

C&O Canal Park Plans Two-Year Repair Projects at Lock 5 /Feeder Canal and Violettes Lock to Great Falls - CCA Seeks to Minimize Impact on Paddlers

Dear Fellow-Paddlers: (13 Sept 2022)

The C&O Canal National Historical Park (NHP) is planning two years of repairs on the lower Canal (Mile 1 to 24 - Violettes Lock) which could affect paddling in the Lock 5/6 Feeder Canal slalom training area and in the Violettes Lock 23 Loop area. The CCA's talks with our normal contacts in the NHP, led to a video-conference on August 8. There Dep. Supt. John Noel and Chief Eng. Joe Reed described in full to our river Access Committee team their plans for repairs to the Lower Canal over the next two years.

1 - NHP says the construction will not affect the Feeder Canal Slalom Practice Area – or Z-Channel in route to Little Falls.

- The contracts will run two years - late 2022 to late 2024.
- The NHP plans to hold a public meeting on this probably in October.
- NHP's needs to renew the “Stop Lock” (Guard Lock) at the bottom of the Feeder Canal that enters the Canal proper at Lock 5.
- To protect this work they will build a temporary cofferdam just upstream from the Stop Lock.
- The construction staging area will be the Lock 5 parking at the end of the Feeder and the Canal proper. This keeps construction out of Lock 6 parking. CCA seeks to maximize paddler parking at Lock 5 when not in use by the construction company.
- Lock 5 will be renewed. This should allow paddling up to Lock 6.

2 - NHP will rehabilitate the prism (bottom) of the three Levels between the Great Falls

Tavern (Lock 20) and Violettes Lock 23. - opens 10 miles of new loops (river & canal) paddling.

- Also a two-year timetable. CCA will advocate that the top (Violettes Lock Loop) Level 22 be kept watered during paddling season.

3 - Georgetown Level 4 and Rebuilding Lock Gates 1 and 2 in Georgetown

- NHP's plan to drain this whole level up to Lock 5 could mean paddlers must carry back to Lock 5 or Lock 6 after running Little Falls. CCA seeks to keep water in the top of level 4 for the return from the Little Falls run.

The CCA is pleased that the NHP intends to upgrade navigability on the lower canal and looks forward to working with them to mitigate the impact on paddlers. We will keep paddlers up to date on these projects.

Please address your thoughts and suggestions to:

Alf Cooley and the CCA River Access Committee, who have the lead on this with the NHP. We will provide updates on the CCA website.

For questions, please look at the CCA website or contact Alf alfcooley@gmail.com rather than inundating the C&O NHP with calls.