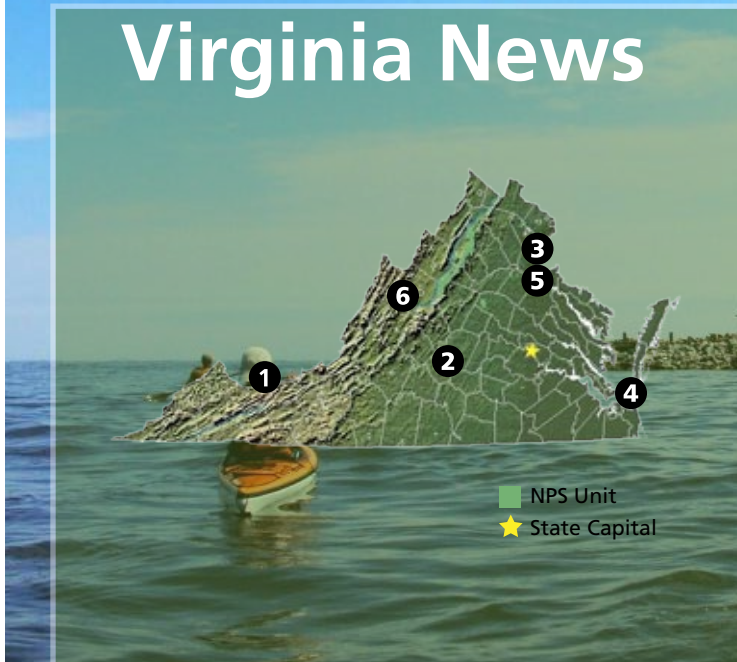




# Virginia News



A lighthouse along the Mathews Maritime Heritage Trail

## PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2011

### CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Great Eastern Trail - KY/VA/WV links  
Great Eastern Trail Association
2. James River Heritage Trail  
VA Department of Conservation and Recreation
3. Occoquan Water Trail  
Occoquan Watertrail League (OWL)
4. Southeast Coast Saltwater Paddling Trail  
VA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation
5. Spotsylvania Greenway Initiative  
Spotsylvania Greenways Initiative
6. Upper James Outdoor Recreation Plan  
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

### ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. RTCA staff provides technical assistance to community groups and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect natural areas and water resources and enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. We help communities plan, organize partnerships, and achieve on-the-ground success on projects they initiate.

## Recent Successes

### Mathews Maritime Heritage Trail

From its early history, the economic strength of Mathews has been tied to the sea. During the latter part of the 1700s and early half of the 1800s, Mathews was one of the nation's premier shipbuilding centers, and a Port of Entry to the United States. Today, the bustling wharfs and shipyards are silent, but the Mathews Maritime Foundation (MMF) and its partners are working to ensure the stories and landscapes of Mathews

*“From building enthusiasm and community coalitions, to planning events, securing funding, organizing tasks, and encouraging team members, RTCA has helped us chart a course for a successful water trail project”*

- Janet Loyd  
Mathews Maritime Foundation

“Golden Age” are not forgotten. The proposed Mathews Maritime Heritage Trail would provide a means for preserving and learning about the county's rich maritime history while exploring the more than 200 miles of shoreline on the Chesapeake Bay's tributary rivers, creeks, and coves. In addition, the project builds on the Mathews Blueways Water Trail, a designated component of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways network.

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# Current Projects

## 1. Great Eastern Trail - KY/VA/WV links

Project Partners: Great Eastern Trail Association

RTCA Contact: Peggy Pings

Location: Southern WV, eastern KY, and southwestern VA.

Congressional Districts: KY-4, VA-9, WV-3

### Project Goal

Create a 350 mile hiking trail link between the Breaks Interstate Park in VA/KY to the Allegheny Trail on the WV/VA border. This trail will fill a gap in the over 1,800 mile Great Eastern Trail.

## 2. James River Heritage Trail

Project Partners: VA Department of Conservation and Recreation

RTCA Contact: Ursula Lemanski

Location: James River corridor in central Virginia, from the headwaters to the Chesapeake Bay

Congressional District: VA-1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

### Project Goal

Development of a braided network of land and water trails from the Chesapeake Bay to the headwaters of the James that connect communities and resources throughout the watershed.

## 3. Occoquan Water Trail

Project Partners: Occoquan Watertrail League (OWL)



Birding along the Trail



Lynnhaven Beach on the Southeast Coastal Paddle Trail

RTCA Contact: Anne O'Neill

Location: The 40 miles of the Upper and Lower Occoquan River and the National Recreation Occoquan Water Trail.

Congressional District: VA-10, 11

### Project Goal

Identify improvements to the Occoquan Water Trail for signage, rest areas, and access. Creation of a public education program.

## 4. Southeast Coast Saltwater Paddling Trail

Project Partners: VA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation

RTCA Contact: Ursula Lemanski

Location: Virginia coast from North Carolina to the Chesapeake Bay, part of a larger multi-state project from Georgia to Virginia.

Congressional District: VA-4

### Project Goal

Development of a water trail along the Atlantic Coast from the Florida Circumnavigation Saltwater Paddling Trail to the Chesapeake Bay.

## 5. Spotsylvania Greenway Initiative

Project Partners: Spotsylvania Greenways Initiative

RTCA Contact: Ursula Lemanski

Location: Spotsylvania County and City of Fredericksburg

Congressional District: VA-1

### Project Goal

Develop a 100-mile system of trails and greenways in Spotsylvania County, that connect natural and cultural sites, provide recreation and wellness opportunities, and inspire respect and responsible stewardship of green space resources.

## 6. Upper James Outdoor Recreation Plan

Project Partners: Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

RTCA Contact: Ursula Lemanski

Location: Rockbridge and Botetourt Counties and City of Lexington and Bueva Vista

Congressional District: VA-6

### Project Goal

Develop a regional trails system that integrates water trails, hiking and walking trails, and bicycling routes, and connects historic and natural resources throughout the Upper James region of Virginia.

## We're Here For You.

Could your project benefit from RTCA Staff Assistance?

Contact us to find out.



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## 2010 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,251	Miles of Trail Developed
1,694	Miles of River Conserved
25,370	Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected
94%	Percentage of Community Partners Satisfied

Find more information online at  
[www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)



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# Recent Successes cont.

## Capital Region Greenway: James River Branch Rail Trail Pilot Project

Throughout America, communities are taking steps to revitalize neighborhoods, and restore neglected parks, waterfronts, and public infrastructure. Many of these efforts focus on improving conditions for walking and bicycling as a way to encourage physical activity and promote health. Richmond is in a position to take advantage of this growing trend with an exemplary park system, a growing interest in walking and bicycling, and a nationally significant river—the James.

In 2009, Doug Conner, Richmond's 9th District Councilman convened a committee to assess options and opportunities for converting an inactive railroad right-of-way to an urban greenway and trail in Southside Richmond. The committee worked in collaboration with RTCA, pro bono landscape architects, and adjacent neighborhoods to develop a vision and conceptual plan for the trail. Completed in March 2010, the conceptual plan graphically illustrates the vision of a multi-use trail, and the opportunity to connect neighborhoods, schools, businesses, parks, and community facilities.

Since completion of the plan in March 2010, the "Friends of the JRB" has been established to assist with partnership development and outreach; and in May 2010, a documentary of the JRB was aired by "Virginia Currents," a local public television program. In June 2010, the Mayor of Richmond established the Richmond Pedestrian, Bicycling and Trails Planning Commission to oversee implementation of the JRB as well as other trail and greenway initiatives.



Team assessing the James River Branch Rail Trail