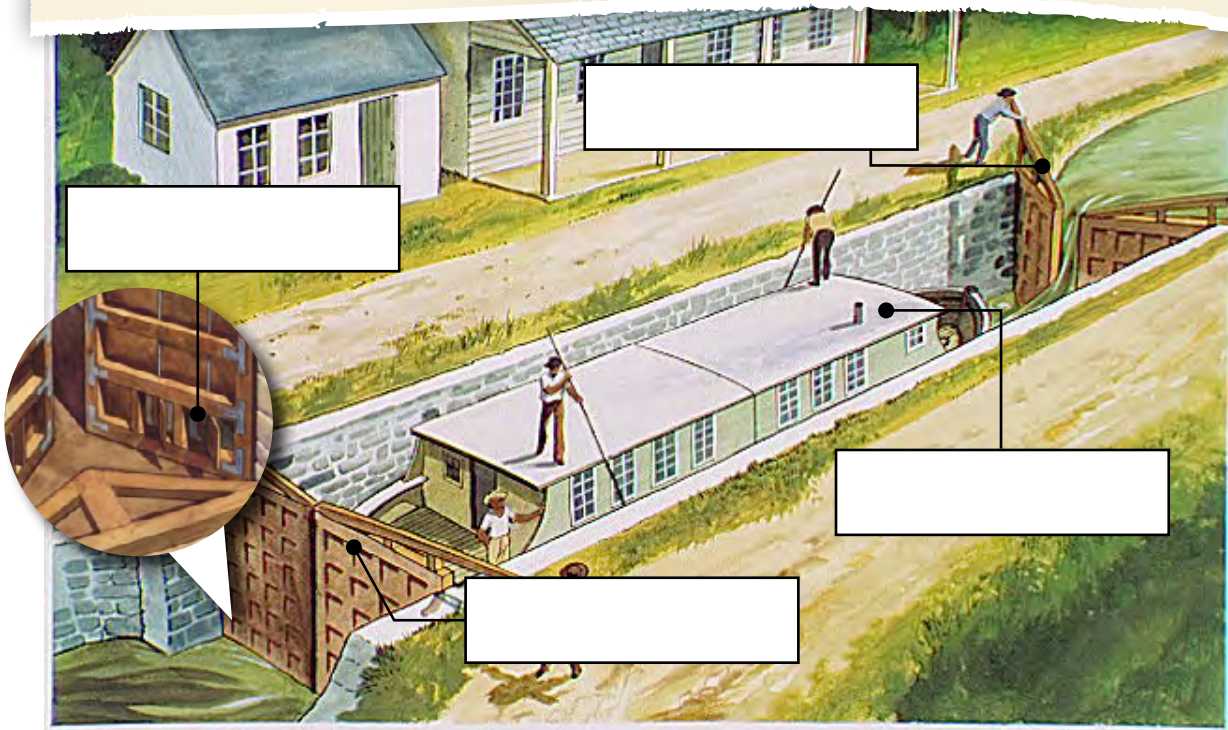
As you explore around the old canal, you will see some old ruins. Those are canal locks. Locks work like elevators for boats, allowing them to safely navigate around steep cliffs and obstacles. Great Falls Park once had 5 locks on the Patowmack Canal.



Read the following passage to learn how a canal lock works and label all the parts of the diagram.



To lower a **riverboat** from the upper to lower level, the boat enters through open doors. The **upper lock doors** close and the **wickets** (smaller doors) are opened to drain the lock. The boat lowers until the water level evens out. The **lower lock doors** are opened for the boat to continue its journey. The process is done in reverse to raise the boat, with water filling up the lock.



Think about how you got here today. What made your journey possible?

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.....





# “An Old and Obscure Citizen”



## *Have you ever heard of Captain George Pointer?*

*George Pointer was an enslaved man born in 1773 in Maryland. When he was 13, George Pointer’s enslaver rented him to the Patowmack Canal Company and he was sent here to work. At the age of 19, he bought his freedom for \$300.*

*He worked for the company 43 years, eventually earning the title of “Captain.” He was the company’s last Superintendent.*

*Captain Pointer lived in a small cottage on the Maryland side of the river with his wife and three children.*

*Captain Pointer told his story in a letter listing all the things he had accomplished. His letter protected his family and his home when the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal construction threatened to destroy it, and it told us the story of his life.*



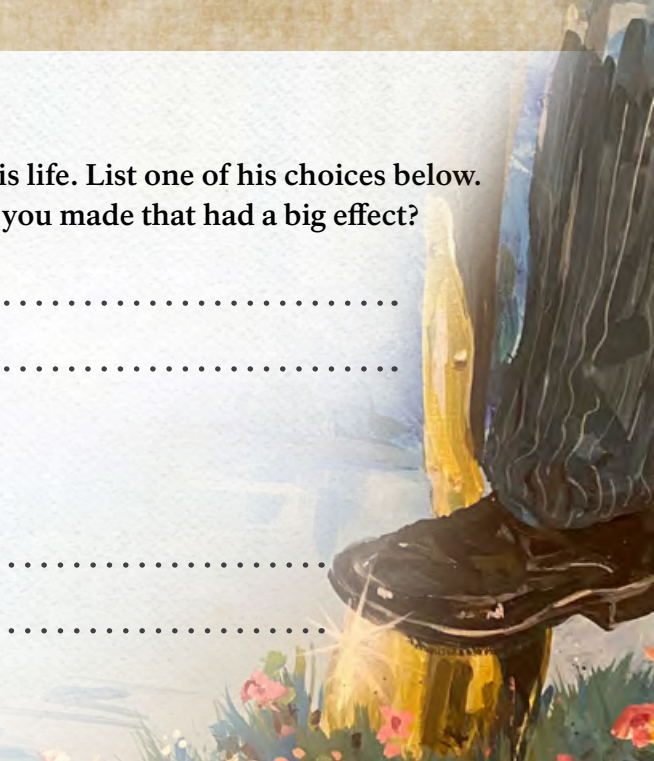
**Captain George Pointer made choices that changed his life. List one of his choices below. How did this choice affect others? What choices have you made that had a big effect?**

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.....



**What does home mean to you?**

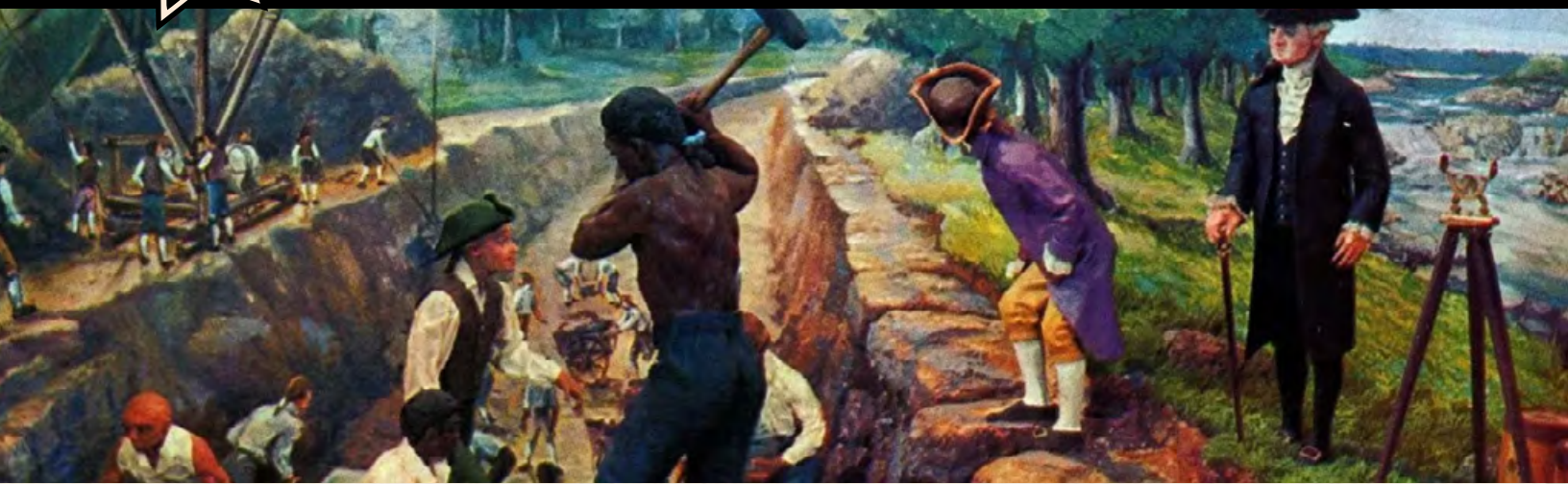
.....  
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# Who Built the Canal?



The Patowmack Company rented hundreds of enslaved laborers. They dug ditches, laid stone, and hauled materials. They worked under oppressive conditions. Enslaved people faced incredible hardships as they were kidnapped, trafficked and exploited for their labor. There are few records about individual enslaved people since they were considered property. Bills of sale, manumission papers, diaries, auction notices and estate settlements are some ways to learn more about them.



Decode the names of some of the enslaved people who worked here.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

1. This enslaved person was a skilled blacksmith who sharpened drill bits used to drill through solid rock at the canal cut. His enslaver, Basil Magruder, was paid \$3 a month for his skill and labor.

13	18	10	15	5		

2. This enslaved person died in 1804 during construction and his enslaver, John Templeman, unsuccessfully sued the company for negligence. Enslaved people were viewed as property, and were treated as such by the legal system.

13	18	6	18	1	14	11				

3. This enslaved person sought his freedom from the company along with another enslaved man named Mr. Matt. Enslaved people often tried to seek their freedom as a form of resistance against their enslavement. Some were successful, many were not.

13	18	13	1	20	20	8	5	23				

4. This enslaved person was a skilled shoemaker. This person was one of the very few people listed with their first and last name.

13	18	20	15	13	8	15	16	5					





# The Native People of the Potomac



## Tribal Land Acknowledgment

*Let us begin by acknowledging that we are in the territory of many Indigenous peoples that have known the Potomac Valley and its lands and waters as their homeland for thousands of years to the present day, including Algonquin, Iroquois, and Siouan peoples.*

*We continue to build on our engagement with traditionally associated Native American*

*communities to identify all of the different connections with these lands held by many Native Nations. Together we recognize the Native Nations' past, present, and future unbroken and unbreakable connections to these lands. We honor the resilience and perseverance of these Nations even as colonizers claimed this land as their own.*

### ★ What is a Tribal Land Acknowledgment?

It is a promise to continually communicate with native tribes that first lived on and used this land to keep their history, culture, and stories alive.



In your own words, what does the Tribal Land Acknowledgment mean to you?

.....  
.....



# 9

## Navigating the Waterways

*Native American Peoples, such as the Algonquian (Al-gone-key-an) and Manahoac (Man-uh-walk) tribes, have been paddling the Potomac for longer than anyone can remember. They used the area around Great Falls as a gathering place to meet and trade goods. Sometimes even the most experienced navigators got in trouble and needed help.*



Guide the canoe around the obstacles so the tribal members can make it safely to the Great Falls meeting place.







# Rocking around the Park

*Carved out to its current form during the last Ice Age, the Potomac River has been weathering away the rocks to create the stunning waterfalls we see today. Long ago, the river was higher and the boulders you hike on might have been the riverbed. Multiple small streams broke off and carried silt and gravel long distances. The rocks by the river were sharper before millions of years of erosion smoothed them out.*



**Draw the rock that you see at Great Falls Park during your visit and imagine what the rock might have looked like in the earlier days of the Potomac River.**

**NOW**

**EARLY DAYS**



# 11

## Ecosystem Invaders

Sometimes other species are introduced to an ecosystem by accident or through human actions. These species can make it harder for native species to survive. These are called *invasive species* and they are also in Great Falls Park. How much do you know about these invaders?



Answer true or false to all the questions about our park's ecosystem and invasive species.

- 1** Invasive species can outcompete native species, pushing them out of the ecosystem. **True or False**
- 2** Species must be from another county to be invasive. **True or False**
- 3** Any type of organism can be considered invasive. **True or False**
- 4** All non-native species are invasive. **True or False**
- 5** Human activity is the primary spreader of invasive species. **True or False**



Ask a ranger how you can help stop the spread of invasive species. Write down one way you can help!

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*National parks are special places, but they are small parts of a larger whole. Every community has important places to learn about. All of us can help protect these places for current and future generations. There are many ways to help!*



**How can you protect the world around you?**



**What is a special place you know?**

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**Why is it special to you?**

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**How can you take care of it?**

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# Certificate of Achievement

\_\_\_\_\_ has successfully completed the requirements to be an official National Park Service Junior Ranger at Great Falls Park.

## JUNIOR RANGER PLEDGE

As a Junior Ranger, I promise to explore the wonders of national parks and nature all around me, to learn the human stories of the past and present, to learn the importance of every living thing, to live every day as Earth's best friend, and to help others do the same.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Junior Ranger signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Age

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ranger signature





# Continue Exploring George Washington Memorial Parkway

## 1. Great Falls Park\*

- *Great Falls Park Book*
- *Captain George Pointer Book*

## 2. Clara Barton National Historic Site\*

## 3. Glen Echo Park\*

## 4. Turkey Run Park - Parkway Headquarters\*

## 5. Fort Marcy

## 6. Theodore Roosevelt Island\*

- *Theodore Roosevelt Island Book*
- *United States Colored Troops Book*

## 7. U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial

## 8. Netherlands Carillon

## 9. Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial\*

## 10. Lady Bird Johnson Park

## 11. Gravelly Point/ Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary

## 12. Daingerfield Island

## 13. Jones Point Lighthouse

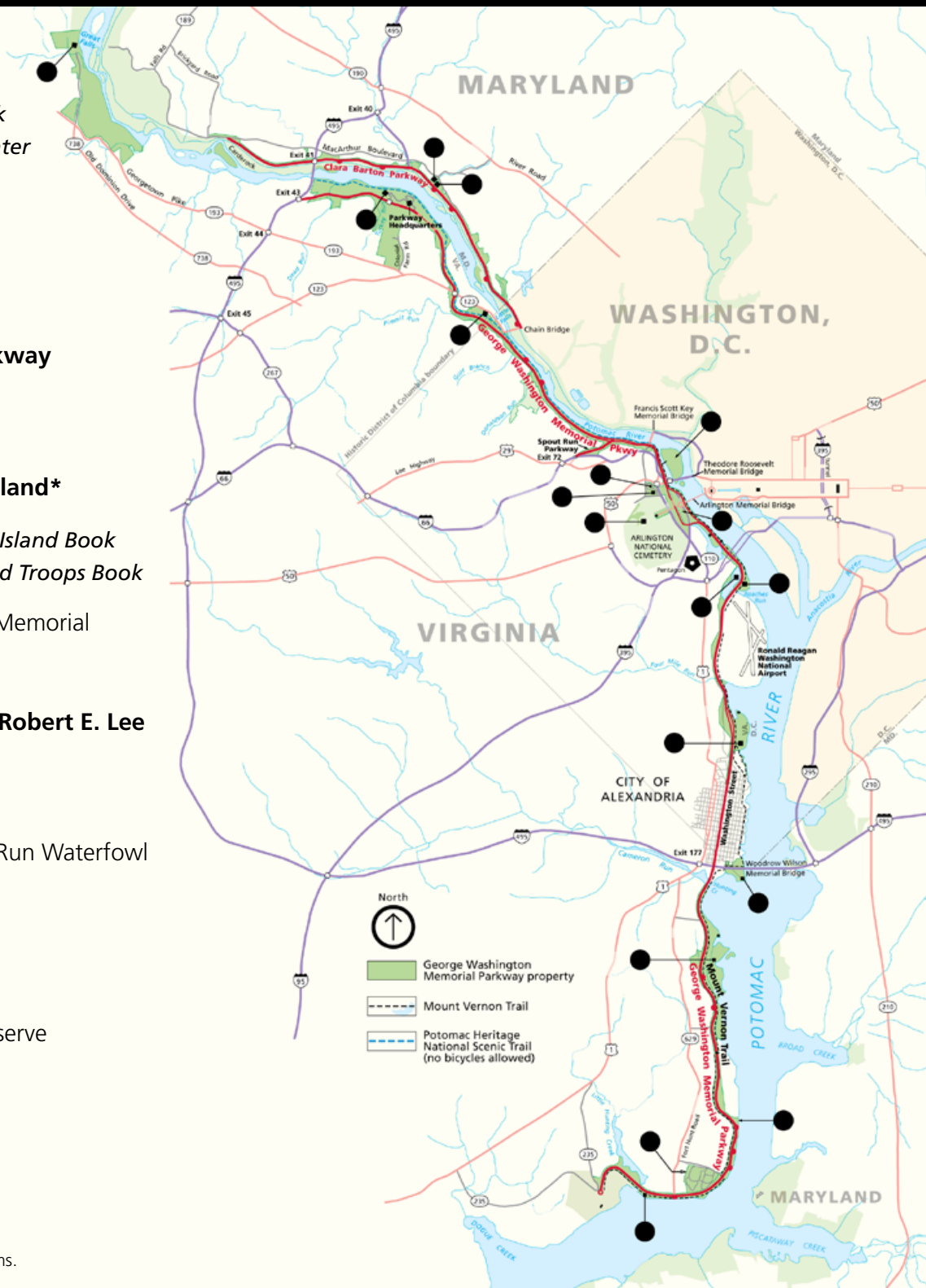
## 14. Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve

## 15. Collingwood Picnic Area

## 16. Fort Hunt Park\*

## 17. Riverside Park

\* Park sites with junior ranger programs.



### Credits:

Page 8: Eight-year-old Mary Ann Plummer Harris piloting the boat with her grandfather, Capt. George Pointer © Richard Swartz.

Page 9: Diorama of George Washington Inspecting Construction of the Potomac River Canal (published circa 1958) / Hagley Museum and Library in Delaware.

Page 10: Conjectural visualization of the town at Werowocomoco. NPS / Rob Wood.

### George Washington Memorial Parkway

#### Great Falls Park

9200 Old Dominion Dr, McLean, VA 22102

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

(703) 757-3101

Content by NPS GWMP Interpretive Rangers.

