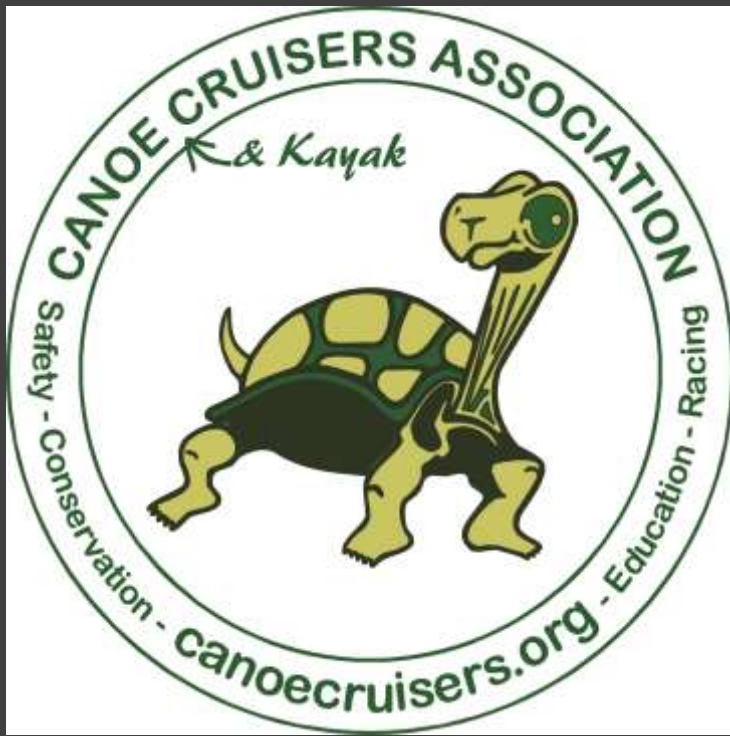


A photograph of a stone arch bridge over a canal. The bridge is made of dark stone and has a large, rounded arch. In the distance, under the arch, several people are paddling on the water. The water is calm and reflects the bridge and the sky. The sky is a pale blue. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

PADDLING AND THE C&O CANAL

ACCESS NEEDS OF THE PADDLING
COMMUNITY

21 OCTOBER 2020



WE ARE THE
CANOE
CRUISERS
ASSOCIATION



Photo Michelle Dandre Lowell

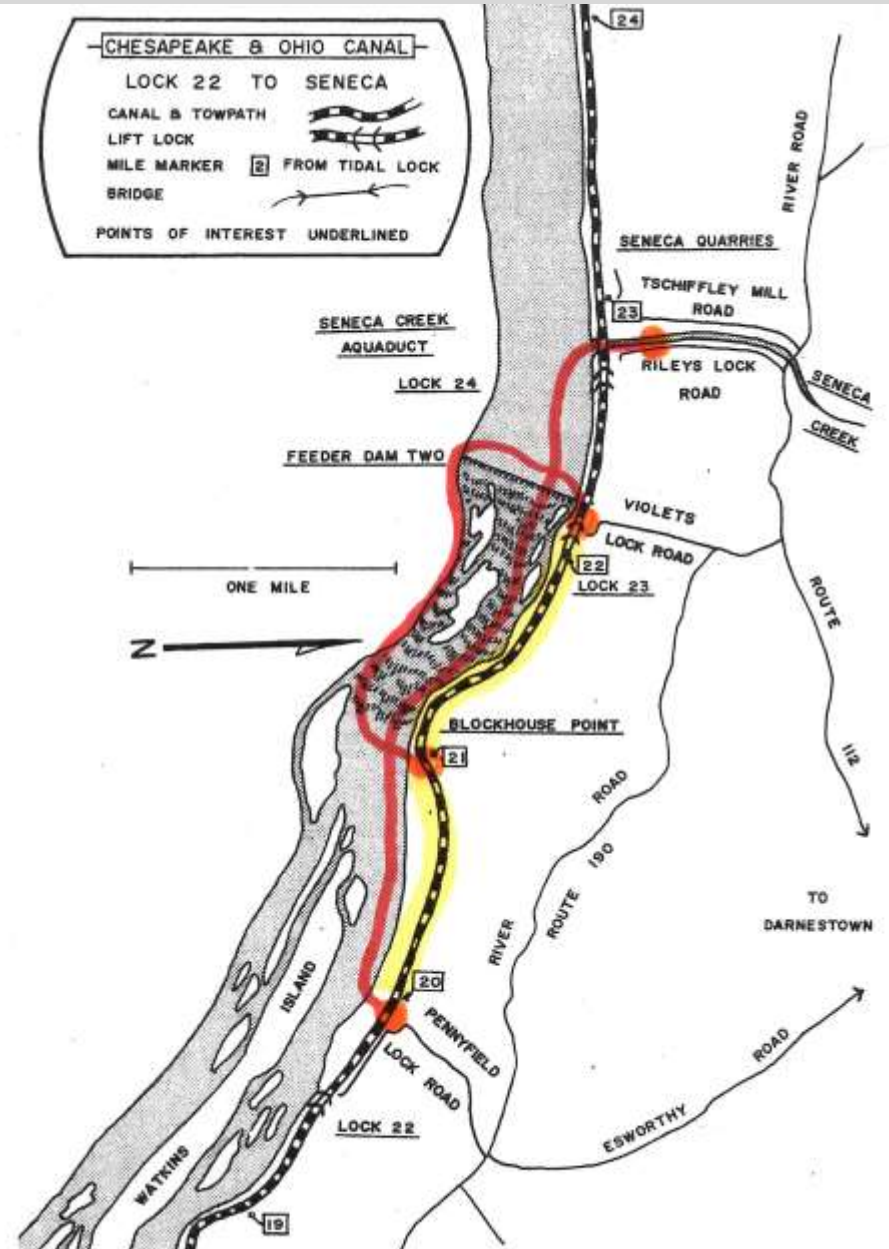
SINCE 1956 CCA HAS:

- Been a voice of the Washington paddling community
- Organized thousands of paddling trips for people of all skill levels
- Taught kayaking and canoeing, paddling safety and rescue
- Worked on river conservation and supported other river conservation groups
- Planned and staged the longest continuously run annual whitewater race in the United States

Here are three examples of what we do:

Violettes Lock Loop

- From Violettes Lock, downstream via GW Canal or through Seneca Breaks, returning via the C&O canal
- Pennyfield option
- Loops permit COVID 19 safe paddling



Novice at Surfer's Ledge



Photo: J. Snitzer



Photo © Barb Brown

Evening at Seneca Breaks

Photo © 2020 Barb Brown

Returning upstream on the canal

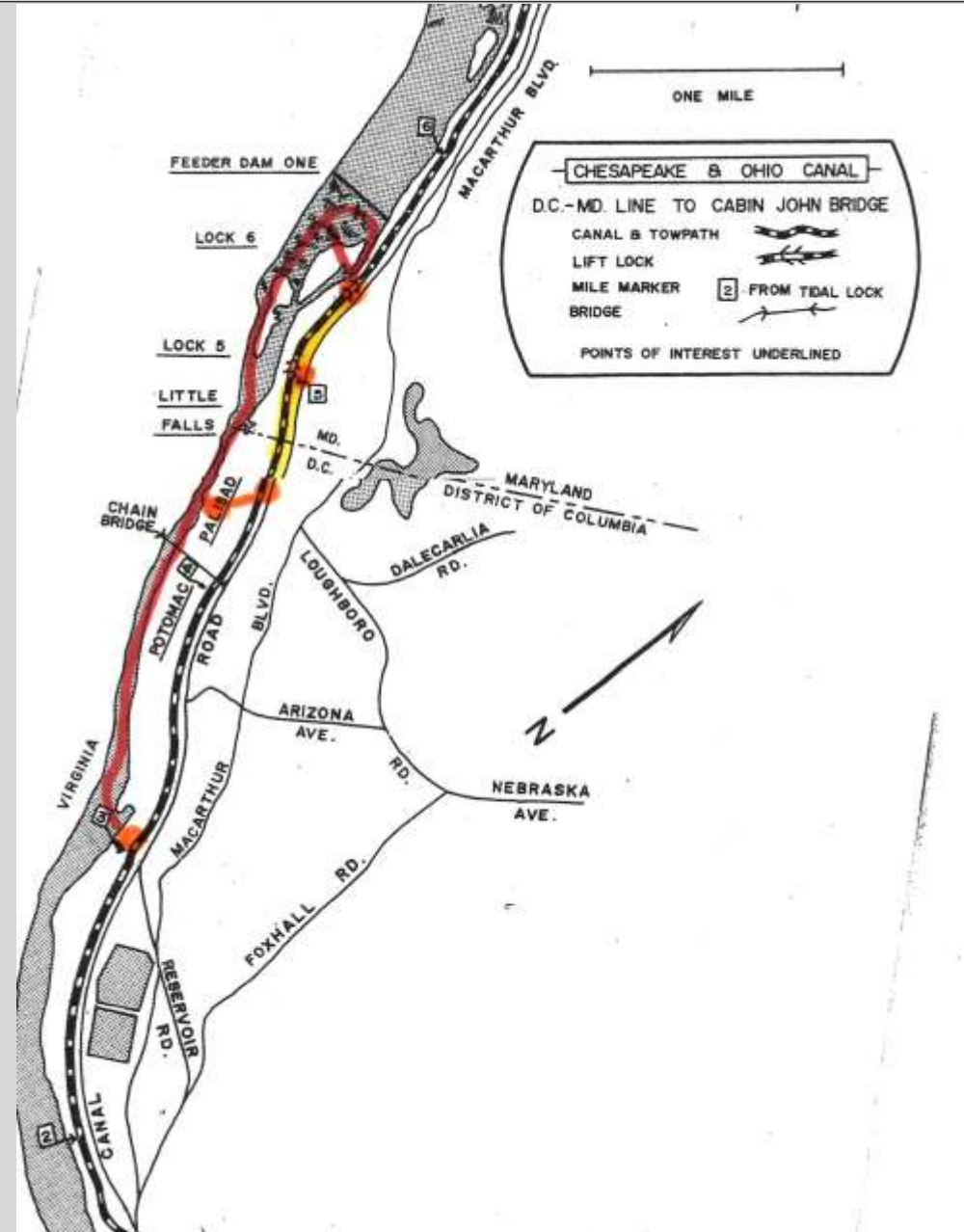


Photos © 2020 Barb Brown



Little Falls Loop


- From the Lock 6 Feeder Canal, down through Little Falls, exiting at the Dalecarlia intake, returning via the C&O Canal
- Fletchers Cove option



A kayaker in a yellow kayak is navigating a turbulent river section. The kayaker is wearing a yellow helmet and a red life vest, and is using a yellow paddle. The river is filled with white water rapids and a small waterfall cascading over dark rocks. The surrounding forest is dense with trees displaying vibrant autumn foliage in shades of green, yellow, and orange. The sky is overcast and grey.

Beaver Slide

Photo © 2020 Barb Brown

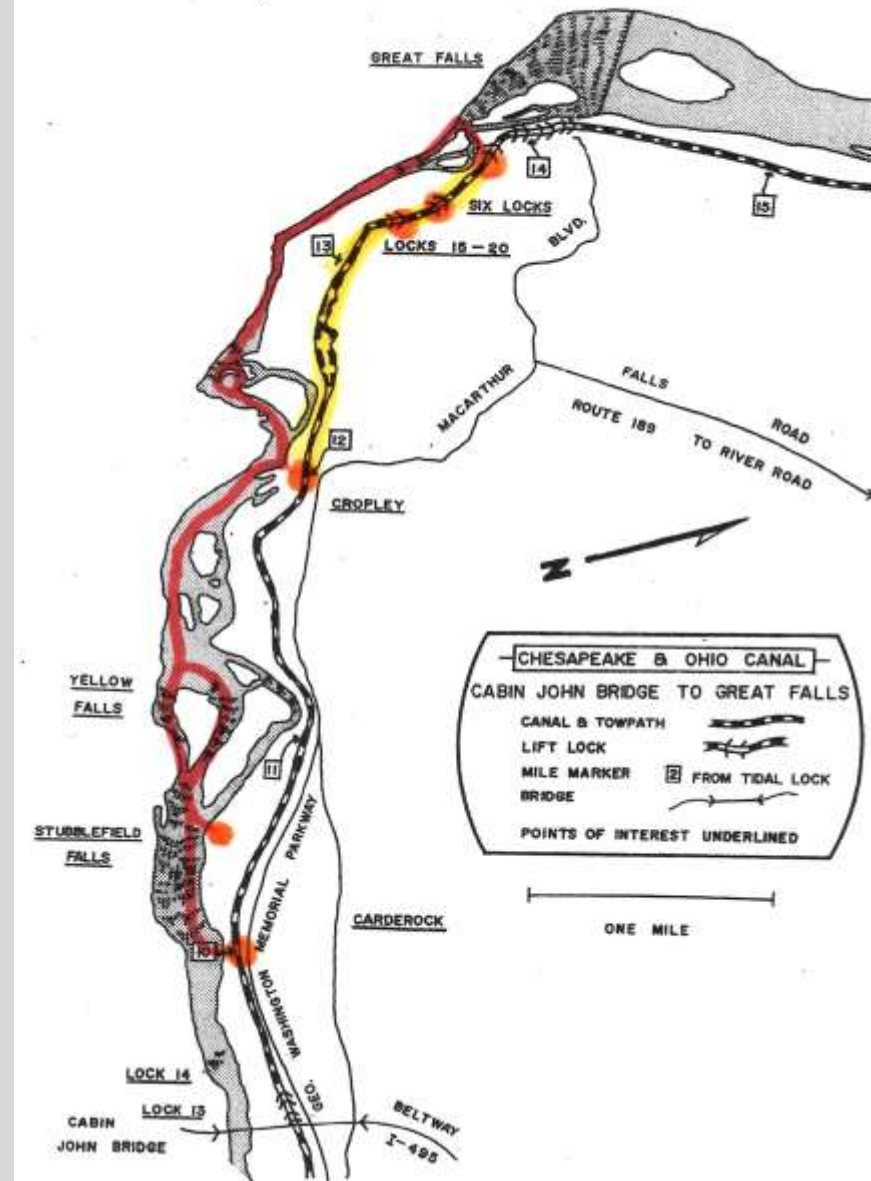
A photograph of a kayaker in a white helmet and blue shirt navigating a turbulent white-water rapid. The kayaker is positioned on the right side of the frame, leaning forward and using a paddle to maneuver through the churning water. The river is filled with large, dark rocks, and the water is splashing and foaming as it flows over them. The background shows a dense forest of green trees and foliage on a steep bank. The overall scene is dynamic and captures the intensity of the rapids.

Final rapid, Little Falls

Photo © 2020 Barb Brown

Mather Gorge Loop

- Anglers Inn, up the C&O Canal to the Sandy Beach trail, down through Mather Gorge to the Anglers take-out
- Optional legs to Carderock or to Lock 10





Mather Gorge back channel at 7'
from Sandy Beach



Photo © 2020 Barb Brown

Putting in from Sandy Beach

Mather Gorge below Great Falls

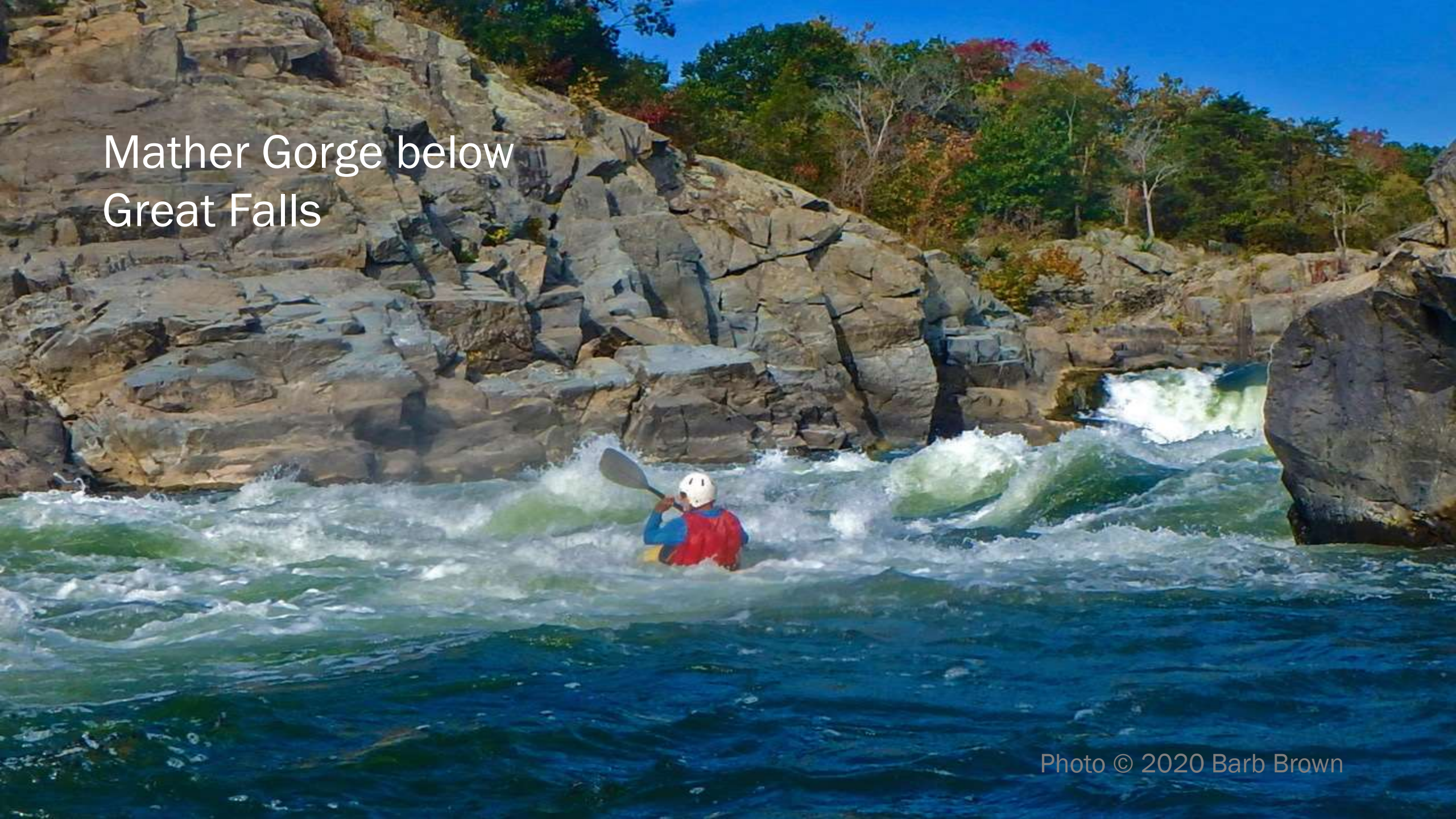


Photo © 2020 Barb Brown

There are access issues

TO PADDLE THE POTOMAC, WE NEED ACCESS TO THE WATER

- Safe, legal parking
- A safe path from the car to the river or the canal while carrying a boat
- Access up and down the bank; the issue of "*the last ten feet*"
- Water in the C&O Canal

Last ten feet concern:
Tree root damage

Violettes Lock



Two more *last ten feet* concerns:
The rock pile at the
Little Falls take-out



Photo: Alf Cooley



Photo: J Snitzer

The always-slippery
take-out at Lock 10



Low water in Pennyfield Level
breaks the Violettes circuits

Photo: Alf Cooley



Photo: Alf Cooley

Path problem: Towpath washout
at mile 21

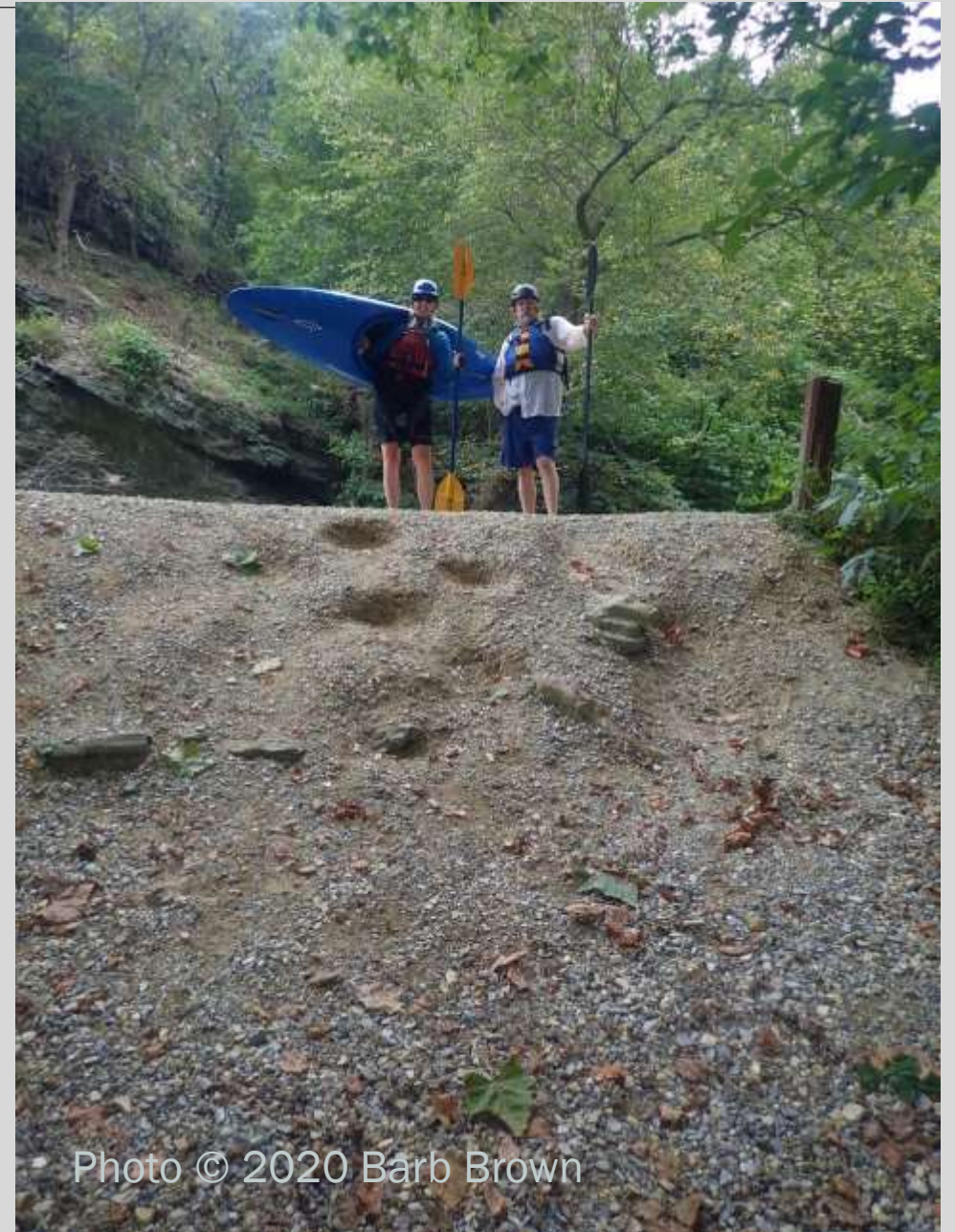


Photo © 2020 Barb Brown



Access
problem: the
train crossing
is dangerous
and no longer
legal

Weverton

Photo © 2020
Barb Brown

Path problem: wash
out and erosion

Sandy Beach put-in.



Parking area erosion
and deposition issues

Violettes Lock





Parking capacity: Violettes
Lock parking lot, filled by
9:00 AM Sunday

What do we suggest?

Improved parking:

- More space for vehicles and better use of current space
- Better storm water management: slowing runoff, capturing sediment
- Repairs and improvements to access roads

Better walks and paths:

- Regular maintenance of existing paths, steps, and bridges
- Repair of pathways with natural materials to improve safety, manage stormwater, and protect riparian zones
- Safe and legal access at railroad crossings
- Improved signage at river access points for river users, particularly novices

Riverbank access—*the last ten feet:*

- New steps and ramps for safe access to the water
- Protection for the river and canal banks, and for riparian vegetation
- Site appropriate, low input construction: stone and gravel rather than concrete, treated lumber, and rebar

A re-watered canal:

- Predictable water in the canal during the April through October paddling season
- Suitable depth for paddlers and rowers
- Simple gauges for canal water levels, posting of levels and planned changes
- Maintenance appropriate for use



Photo Alf Cooley

Simple signs
help novices
find the
takeout and
make the river
a safer place



Simple steps and ramps
in crushed stone
See also: Appian Way





Gravel for better traction and reduced erosion where water flow is limited

Violettes Lock

Feeder Canal



FINAL THOUGHTS

- The Potomac River is central to thousands of regional paddlers
- The C&O Canal NHP is essential for Potomac River accessibility for boaters, anglers, birders, hikers, cyclists, and picnickers
- All rely on safe parking, safe trails, access across the last ten feet, and water in the canal.
- Thank you for the opportunity to explain who we are and what we do.
- We would welcome a chance to take you paddling on the Potomac River and the C&O Canal

Thank you for your
consideration

Photo © 2020 Barb Brown