



Recreational enthusiasts hope Anne Arundel will adopt 30-mile water trail

Kayak and canoe trail connects parks from Edgewater to Rose Haven



Courtesy photo

Beverly-Triton Beach Park

At Beverly-Triton Beach Park, Lisa Arrasmith said, "We found more than a mile of sandy beach, old roses in bloom, inland ponds full of birds, hiking trails through the woods and horseshoe crab shells on the beach."

[What should Anne Arundel County do with the proposed water trail?](#)

- Adopt it. It's a no-brainer, and potential money earner. 82%
- Study this. There could be hidden costs. 9%
- Pass. Maybe there's an business idea here for someone. 0%
- Look for a public-private partnership. 9%

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[Anne Arundel County Water Trail](#)

A group of Anne Arundel County residents put together a rough outline of what the county water trail could look like. They provided these photos from their trips over the

summer exploring possible locations between Edgewater and Rose Haven. A north county trail is also being planned.

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By SARA BLUMBERG sblumberg@capgaznews.com

Lisa Arrasmith was planning to spend her summer kayaking in New Jersey.

The north county resident, a lover of the water, was set to go when she started thinking about water access in Anne Arundel County.

“I was waiting in Annapolis one day when I realized there aren’t that many locations to access the water,” she said.

So she got out a map and started plotting. Instead of heading to New Jersey, she and friends started kayaking in parts of south county to see what was available.

“What I found was a treasure trove of beautiful beaches and views,” she said. “Needless to say, I didn’t make it to New Jersey.”

Those simple water trips allowed the group to scout and discuss sites. Ralph Heimlich, president of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association, soon came in and drew up a trail on a map.

It’s called the Anne Arundel County Water Trail, and water lovers like Heimlich and Arrasmith are hoping the county Department of Recreation and Parks will adopt the plan to encourage more people to use county waterways.

“We kind of identify the pearls and string the necklace together, that’s really what this map is about,” Heimlich said. “This is a citizens’ take on what this trail could look like. We’re hoping the county will look into this.”

The trail is tailored for visitors using their car tops to transport kayaks, canoes or paddle boats. It starts in London Towne and extends for 30 miles all the way south to Rose Haven Memorial Park near North Beach.

Arrasmith estimates it would take a couple of days for an average kayaker to travel the whole route.

During one of her scouting expeditions, Arrasmith said she was surprised to see how beautiful Beverly-Triton Beach Park really is.

“I paddled in from the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center on the Rhode River with seven friends,” she said. “We found more than a mile of sandy beach, old roses in bloom, inland ponds full of birds, hiking trails through the woods and horseshoe crab shells on the beach.”

Stops were divided into three categories: viewing, landing only, and launching and landing. The launching and landing areas were designated as places visitors could park and put their boat into the water.

“It’s really just a proposal of stringing together existing county and state park properties, with one private property — SERC — that could be strung together to make a water trail,” Heimlich said. “We know a lot more work would need to go into it.”

The designing of the water trail is another push by area residents to create more points of accessibility so residents can enjoy county waterways.

Rick Anthony, county director of recreation and parks, said he supports the idea. But he cautioned that funding and development will take time.

“Right now we are starting the conversation. That will help get things moving,” he said. “We are also talking a multiagency effort here.”

The proposal is not a line item in the county budget. Mike Lofton, a member of the county water access committee, said his group is interested in putting together a proposal to advance work on the trail.

He said the group used the same method to help make improvements to Jack Creek Park in south county, which was upgraded within two months.

Fred Tutman, the Patuxent riverkeeper, said creating a fully functioning water trail requires a lot of work. Challenges range from funding to addressing possible safety problems and community concerns, to finding locations for portable toilets.

Tutman said volunteers, as well as partnerships with government agencies, helped make the [Patuxent Water Trail](#) a success.

That self-guided trail extends more than 100 miles through five counties.

“We have slave labor, in a sense,” Tutman joked. “Really, we have stewards who care about this trail and help maintain it, allowing for people to access the water.”

An Anne Arundel trail could have economic benefits, he said.

“Our visitor center is considered the gateway to the Patuxent trail,” Tutman said. “With that, we are able to provide guided tours, rent equipment and allow people to enjoy the water.”

Heimlich said the trail took a few months to put together. He and his colleagues are working on a northern portion of the trail they hope to debut next year.

Arrasmith said she would regularly park her car at a launch area and use her kayak to visit Thursday’s Steak and Crabhouse in Galesville or Mike’s Crab House in Edgewater.

“I could get in my car and drive home in half an hour instead of playing Bay Bridge traffic roulette getting back from the Eastern Shore,” she said.

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