



## Regional Paddling Destinations

### Local Lakes

#### **Little Seneca Lake at Black Hill Regional Park – Boyds, Maryland**

This 505 acre reservoir in a 3200 acre park has lots of tributary arms and bays for family exploration; a great place to work on paddling skills. Good fishing, birding and wildlife; nature center. Park has kayak/canoe rentals. Launch fee for private boats. Paddling limited to dawn-to-dusk. Off I-270 at MD Rt 121, Clarksburg. 301-972-9396. Maryland National Capital Parks & Planning Commission; [mncppc-mc.org](http://mncppc-mc.org) Electric or paddle craft only, not gas-powered motors allowed.

#### **Burke Lake Park - Fairfax Station, Virginia**

218 acre lake; Good fishing, birding, EAGLES; a great place to introduce kids to paddling and wildlife and birding. Take beltway Exit 54A (Braddock Road) west to left on Burke Lake Road, to left on Ox Road, to park entrance on left. Fairfax County Park Authority [fairfaxcounty.gov/parks](http://fairfaxcounty.gov/parks) **Electric or paddle craft only, not gas-powered motors allowed.** 703-323-6601

#### **Lake Accotink Park – 7500 Accotink Park Road Springfield, Virginia**

A small lake, with good access near the Beltway and I-395. A great place for a quick paddle getaway or aerobic workout. Lake Accotink may be reached from I-95 by taking Old Keene Mill Rd. west to right on Hanover Ave. to left on Highland Ave. to right on Accotink Park Rd. to front entrance on left. Fairfax County Park Authority [fairfaxcounty.gov/parks](http://fairfaxcounty.gov/parks) **Electric or paddle craft only, not gas-powered motors allowed.** 703-569-3464.

### Local Rivers

#### **Upper Potomac River**

Long stretches of moving water without whitewater flow between Oldtown, Maryland and Seneca, Maryland. Consult a paddle guide for the sections you want to paddle. **BE AWARE:** significant whitewater exists in the Harper's Ferry to Knoxville stretch. Paddle there only if you paddle class III water regularly; or take a guided trip. Several dams exist along the upper Potomac to supply water to the C&O Canal. They are all hazard areas. It is best to stay clear of them. Consult a paddling guide for information on best stretches to paddle. Call 703-260-0305 for current river levels, or go to [USGS.gov](http://USGS.gov).

#### **Mid-Potomac**

This area runs from Seneca Maryland to Chain Bridge at the District Line. Much of it is fairly continuous whitewater and includes Great Falls and Little Falls. Paddle here only with skilled, trusted companions, with Class III skills as a minimum. Great scenery and wilderness values, but this stretch of river is no place for those who are careless or inexperienced. Call 703-260-0305 for current river levels, or go to [USGS.gov](http://USGS.gov).

#### **Shenandoah – South Fork**

Long stretches of floatable river with occasional riffles and a few ledges for 30-plus miles from south of Luray, Virginia to Front Royal. Good fishing and nature. Several good outfitters in Luray and Bentonville. Andy Guest State Park near Bentonville. Also borders George Washington National Forest. Trips of 1-4 days can be made. Consult a paddle guide for best stretches, access and shuttles.

**Shenandoah Mainstem**

From Front Royal, Virginia to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, this is mainly a large smooth flowing river, with the exception of several dams and the final few miles from Bulls Falls down the Staircase rapid to the Potomac at Harpers Ferry. Paddle the lower stretch only with proper experience and companions. Otherwise the Mainstem is very pretty, and great fishing. A good family tour. Consult paddle guide for best Access, shuttles and paddling stretches.

**Rappahannock River**

From Near Culpeper to Fredericksburg, this is one of the least developed watersheds in the region. It is also rockier, with more whitewater, but good stretches can be paddled by novices with care. Contact Clore Brothers in Fredericksburg, or Rappahannock River Campground near Richardsville for shuttle arrangements, or consult a good Virginia paddling guide for access/shuttle and route information.

**Monocacy River**

From the Pennsylvania state line to the Potomac, there are about 50 miles of gently flowing water. This is the best family river paddle in the area. The best stretch is from Buckeystown, Maryland, below Michael's Mill Dam to the Potomac, 6 to 8 miles of steady current, with a few riffles, and great bird and wildlife viewing, and a real sense of isolation. The Monocacy can rise quickly after thunderstorms, so be sure to consult river levels and paddle guide.

**Tidal Estuaries****Lower Potomac****Pohick Bay Regional Park Lorton, Virginia**

This is one of the best places to paddle and learn new skills. It also has a lot of wonderful shoreline to explore as you paddle along. Connects with Mason Neck State Park, and is one terminus of the Occoquan Water Trail, leading 44 miles to Bull Run Park. Eagles, ospreys, egrets and herons seen regularly. A touring kayaker's paradise. Consult paddle guide. A Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority Park 703-339-6104

**Mason Neck State Park**

On the other side of Mason Neck from Pohick Bay Park. Access to Kane's Creek, a sheltered area great for novices and family exploration and eagle sighting, especially early morning or late afternoon. Also a great place for a shuttle for one-way trips to Pohick Bay Park. Consult paddle guide and tide charts. 7301 High Point Road, Lorton, VA, (703) 339-2385 or (703) 339-2380

**Patuxent****Jug Bay Natural Area**

Jug Bay is one of the most important freshwater tidal estuaries in the Chesapeake Bay region. Jug Bay is excellent to explore by canoe or kayak. The park offers guided trips, as well as daily and hourly canoe and kayak rentals. 16000 Croom Airport Road, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 301-627-6074

**Eastern Shore****Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge**

South of Rock Hall, MD on the Eastern Shore. Excellent sheltered area for family paddling and day touring, exploring quiet coves, creeks and marshes. Excellent for birding. Consult tide tables and get a good weather forecast. 1730 Eastern Neck Rd. Rock Hall, MD 21661, (410) 639-7056

**Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge**

This nationally-known birding mecca is also a great place to paddle. Eagles and wading birds are the big draw, but the quiet bays and creeks are wonderful to explore. 2145 Key Wallace Drive, Cambridge, MD 410-228-2677

**Janes Island State Park**

Tranquil canoeing or kayaking in a natural paradise with few signs of civilization, Janes Island State Park has 2,900 acres of marsh, beach and high land offering paddlers an outdoor adventure through small waterways within the island. Most are protected from wind and current providing ideal conditions for the novice as well as the experienced canoeist. Janes Island State Park, 26280 Alfred Lawson Drive Crisfield, MD 21817 (410)968-1565 (office)