

# Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is happening?

The National Park Service is creating a **comprehensive plan** for the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail.

This plan will guide the trail's future across **Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.**

The plan will help the National Park Service and its partners protect important places, improve the visitor experience, and make decisions more clearly and consistently.

### Why is the National Park Service doing this now?

The trail crosses many communities, parks, waterways, and jurisdictions. Many partners help care for it.

The plan will give everyone a shared guide for how to manage the trail, protect resources, improve access, and help visitors understand where to go and what to expect.

The plan also helps meet requirements of the **National Trails System Act.**

### What will the plan do?

The plan will:

- clarify the trail's purpose;
- set goals for protecting natural, cultural, and historic resources;
- improve the experience for people who hike, bike, paddle, ride horses, and visit trail sites;
- explain how the National Park Service, states, local governments, and nonprofit partners will work together;
- create a process for adding and recognizing future trail sections; and
- help make signs, maps, and visitor information more consistent.

## **What will the plan not do?**

The plan will **not** approve construction projects.

Any future construction or site-specific project would go through a separate review process.

## **How is this different from past plans and agreements?**

Past documents focused on specific projects or individual partner roles.

This plan looks at the **entire trail network**. It gives shared guidance for the full trail system.

## **How will the National Park Service work with partners?**

The National Park Service will continue working with states, local governments, nonprofit groups, communities, and trail users.

The plan will help define who does what, how trail sections may be added, and how partners can provide a more connected and consistent trail experience.

## **What is trail segment certification?**

Certification is a way to recognize trail sections that meet Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail standards.

A certified section supports resource protection, safety, access, trail identity, and connections to the larger trail network.

The plan will explain how future trail sections may be proposed, reviewed, and certified.

## **How will the plan protect resources and improve visitor use?**

The trail includes rivers, forests, historic places, communities, parks, and public lands.

The plan will help balance public access with resource protection. It will also help improve safety, signs, directions, and the overall visitor experience.

## **How can I comment?**

**Share your comments from May 28 through June 29, 2026.**

Submit comments online at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/pohecompplan>

You can also learn more and ask questions during the virtual public meeting.

## When is the public meeting?

### Virtual public meeting

**May 28, 2026**

**6 p.m. EDT**

Meeting details will be posted at:

<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/pohecompplan>

## What is the timeline?

**Spring 2026:** Public outreach begins.

**Late 2026:** The National Park Service expects to share a draft plan for public review.

**2027:** The National Park Service expects to complete the final plan.

## Where can I learn more?

Visit the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail website: <https://www.nps.gov/pohe>

## Share your thoughts

Review the project information.

Attend the virtual public meeting on **May 28, 2026, at 6 p.m. EDT.**

Submit your comments by **June 29, 2026.**

Your feedback will help shape the future of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail!