

Great Falls Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior



Dear Friends:

For many of us, Great Falls Park holds a special place in our lives. A place unlike any other with dramatic vistas of the Potomac, as the river builds up speed and force, tumbling over jagged and steep rocks, and flows roaring through a narrow gorge. Each year more than 500,000 people come here to discover the engineering feat known as Patowmack Canal, to hike, ride horseback, climb rocks, kayak or picnic, or to simply enjoy the spectacular views of the falls and the river.

Over the past few years, several planning projects have been initiated at the park. These include: the rehabilitation of two existing overlook areas; the addition of two more overlooks that are connected by a boardwalk to the Patowmack Canal trail, and new information kiosks that are located near the overlooks; renovations at the visitor center; and replacement of the existing radio tower by Verizon, with a cell tower that is designed to look like a tree.

We feel this is the appropriate time to take a more comprehensive look at the entire park and explore what range of resource conditions and visitor experiences should be achieved and maintained over time. Our goal is to develop a plan that will protect the park's resources, serve the needs of our visitors and address the concerns of our neighbors. To achieve this, we will work closely with the general public, federal, state and local agencies, special interest groups and park partners (concessionaires).

The park staff has developed a list of preliminary issues that we think should be addressed in the plan. A few of these are identified in this newsletter. At this time, we sincerely invite your participation in this planning effort. Please share with us any concerns and issues that you, as a park user or neighbor, think should be addressed in the plan. You can participate by responding through the comment form in this newsletter, attend the Scoping Meeting planned for January 29th, 2002 or through the park's website.

The preparation of the General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement is anticipated to last for nearly two years. Throughout this process we will provide you with periodic updates and seek your input at key planning stages.

We appreciate your comments and look forward to working together as we plan for Great Falls Park's future.

Sincerely,

Audrey F. Calhoun
Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway

CONTACT US

For More Information please contact **Dottie Marshall**, Deputy Superintendent, GWMP or **Deborah Feldman**, Park Planner, GWMP at 703.289.2500, or check our website at the following web address:
<http://www.nps.gov/grfa/>