



Press Release

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Fourth Annual Potomac River Sojourn Kicks off July 8 *Registration open for 75 mile week-long paddling expedition*

Washington, DC (May 18, 2005) – Paddlers from across the region will join local communities and elected officials in the fourth annual Potomac River Sojourn – a week-long paddling expedition designed to elevate local awareness about the need to restore and protect the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay.

The Sojourn begins July 8 with kick-off festivities and dinner at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV and continues downstream to Riverbend Park, VA on July 16. Throughout the week, paddlers will take part in educational programs, riverside camping and meetings with elected officials in an effort to raise awareness needed to improve and protect the Potomac watershed.

Again this year, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin are co-coordinating the Sojourn. Since 1990, the Alliance has worked with local river conservation organizations across the Bay watershed to hold week-long paddling and camping trips that celebrate rich history and ecology of the rivers that make the Chesapeake Bay watershed unique. ICPRB has been a partnering organization since the inception of the Potomac River Sojourn and brings a local focus to the event.

Throughout the week, Sojourners build comradery through daily paddles and programs and share new experiences with others on the trip. Each day, paddlers cover about ten miles of river, stopping to meet with local communities and their elected officials along the way. Each evening, the Alliance and partner organizations coordinate group meals and environmental programs designed to educate paddlers and their guests about the river's importance to local communities and the Bay region as a whole.

“Sojourns are a great way to engage a variety of participants from novice to experienced paddlers, both children and adults, in learning about river ecology and spreading local awareness about the Potomac,” said Sojourn coordinator Jamie Alberti. “Throughout the week, we hope to provide Sojourners the opportunity to understand and appreciate the Potomac by actually experiencing it throughout the week.”

“The Potomac River Sojourn brings together people from an array of backgrounds to experience the Potomac first-hand,” said Sojourn coordinator Steve Saari. “The participants not only learn about the many resources of the Potomac, but they also have a lot of fun in its exploration.”

The public is invited to participate in evening programs and meet with Sojourners as they work their way downriver. As the event nears, evening programs will be organized to educate paddlers and members of local communities about the importance to protect and restore the “Nation’s River.”

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Registration for the 2005 Potomac River Sojourn is open until June 20; paddlers should contact Sojourn Coordinator xxxx at xxxxx or visit www.AllianceChesBay.org for more information about this unique opportunity to experience the Potomac Watershed.

The \$45 (\$25 for youth) daily registration fee covers camping fees, meals, safety outfitters, evening programs, car shuttles and commemorative t-shirt. Registration is limited to approximately 100 paddlers each day, depending on safety considerations for each river segment. Sojourners can take part for a day or two of the trip, or spend the entire week on the river.

The 2005 Potomac River Sojourn is sponsored by the National Park Service, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail and the DC Department of Health, Environmental Health Administration.

Additional support and planning assistance is also provided by Antietam Watershed Association, Canaan Valley Institute, Citizens for the Protection of Washington County, C&O Canal Association, C&O Canal National Historic Park, National Park Service, Community Commons, Friends of the Cacapon, Friends of the Potomac, Maryland Dept. of Agriculture, Maryland Dept. of Forestry, Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources, National Conservation Training Center, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection, Potomac Conservancy, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, Potomac Heritage Trail Council, National Park Service, Potomac River Greenways Coalition, Potomac Riverkeeper, Potomac Watershed Partnership, Ridge and Valley Streamkeepers, River & Trail Outfitters, Spring Mill Bread, Tarara Winery, Upper Potomac Tributary Team, USDA, Forest Service, Virginia Dept. of Conservation & Recreation, Virginia Dept. of Environmental Quality, Virginia Dept. of Forestry, and West Virginia Dept. of Environmental Protection.

Founded in 1971, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay serves as the Voice of the Bay by building partnerships to improve the health of the Chesapeake and its rivers.

The Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin helps enhance, protect, and conserve the resources of the Potomac River basin through regional and interstate cooperation. Maps of the Potomac River Water Trail and the C&O Canal are available at www.potomacriver.org.

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For more information or media participation, contact:

xxxx, Potomac River Sojourn coordinator, xxxx or via e-mail at xxxxx