



National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal
National Historical Park

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C&O Canal National Historical Park News Release

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Repairs Close Olmsted Island Bridge and Overlook

Potomac, MD- The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal) anticipates reopening the previously closed Olmsted Island Trail and Great Falls Overlook in early July 2017. The series of five bridges comprising the Olmsted Island Trail to the Great Falls Overlook are currently closed for repairs that will improve visitor safety and better protect park resources. Construction activities were impacted by weather delays, which necessitated extension of the closure to the current date.

Once complete, this project will provide a safe, reliable, and enjoyable trail to view the Great Falls of the Potomac River. Restoration, repair and refinishing work includes bridge railing, decking and concrete foundation. Noticeable improvements will be sturdier bridge railings and a smoother concrete walking surface.

Park natural resource managers have developed measures to protect the delicate ecosystem of Olmsted Island. This project will be conducted in full compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and additional park regulations.

During the remaining weeks of construction, the C&O Canal continues to encourage visitors to take advantage of the alternate views of the Potomac on the Maryland side that including Mather Gorge, Conn Island, and the Washington Aqueduct. Full access to all hiking trails, including the River Trail and the Goldmine Trail offer great outdoor opportunities for adventure. Ranger-led programs every Thursday and public boat rides on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday are ongoing. Unimpeded views of the Great Falls will continue to be enjoyed at Great Falls Park on the Virginia side of the Potomac River. We encourage visitors to plan visits to Great Falls Park well ahead, especially on weekends, as the park often sustains high visitation and wait times.

For more information on the project and Great Falls, please visit our website at:

<https://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/greatfallstavernvisitorcenter.htm> or visit our Facebook page. Be sure and tag your park posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter with #candocanal, #greatfalls and #towpath.

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ABOUT THE C&O Canal: The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park preserves and interprets the historical, natural and recreational resources of the C&O Canal. Over 5,000,000 visitors a year enjoy the opportunities for recreation and understanding that the Park has to offer. For more information, visit the Park's website at www.nps.gov/choh.