

Mallows Bay – Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary (MPNMS)
Highlights of Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Draft Management Plan (DMP)

DESIGNATION:

- Evaluates 4 alternatives to help protect and promote nationally significant shipwrecks and associated maritime heritage resources in the area: no action, and 18, 52 and 100 square mile area boundaries, respectively.
- Recommends designating the 52 square mile (39 NM) area in the Potomac River from approximately the Dominion powerlines just north of Quantico to the eastern edge of Virginia's Caledon State Park.
- Preferred alternative area includes vessels listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as 2 additional WWI steamships located near Caledon, the 1873 steamboat *Wawaset*, a Civil War barge or canal boat, and up to 17 other historic shipwrecks found or identified in records to be located in this area. Also includes historically significant steamboat landings, ferry crossings, Revolutionary War and Civil War battlescapes and remnants of the Potomac River's historic fishing industry.
- Facilitates additional recreational access improvements to the area.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- Finds no significant adverse impacts to the environment.
- Anticipates positive long term impacts to the local economy from recreation and tourism.
- Provides the management tools and capabilities for the long term preservation and interpretation of the shipwrecks.
- Will have no impact on personal property rights, land use and planning. Applications for activities affecting State or local lands or waters (e.g. dock construction) will follow the same process now in place.

MANAGEMENT:

- Would be managed cooperatively by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the State of Maryland and Charles County, Maryland.
- Recreational and commercial fishing in the area would continue and be managed, as before, by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission.
- All other recreational uses occurring on the river or on Maryland public lands, including hunting, fossil collecting, birding, wildlife viewing, boating and paddling, would continue and be managed by MD DNR, or local authorities, as before.
- Archaeological research will be by permit from the Maryland Historical Trust, as before.
- The only new regulations clarify and strengthen extant laws related to the historical shipwrecks and focus only on the protection of the shipwrecks and associated maritime heritage resources.
- Proposes strategies and action plans to enhance education, outreach, interpretation, research, public access, safety and responsible use of sanctuary resources.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- <https://www.regulations.gov/searchResults?rpp=25&po=0&s=NOAA-NOS-2016-0149&fp=true&ns=true>
- <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/mallows-bay/>