



EXPLORE

the

APPOMATTOX RIVER TRAIL

Boating, Birding & Fishing

The Appomattox River from the dam at Lake Chesdin to the confluence with the James River in Hopewell is a designated Virginia Scenic River that provides a unique and beautiful setting for both whitewater and flatwater paddlers, as well as for powerboaters and fishermen. Virginia Scenic River designation is only given to rivers and streams that possess outstanding scenic, recreational, historic and natural characteristics. You can still see the culture and history of the river with the visible remains of dams, locks and canals.

The western/upper portion of the Appomattox River from Brasfield Dam at Lake Chesdin down to Campbell's Bridge in Petersburg can be powerful and remote. High water levels and cold conditions increase this danger. At the natural fall line through the City of Petersburg, the eastern/lower portion of the river becomes tidal and tide charts should be consulted when planning a trip on this portion of the river.

Birding

A wide range of birds can be seen along the river, including Bald Eagles, herons, ospreys, ducks, owls, and more.

Fishing

The Appomattox River contains a wide range of species, including largemouth and smallmouth bass, redbreast sunfish, bluegill, flie, crappie, pickerel, and hard-fighting minnows, like fallfish and chubs. Striped bass, walleye and saugeye, which run out of Lake Chesdin, provide a seasonal fishery in the Appomattox.



A fishing license is required for anyone fishing over the age of 16 and can be purchased from the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. Fishing licenses can be purchased online.

River Information

Plan your trip on the Appomattox River by first checking river and weather conditions.



Flatwater paddlers should check the tide prediction chart at Puddledock.



Whitewater paddlers should check the river level at the Matoaca gauge – See skill level chart to right.



Check the American Whitewater website for information on rapids & current conditions.

FLATWATER ROUTES

On the western/upper portion of the river, boaters can put-in and take-out at John J. Radcliffe Conservation Area, floating down 1 mile to the abutment dam and back. The flatwater section of the river begins at Patton Park in Petersburg, where the river becomes tidal.

WHITEWATER ROUTES

You can choose a 7 mile trip from John J. Radcliffe Conservation Area in Chesterfield County to Patton Park in Petersburg, or a 3 mile trip from Ferndale Park in Dinwiddie County to Patton Park. Either trip offers a quick shuttle route along River Road in Matoaca. You can also try a shuttle-free whitewater circle trip at Ferndale Park, paddling up the canal (flatwater) and back down the main river (whitewater).

Whitewater Paddler Skill Level Classification	
Class I - Easy	Waves small, clear passages; All obvious obstructions, no serious obstacles.
Class II - Medium	Rapids of low difficulty with passages clear. Occasional maneuvering may be required.
Class III - Moderate	Waves numerous and high, irregular, can swamp open canoe; Rapids with passages clear though narrow and fast, requiring experience in maneuvering. Scouting is advisable for inexperienced parties.
Class IV - Difficult	Long rapids; waves powerful, irregular; dangerous rocks; boiling eddies; powerful and precise maneuvering required.
Class V - Extremely Difficult	Long and violent rapids, following each other almost without interruption; riverbed extremely obstructed; big drops; violent currents; very steep gradient. Paddlers should have prior Class IV or better whitewater experience with experienced guides who know the river.

12 Appomattox Boat Harbor

1604 Fine Street, Prince George County

A privately owned marina but publicly accessible. Slips and ramp available for a variety of boats including canoes/kayaks. Amenities: floating docks, wet slips, dual boat ramp, gas pump, restrooms & showers, pump out station, marine repair shop, boat storage on land, snack bar, bait shop, pool, free Wi-Fi, Harbor Blast concert series, fishing tournaments, kayaks, canoes and clubhouse available to rent.

13 Swift Creek Conservation Area

Chesterfield County

Located where Swift Creek meets the Appomattox River 5.7 miles from the confluence with the James River, this 447-acre conservation area is currently open by appointment only. Water trail can be accessed from White Bank Park boat launch in Colonial Heights, but land access is by appointment only.

14 White Bank Park

400 White Bank Road, Colonial Heights

The park consists of 22 acres which overlook Swift Creek, and includes two picnic pavilions which accommodate 200-300 people each, 8 individual picnic shelters for smaller groups, restrooms, 18-hole disc golf course, beach volleyball court, boat ramp, paddling access, and public playground.

15 Fort Clifton Park

100 Brockwell Lane, Colonial Heights

Fort Clifton was a Confederate stronghold, serving as an important link in the line that defended Richmond and Petersburg in 1864 and 1865. Located on a high bluff at the junction of the Appomattox River and Swift Creek, the fort controlled navigation on the river north of Petersburg and was a formidable defensive bastion that wasn't taken by Union forces until the fall of Petersburg on April 3, 1865. The 24-acre park includes one picnic pavilion which accommodates 60 people, restrooms, walking trails and fishing pier.

16 Old Brick House

131 Waterfront Drive, Colonial Heights

Located in Conjuror's Neck subdivision, the Old Brick House property has been settled since 1677 and has long been a landmark on the river, with navigational charts referring to the structure as "Brick House". Interior house tours are available by appointment. The house is available for rental on special occasions.

17 Hopewell/Prince George & VA Visitor Center

4100 Oaklawn Boulevard, Hopewell

The Hopewell/Prince George Visitor Center is a Certified Virginia handicap accessible rest stop off I-295, just 3.5 miles from the Petersburg National Battlefield Visitor center, providing maps, coupons, local relocation and event information as well as statewide tourism resources.

Water Safety

The river is not patrolled and rescue is difficult. Please let others know of your river plans, study river maps and know how to get off the river.

TO PREVENT PROBLEMS:

- Wear a life jacket. If paddling whitewater, wear a helmet
- Recognize and avoid hazards: Fallen trees, debris piles and dams
- Wear a wet suit in spring, fall and winter
- Carry throw ropes and first aid kits
- Never paddle alone
- Know and prepare for the weather
- Don't paddle after dark
- Use supplemental boat flotation
- Alcohol and paddling do not mix

IF YOU GET INTO TROUBLE:

- Float on your back with feet up, pointed downstream
- Do not try to stand up in swift water
- Stay upstream of your capsized boat
- Get to shore as soon as possible
- Call 911

River Level at Matoaca Gauge	Whitewater Paddler Skill Level
2.5 ft. to 3.9 ft. (~ 400-1200 cfs)	Easy to Moderate
3.9 ft. to 5.5 ft. (~ 1200-2800 cfs)	Moderate to Difficult
5.5 ft. to 7 ft. (~ 2800-4800 cfs)	Difficult to Extremely Difficult
Over 7 ft. (~ above 4800 cfs)	Very Hazardous–Expert only!

18 R. Garland Dodd Park at Point of Rocks

201 Enon Church Road, Chesterfield County

This 178-acre park offers 3 miles of trails through several habitats including eastern deciduous forest, riparian environment, and tidal freshwater marsh. Trails take you through all habitats to include Ashton Creek Marsh along a ¼ mile floating boardwalk. Amenities: restrooms, tennis, basketball and pickleball courts, picnicking areas with three rentable shelters, playground, nature-themed wetlands habitat playground and adult outdoor fitness equipment, trails, and athletic fields.

19 Historic Point of Rocks Park

1005 Enon Church Road, Chesterfield County

This 30-acre park with ½ mile of Appomattox River shoreline is open by appointment only. Conservation and historical interpretive focus on 1840s Strachan house, Civil War hospital activities and river riparian environments. History programs and events scheduled throughout the year.

20 Appomattox River Regional Park

800 Folar Trail, Prince George County

Over 65 acres of pristine woods on the river features over 3 miles of hiking trails, fishing pier, birdwatching, picnic pavilions, self-service kayak rentals, a canoe/kayak launch, an observation pier, fitness trail and restrooms.

21 Anchor Point Marina

303 Beacon Ridge Road, Hopewell

A private marina to serve both Anchor Point residents and the general public that provides wet/dry slips and small boats/canoes are welcomed. Amenities: gas pump, restrooms & showers, pump out station, marine repair shop, snack bar and patio use.

22 Weston Manor

400 Weston Lane, off of 21st Avenue, Hopewell

One of the last remaining historic homes on the Appomattox River, Weston is notable for its original interior. The house was built in 1789 and is a classic example of Virginia Georgian architecture and the very essence of the Tidewater plantation mansion. All three floors and the kitchen dependency are open to the public through guided tours. Also on-site is the All Manor of Things Boutique, a one-room shop with unique gifts and the latest in fashion. See website for up-to-date information on tours, concerts, the Boutique, and the fishing pier.

23 Hopewell City Marina

1151 Riverside Avenue, Hopewell

A public, municipal marina with boat slip rentals available for daily use or longer-term storage. Amenities: four-lane ramp for motorized craft, accessible restrooms and showers, accessible canoe/kayak launch, fishing area, picnic tables, fishing tournaments, and special music events.

Do's & Don'ts OF BOATING AND HIKING

Boating Etiquette:

- Respect private property
- Don't litter–pack out all trash
- Paddlers should pass fishermen quietly and give lots of room
- Don't block ramps and access points—they are for launching and retrieving boats only

Trail and Park Etiquette:

You can also enjoy the beauty of the scenic Appomattox River from the land—whether you enjoy hiking, biking, fishing or picnicking, remember some of these tips from the American Hiking Society:

- Stay on marked trails and public property
- Respect your fellow trail users and nature
- Keep volume and noise to a minimum
- If taking a break, move off the trail to allow others to pass by
- Don't litter—not even biodegradable items
- When bringing a pet, be sure to keep it on a leash and pack out pet waste
- Don't feed the wildlife
- Help preserve the trail by staying on the trail (walk through puddles, not around)
- If hiking in a group, don't take up the whole width of the trail; allow others to pass
- No motorized equipment except for official and emergency vehicles and motorized wheelchairs
- LEAVE NO TRACE



Other Services DINING, SHOPPING & LODGING

There are plenty of great places to eat or shop after a day spent outdoors at the Appomattox River. For more information on where to dine, visit or stay in the region, please visit the Petersburg Area Regional Tourism website.

Petersburg Area
Regional Tourism

www.petersburgarea.org

24 Riverside Park

500 North 12th Avenue, Hopewell

A city park with basketball courts, tennis courts, baseball/softball fields, and access to the Riverside Greenway.

25 Hopewell Riverwalk at City Park

205 Appomattox Street, Hopewell

Located off Appomattox Street across from the Appomattox Regional Library, this park offers a riverfront beach area, nature inspired play space, an accessible fishing pier, self-service kayak rental, wildflower garden, picnic pavilion, accessible portable restrooms, and access to the 0.6 mile Hopewell Riverwalk.

26 The Beacon Theatre

401 N. Main Street, Hopewell

This is the region's centerpiece for concerts offering a wide range of music to suit any taste. It was built in 1928, designed by Fred Bishop, and was a silent movie and vaudeville show house through the 1940s and then transitioned to a movie house until closing in 1981. The restoration of this beautiful, intimate venue is spectacular.

27 Union Fort

700 Appomattox Street, Hopewell

This historic site along the Appomattox River Trail contains the most prominent Civil War-era earthworks in the City of Hopewell as well as picnic tables and interpretive signs.

28 City Point Open Air Museum

505 Cedar Lane to Water Street, Hopewell

City Point, the oldest part of Hopewell, was founded in 1613 by Sir Thomas Dale for the Virginia Company. Its strategic location on a bluff overlooking the confluence of the James and Appomattox Rivers ensured a key role in Virginia's history. A pleasant walking tour highlights 25 historic homes and structures. Outdoor storyboards are located throughout the historic area.

29 Grant's Headquarters at City Point

1001 Pecan Avenue, Hopewell

This 1760s plantation owned by the Eppes family sits at the confluence of the James & Appomattox Rivers. In 1864, it became one of the busiest ports in the world, supporting General Grant's headquarters during the Civil War Siege of Petersburg. Those enslaved here seized their freedom. President Lincoln also spent time here discussing a strategy for ending the war. The grounds are open daily, and tours are offered as staffing allows, typically on weekends. It is operated by National Park Service site as part of Petersburg National Battlefield.

30 Old City Point Waterfront Park

1199 Pecan Avenue, Hopewell

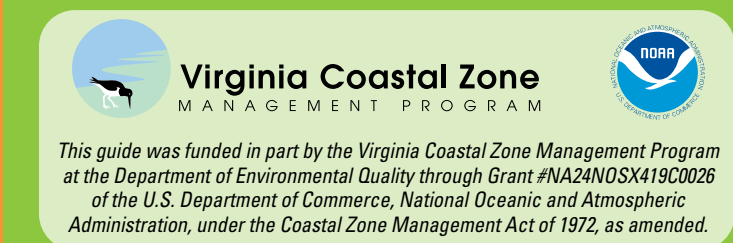
This park and popular fishing spot sits on the James River and offers a boardwalk, accessible fishing pier, riverfront trail, benches, picnic tables and gazebo.



Produced by Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (folar-va.org) and Crater Planning District Commission (craterpdc.org)



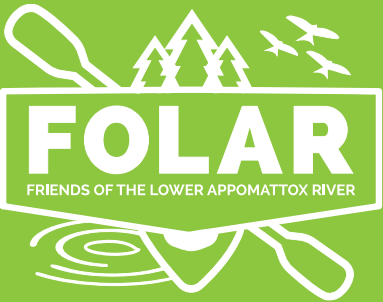
Map available online at <https://folar-va.org/appomattox-river-trail/map/>



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VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS



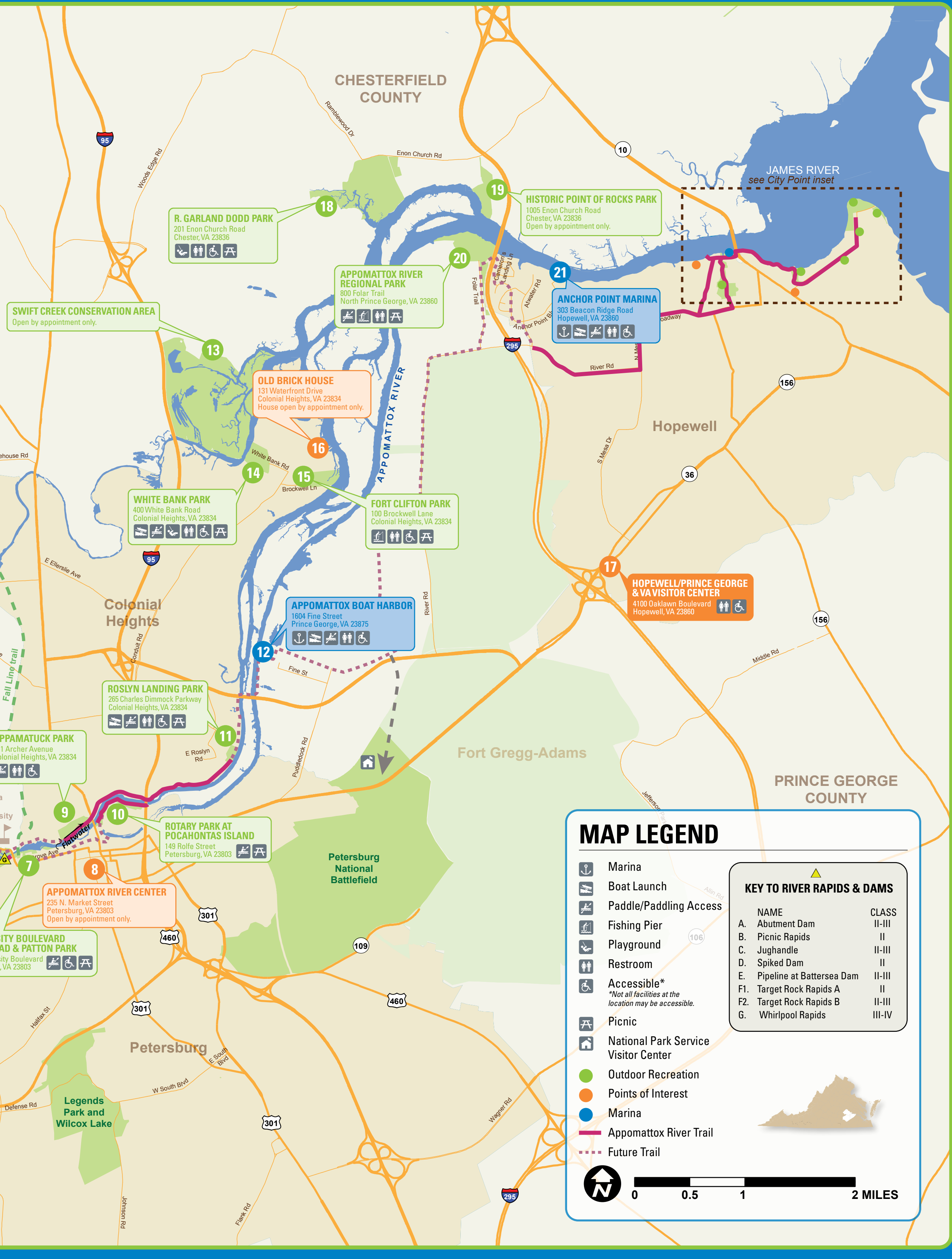
The Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR) is the only non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing the Appomattox River between the Lake Chesdin Dam and City Point in Hopewell for ALL to enjoy. FOLAR is leading the effort to create the Appomattox River Trail, a network of over 20 miles of public open space, including accessible trails and river access. **We need your help to complete the trail and protect the river!**



Join FOLAR as a member to help support the Appomattox River and Trail. www.folar-va.org



Our thanks to the following photographers who made their photos available for this map: E. M. Betts, III, Kristy Fowler, Christine Held, Daniel Jones, Ken Newman, John A. Rooney, Jr.



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APPOMATTOX RIVER TRAIL

Mile by mile, the Appomattox River Trail connects our neighborhoods and communities and gives us opportunities to access and protect the river. The trail gives us places to explore and learn while providing increased opportunities for physical activity and wellness. It even helps attract businesses and individuals that will make our region stronger and more prosperous.

MAP LEGEND

- Marina
- Boat Launch
- Paddle/Paddling Access
- Fishing Pier
- Playground
- Restroom
- Accessible*
*Not all facilities at the location may be accessible.
- Picnic
- National Park Service Visitor Center
- Outdoor Recreation
- Points of Interest
- Marina
- Appomattox River Trail
- Future Trail

KEY TO RIVER RAPIDS & DAMS		
NAME	CLASS	
A. Abutment Dam	II-III	
B. Picnic Rapids	II	
C. Jughandle	II-III	
D. Spiked Dam	II	
E. Pipeline at Battersea Dam	II-III	
F1. Target Rock Rapids A	II	
F2. Target Rock Rapids B	II-III	
G. Whirlpool Rapids	III-IV	

