



Snow Hill, Maryland

Nature & Heritage Tourism Assessment

2017

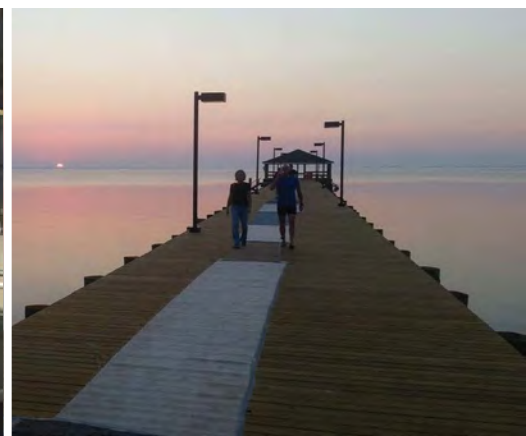


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Statement of opportunity	1
Process	3
Snow Hill history/background	6
Regional context/local tourism overview.....	9
Nature & Heritage tourism assessment.....	10
Strength/weakness/opportunity/threat (SWOT) analysis.....	11
Snow Hill's tourism assets	13
Nature & Heritage Tourism Plan	26
Top 10 outdoor things to do by season	28
Existing online resources for nature & heritage tourism	39



This project would not have been possible with the very generous support of Town of Snow Hill. Thanks especially to the partners below for their time, energy, funding, and additional contributions to this report.

PROJECT SPONSORS



PROJECT PARTNERS



STATEMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

Snow Hill, a historic Worcester County town of 2,091 residents, is surrounded by 55,000 acres of protected land with liquid gold, known as the Pocomoke River, running through it.

While throughout the Mid-Atlantic region farmland and forests have been converted to housing developments and shopping malls, Snow Hill has been able to retain its rustic feel, and along with it, its authenticity.

This renders it uniquely poised to capitalize on this distinctive character for the increasingly experience-seeking traveler.

This nature trails and heritage tourism proposal will use the town of Snow Hill as the hub for nature and heritage trails on the Lower Shore. While many nature trails exist here, there remain disjointed marketing efforts, unmarked trails, and new trail opportunities on land and water waiting to be exploited. This project presents a nature tourism plan for Snow Hill that will provide recommendations to explore and develop new trails, improve and market existing ones, and brand the Lower Shore as a paddling, birding, biking, hiking and cycling mecca.

Such an effort can deliver the multi-pronged effect of significantly improving the shore's economic woes while providing an impetus for protecting and preserving its cultural and natural assets.

Nature tourism, and in particular hiking, cycling, kayaking and birding, brings \$646 billion annually to the nation's economy. Lower Shore towns have not taken advantage of this in a systematic way. This proposal addresses this problem by fusing efforts and creating a real plan to attract these tourists to Snow Hill.

The town already boasts three bed & breakfasts, thousands of acres of nearby natural areas, museums, boat launches, world-class birding, a road cycling trail, mountain biking trails, horse trails, historic buildings, a state-designated scenic river, restaurants, fishing, downtown parks, Shad and Milburn landings, a national recreational trail, certified heritage area, and a State Scenic Byway.



Launching from your base camp in Snow Hill

- You can explore 90 square miles of protected open space by boat or bike from a safe and beautiful small town along one of the most scenic rivers in Maryland.
- A beginning kayaker can paddle through ancient cypress within the wilderness of the Pocomoke River and a more advanced paddler can launch from any of five landings from Public Landing to George Island Landing to paddle the pristine shores and creeks of Chincoteague Bay.
- A cyclist or horseback rider can explore forested, scenic roads through the rural Worcester County landscape, either on lightly trafficked roads or on the more than 50 miles of off-road mountain biking and horse trails.
- A birdwatcher can tally more than 150 species just by visiting the nearby birding hotspots at Mt Olive Church or Red House Rd. along Nassawango Creek; Porters Crossing on the Pocomoke River; or Truitt's Landing along Chincoteague Bay.
- Visit 11 homes, churches and villages on the National Register of Historic Places.

While many of the cultural and natural resources in the Snow Hill area have been identified, many

remain underutilized. New trails and information about nature and heritage opportunities can showcase the resources in the Snow Hill area and make the information about them easily accessible to visitors. Increasing public access to these places is a critical element of the entire plan.

Already a separately funded website and branding campaign have begun. Substantial resources and community buy-in have been secured for this effort. This nature tourism manifesto can serve as the key element in the town's strategy to lift itself from its economic doldrums.

With a unified strategy, Snow Hill can reap the economic rewards generated by the increasingly rare beauty of the area's parks, farms, and fields and the myriad cycling, paddling and other outdoor recreation opportunities they bring with them.

The time to tap this lucrative tourism market is now. Paddlers, cyclists, birders, and heritage tourists have options. One of their best options is Snow Hill, Maryland.



PROCESS

With assistance from the Town of Snow Hill, Conservation Community Consulting, LLC was tapped in the spring of 2016 to initiate a process to explore nature and heritage tourism opportunities within and around Snow Hill, Maryland.

The effort began with a committee made up of town leaders, business owners, and local and regional tourism professionals who used their knowledge of the lay of the land to create a blueprint for a strategy to bolster nature and heritage tourism around Snow Hill.

Using this input, 20 local stakeholders and regional tourism professionals joined forces on May 10-11, 2016 to participate in a 1.5-day workshop.

The group boarded a bus from the old Snow Hill Fire House and was delivered to boat ramps, natural areas, historic buildings, scenic landings, horse trails, bike trails, secluded paddling spots, and birdwatching sites around Snow Hill. The bus served as a mobile brainstorming office with ideas and opportunities exchanged throughout the day.

PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION
Michael Day	Town of Snow Hill
Lisa Challenger	Worcester County Department of Tourism
Barry Laws	Pocomoke River Canoe Co.
Ron Pilling	Pocomoke River Canoe Co.
Joe Fehrer	The Nature Conservancy
Ann Gibb	Town of Snow Hill
Brent Sullivan	Pocomoke River State Park
Mike Schofield	Pocomoke State Forest
Doug Wight	Chanceford Hall Bed & Breakfast
Scott Thomas	Southern Delaware Tourism
John Azzolini	Worcester County Department of Economic Development
Steve Parker	The Nature Conservancy Virginia Coast Reserve (retired)
Ann Coates	Bishops Stock Art Gallery
Don Cheeseman	Snow Hill resident/avid paddler
Ed Lewandowski	University of Delaware Sea Grant
Brian Shannon	Laurel Redevelopment Corporation
Dave Wilson	Conservation Community Consulting
Jim Rapp	Conservation Community Consulting
Rick Lesser	River House Inn Bed & Breakfast
Dwayne Mease	River House Inn Bed & Breakfast



Local leaders, business owners, and tourism professionals tour nature and heritage tourism sites to help craft a plan for Snow Hill.

The rigorous multi-day event also included:

- An audit of existing trails, resources, and marketing tools
- A mapping charette of Snow Hill's nature & heritage tourism resources
- Recommendations for new themes, trail and resource enhancements, development and redevelopment opportunities, and marketing strategies
- A SWOT analysis to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- A rough final presentation to the workshop participants of all findings and suggestions, which were used to inform this final report

The affair was capped off by a cookout at the River House Inn where new and creative ideas were

floated and flung amongst an engaged crowd of movers and shakers.

After numerous additional stakeholder meetings and a presentation to the Snow Hill Town Council, this Final Report and Executive Summary were created to detail the objectives, goals, stakeholders, process, and recommendations from the group. The goal of the final report is to:

- identify existing trail and marketing themes and connections between Snow Hill, the Pocomoke River, and natural and historic resources in Worcester County and beyond.
- recommend enhancements to existing trails and resources for paddlers, cyclists, birders, and heritage tourists.
- ensure long-term stakeholder-based

involvement through a core committee of decision-makers who commit to an implementation schedule and at least a quarterly follow up with CCC LLC in 2016-2017.

- recommend development or redevelopment opportunities to support nature & heritage tourism.
- recommend marketing strategies to help Snow Hill attract nature & heritage tourists.
- provide information that will support a branding strategy for Snow Hill.
- seek consultative, organizational, and grant seeking support.

This report includes an implementation schedule and funding mechanisms. Presentations on the final report will be provided for the Town of Snow Hill and Worcester County Tourism.



Nature and heritage tourism professionals at the Mattaponi kayak launch.

SNOW HILL HISTORY/BACKGROUND

Snow Hill was settled in 1686 in what was Somerset County by English settlers who may have named it after a street and neighborhood of the City of London also called “Snow Hill”. In 1742, [Worcester County](#) was carved out of the eastern half of old Somerset County and Snow Hill, centrally located in the new county and at the head of navigation on the [Pocomoke River](#), was made the county seat.

For the first two centuries, the river provided its chief means of access and transport to nearby settlements. In 1694, it was designated a Royal Port. First, sailing vessels, and then steamboats, traded with the settlements around the Chesapeake Bay and with foreign markets. Snow Hill was a port of entry for rum, sugar, molasses, and other commodities, while exporting cypress lumber, shingles, pig iron, and other miscellaneous products for trade with Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. The community of Public Landing

along Chincoteague Bay was also a port of entry and significant staging area for transport to and from Snow Hill. Merchant ships likely used one or more of the then 5-6 inlets through Assateague Island to reach the landing.

Downtown, historic homes line narrow, tree-lined streets with brick walks and several of the oldest homes in the County are located here, dating from the mid to late 1700’s. Snow Hill is also the site of the first regularly organized Presbyterian Church (Makemie United) in America, established in 1683 by Francis Makemie.

Major fires in 1844 and 1893 destroyed the center of Snow Hill, including two successive Court Houses, although some eighteenth century structures survived both fires. Following the second fire, much of the commercial area was rapidly rebuilt, so the downtown today contains many historic buildings of the late nineteenth and



Chanceford Hall.

early twentieth centuries. The Snow Hill Historic District, which includes approximately 80% of the town, was created in 2002. The total area of the Town is 2,010 acres.

According to the United States Census Bureau, there are 2,134 people and 871 households in the town. The racial makeup of Snow Hill is 56% White, 39% African American, and 1.5% Latino. Some 18% hold a bachelors degree or higher and the median household income is \$44,817. More than

23% of Snow Hill residents are employed by the government. The median age is 42 and 25% of the population is below the poverty line.

Listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) are the [All Hallows Episcopal Church](#), [Chanceford](#), [Old Friendship United Methodist Church](#), [Samuel Gunn House](#), [Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church](#), [James Martin House](#), [Nassawango Iron Furnace Site](#), [Nun's Green](#), [George Washington Purnell House](#), and [Gov. John Walter Smith House](#).



Pocomoke River Canoe Company after a day of kayaking with tourism interests.

Snow Hill also boasts some famous names like:

- [Arch Johnson](#), stage, film, and television actor died in Snow Hill in 1997.
- [Judy Johnson](#), a player in the Negro Baseball Leagues and later a scout in the major leagues. In 1975, Johnson was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. He was born William Julius “Judy” Johnson in Snow Hill on October 26, 1900.
- [John Walter Smith](#), Congressman for Maryland 1st District, 1899–1900; 44th Governor of Maryland, 1900–1904; U.S. Senator, 1907-1919. Born in Snow Hill on Feb. 5, 1845.
- [Ephraim King Wilson II](#), U.S. Senator, 1885–1891; Congressman for Maryland 1st District, 1873-1874. Born in Snow Hill on December 22, 1821.

In 1999, some scenes of the Hollywood film, *Runaway Bride* (starring Julia Roberts and Richard Gere) were shot at the Snow Hill High School. The scenes at the baseball and football games were filmed behind the school.

Snow Hill is included in the Salisbury–MD–DE Metropolitan Area, newly created with the 2010 Census. It is an area of almost 375,000 people surrounding an urban center and adjacent areas that are socioeconomically tied to the center by commuting. This region spends over \$155 million annually on recreational pursuits.

Its location puts Snow Hill in an advantageous position for tapping both this and the mid-Atlantic metrocore region it took advantage of so long ago.



Worcester County Courthouse in Snow Hill, the county seat.

REGIONAL CONTEXT/LOCAL TOURISM OVERVIEW

Snow Hill is light years ahead of Lower Shore towns in terms of its desire and ability to market its natural assets. For four decades the town has been touting the Pocomoke River as one of the most beautiful and unspoiled places on the East Coast. This effort has paid dividends by putting Snow Hill on the map of nature and recreation enthusiasts in the Mid-Atlantic region.

However, that map has a myriad of competing opportunities in the minds of would-be visitors. Rebranding and revamping old ways of marketing and messaging is in order as well as a new and

refreshed assessment of what Snow Hill can offer. Much of this needs to be understood in a regional context.

The Salisbury-MD-DE Metropolitan Area encompasses Sussex, Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset counties. Millions are spent here annually on outdoor recreation, including paddling, camping, fishing, boating, cycling, and horseback riding. Much of this money comes from southeastern Pennsylvania, including Philadelphia, and the Baltimore/Washington metro region. While Snow Hill offers



The proximity of Snow Hill to major metropolitan areas renders it a tourism marketer's dream.

all of the aforementioned recreational activities within a stone's throw, more than two dozen municipalities compete for these tourists.

Nevertheless, Snow Hill has the strategic advantage of lying only 30 minutes from Ocean City, 30 minutes from Assateague, 40 minutes from Chincoteague, VA, 15 minutes from Chincoteague Bay, and zero minutes from the Pocomoke River.

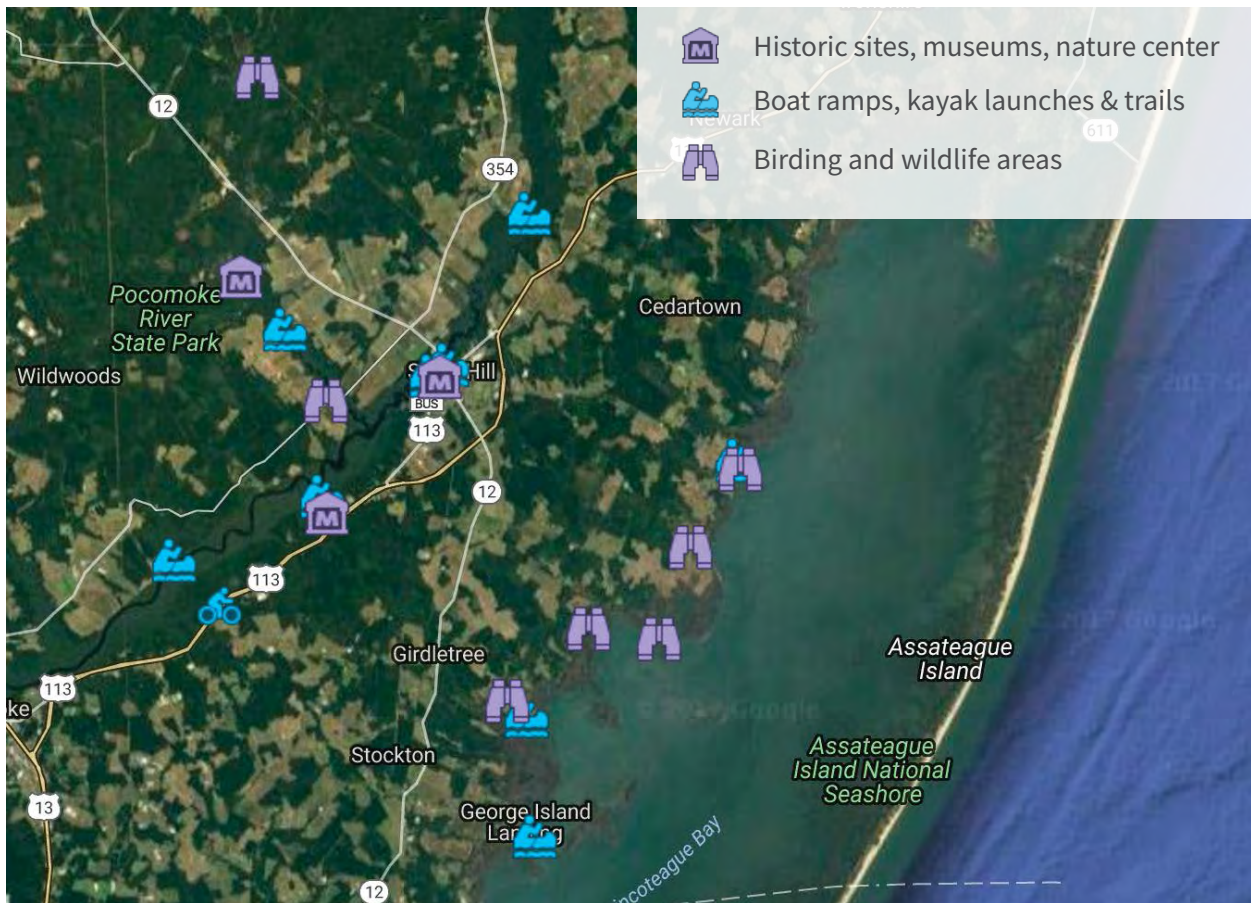
Millions of tourists and unparalleled beauty are at the town's disposal.

Devising a new and creative plan on how to market these assets to the Philadelphia and Baltimore markets, and to lure Ocean City and Chincoteague visitors to the town will be an important part of this effort.

NATURE & HERITAGE TOURISM ASSESSMENT

After a series of meetings, phone calls, and other correspondence with local tourism officials, business owners, and visitors, Conservation

Community Consulting devised a map of touristic sites within a 12-mile radius of Snow Hill.



The Google map of Snow Hill and the surrounding region visually displays the rich array of nature and heritage tourism resources. See p.25 for site specifics.

STRENGTH/WEAKNESS/OPPORTUNITY/THREAT (SWOT) ANALYSIS

The mapping exercise was followed by a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis with a core group of Snow Hill tourism

professionals, business owners and conservation leaders.



STRENGTHS

- Pocomoke River
- Placid, flat
- Always water
- Convenient launch sites
- Mosquito-free paddling
- Outfitter on site
- Surrounded by country/pretty roads
- Wildness - deepest river for width
- Recreational fishing
- Birding
- Pocomoke River State Park - Shad & Milburn landings
- Charming town - clean & wholesome
- B&Bs
- Wealth of architecture
- Walking tour of homes
- Paul Touart - Architectural History of Worcester County Along The Seaboard Side
- 3 parks in town - Byrd, Sturgis, Gateway
- Mid-Atlantic location - 30% are 4 hours away - interest-driven ports of call



Eastern kingsnake.



Eastern screech owl in a wood duck box on the Pocomoke River.



WEAKNESSES

- Camping infrastructure - need more
- South of Milburn - no camping
- Empty storefronts - need critical mass of shops - eat, drink, shop
- Lack of a brewery
- Inadequate signs on back roads - horse trails
- Signs on 113 are inadequate and too small
- Water trails need definition
- Keep secret & keep mystique?
- Can't drink at the state park (there are exceptions)



OPPORTUNITIES

- Riverside assets, bayside assets - develop into itineraries
- Could open up river to multi-day experiences
- Pocomoke eligible for scenic & wild designation
- Kayak fishing
- Mattaponi soft launch - between Milburn and Shad landings
- Snow Hill paddlers page or river blog
- 60+ miles of trails
- Improve water trail maps (Bog Iron and EA Vaughn)
- Primitive camping sites?
- Camping on Blades road
- In the Pocomoke State Forest you can drink
- Excursion train in Worcester County (connect Berlin to Snow Hill - entertainment opportunities at both ends)
- Proximity to Chincoteague and Assateague
- Trails next to rails
- Cultural - oysters at Taylors Landing, Mattaponi old ferry
- Piggyback on regional tourism opportunities
- One article can open up huge market
- Packaging - birding & culinary, biking & breweries
- Power of a story
- Taking advantage of other resources
- Adopt an ordinance - fill, dress-up empty storefronts
- Berlin model - registration ordinance
- Three buildings being upgraded right now in Snow Hill
- Interest is high
- Brewery!
- Central to lots of stuff
- Route 113 expansion - more travel
- SHA Tourist Area and Corridor Signing Program
- Journey between trail towns
- Extending the gateway - good, can be improved, more distinctive
- Many really good public & private partners
- Resort town visitors
- Rocket launches! Waiting for launch, if launches get scrubbed - other options
- Packaging with launches using landings etc.
- Other -ing, geocaching, crabbing, horseback riding - target ads to specialty magazines
- Promote seminal experiences - crabbing
- Multi-day paddling
- Photos, videos - report opportunities
- Improve snowhilloutdoors.com



THREATS

- Marina
- Zoning - be mindful of future development that could detract from quality
- Incompatible uses -- fill river with jetskis, etc.
- Water pollution
- Buildings need work
- Mosquitoes - Zika perception? Fear
- Complacency

SNOW HILL'S TOURISM ASSETS

Tourism assets within a one-mile radius around Snow Hill

1
MILE

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
Harvest Moon Tavern	<p>This small town tavern offers comfort food at its best. Known for its homemade soups, bountiful salads and stuffed sandwiches, the restaurant is perfect for the hungry outdoor set. Home style platters as well as fresh seafood and steak dinners are also among the many choices available. Such an establishment is a must for sustaining a trail town.</p>
Blue Dog Café	<p>Famous for its dinner shows and gourmet-cooked meals, the Blue Dog Café is a great lure for nature and heritage tourists. Todd, the singing waiter, is a local celebrity with the pipes to croon all comers. The unique flavor of the restaurant adds authenticity to the Snow Hill experience.</p>
China Moon restaurant	<p>Often times small towns lack ethnic foods. In this case, Snow Hill enjoys the flavor of real East Asian cuisine at a reasonable price and in large servings for the hungry outdoor recreationist. China Moon's location on East Market Street also makes it walkable from anywhere downtown.</p>



Blessing of the Combines.

1
MILE

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
<u>Julia Purnell Museum</u>	<p>Built in 1891, the Julia A. Purnell Museum offers exhibits interpreting many aspects of Worcester County’s history. The museum’s historical timeline parallels the history of Worcester County with that of the nation as a whole. The People of the Pocomoke exhibit informs visitors about the history of regional Native Americans. A “general merchandise” store exhibit welcomes guests back to a time when the community was built around the local general store. For heritage tourists it is a one-stop shop to learn the history of the Pocomoke region.</p>
<u>River House Inn Bed and Breakfast</u>	<p>This casual, laidback getaway along the Pocomoke River is a National Registered Victorian home replete with pool, outdoor barbeque, and sofa lounge. The spacious estate is famous for its homemade waffles, spectacular weddings, and capacity to sleep 26 guests. B&Bs are an essential ingredient for marketing a place as a nature and heritage tourism destination</p>
<u>The Daily Brew Coffeehouse</u>	<p>The “DBC” on N. Washington St. is the perfect place to get your daily cup of brew. In addition to coffee and espresso, the café serves breakfast, lunch, smoothies, and a delectable assortment of baked goods.</p>



Pocomoke River Canoe Company.

1
MILE

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
<p><u>Chanceford Hall B&B</u></p>	<p>Built in the late 18th century, Chanceford Hall’s placement on the National Register of Historic Places makes it a heritage tourist’s dream stay. When Snow Hill was set to be bombed by the British during the War of 1812 all important town records were moved to Chanceford for safe keeping. Chanceford was comprised entirely of Flemish Bond bricks, and the rest of the buildings in Snow Hill were made of wood and would have been destroyed in such an assault. Thankfully the town was spared. Subsequently the historic home turned into a Bed & Breakfast business in 1986. The 7,000 sq ft B&B now boasts six bedrooms, seven full baths, & ten fireplaces. It sits on a little over one acre, has a vintage lap pool, and the oldest black walnut tree in Worcester County. In 2014, Chanceford Hall was selected as one of the 100 Best Buildings in Maryland by The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), a division of the National Park Service.</p>
<p><u>The Cedars Bed and Breakfast</u></p>	<p>This historic 1850s mansion in downtown Snow Hill is the cozy and green experience nature and heritage travelers are looking for. The Cedars recycles, composts, and has an organic garden which offers fresh vegetables and fruits when in season. Sheets and linens are line-dried. In addition to a spa and hot tub, the quaint B&B offers a gourmet breakfast, 2nd story porches, and airport pick-up at Salisbury Airport. The town should continue to promote this travel experience and make business as simple as possible for such entities.</p>



River House Inn.

1
MILE

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
Byrd Park	Situating on the banks of the Pocomoke River, the 15-acre Byrd Park is the largest of the three town parks in Snow Hill. Its new concession stand and wide expanses of green grass make it ideal for festivals and specials events. The large pavilions provide shade from the hot sun and shelter from inclement weather. Ample launch sites for canoes and kayaks as well as spacious picnic areas make this park an important lure for outdoor adventure seekers.
Sturgis Park	Just up the river from Byrd Park lies Sturgis Park. This charming spot is a perfect venue for summer events and picnics. Set at the base of the downtown shopping district, the park offers both cultural and natural heritage alternatives. This amenity provides another important green space available when other public places are crowded or hosting events.
<u>Pocomoke River Canoe Co.</u>	The Pocomoke River Canoe Company is the backbone of Snow Hill’s nature and heritage tourism efforts. A staple of the Pocomoke paddling experience for more than three decades, the locally owned business provides bikes, kayaks, canoes, and stand-up paddleboards for Pocomoke, Nassawango, and Chincoteague Bay area adventures. Without such a provider, nature tourism efforts in Snow Hill would falter. With improved social media, advertising, package tours and an injection of energy and creative thinking, the business could help Snow Hill blossom into a bona fide trail town.



Byrd Park.

1
MILE

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
<p>Gateway Park & Pocomoke River Cruises</p>	<p>On the east of Rt 12 behind the Pocomoke River Canoe Company on the east side of the river sits Gateway Park. Though tiny in size, it's an ideal spot to take in the river, relax on a bench, or learn from its numerous interpretive panels. The little gem is also the home of the Pocomoke River Cruises pontoon boat, famous for its laid back scenic river cruises.</p>
<p>US113/Commercial development</p>	<p>Route 113 presents a challenge to those trying to market Snow Hill as a unique, small town destination. While less developed than some major roadways near small jurisdictions, the current zoning could present a future strain for allowing Snow Hill to keep its small town flavor. Fastfood franchises, box store chains, and car dealerships are not inviting to heritage tourists and steal from what makes small towns unique. Town leaders should make every effort to be discriminating with the appearance and type of development they allow on US113, making strides to retain the town's authenticity and limit competition to locally owned downtown businesses. The dualization of the highway may present additional opportunities to draw tourists to the town provided regulatory mechanisms do not impede marketing.</p>



Snow Hill downtown.



ASSET	DESCRIPTION
Market Street	The appearance of a town’s ingress and egress is critical to how they are perceived. East Market Street is the preferred thoroughfare in and out of Snow Hill, but it could use some TLC. Adjusting building and zoning codes and finding state and federal dollars to improve this street would be a prudent long-term investment. Since commercial areas provide significant revenue for municipalities, Snow Hill should investigate how to improve this area with better streetscapes and committed local businesses.
Lower Shore Land Trust	The Lower Shore Land Trust is more than just an office along the river. In many ways it’s the glue that holds towns like Snow Hill and Berlin together. By promoting land conservation and encouraging infrastructure investment in towns rather than sprawled across the countryside, the Trust has been adept at revitalizing the lower shore’s small towns. Stop by their office along River St. or check out their Pollinator & Native Plant Sale in early May.
Snow Hill–Shad Landing hiking trail	Not yet in existence, the concept for this trail emerged in 2015 after a brainstorming session with tourism professionals. The trail would extend Dighton Ave into an existing sandy forest road winding just east of the Pocomoke River five miles to Shad Landing. The economic effect of allowing both town folk and Shad Landing’s thousands of campers to walk or bike to and from Snow Hill could be enormous. Travelers could even canoe one way via the Pocomoke and bike or walk back via the trail. The county and Snow Hill elected officials should invest time and energy into nailing down logistics and purchasing easements and property to make this happen.
Vibrant Arts & Entertainment District	Snow Hill is one of 24 Maryland communities with an Arts & Entertainment District designation. First Fridays, community art projects, Paint Snow Hill and music events like Blues Jam now fill the Snow Hill arts & entertainment calendar. Art is a critical element in Snow Hill’s revival. Galleries include Bishop Stock Fine Art, Craft, and Wine, Nancy Ellen Thompson Studio, Adcock Studio, and The Green Pearl, and coming soon are the 101 Green Street Gallery and 1/2 Gallery.

Tourism assets within a one- to five-mile radius around Snow Hill

5 MILES

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
<p><u>Porters Crossing (4.9)</u></p>	<p>On Porters Crossing Rd. lies the starting point to one of the East Coast’s most spectacular paddles. Here, the canoe-wide Pocomoke River methodically weaves its way south to the Chesapeake. Spring and early summer mornings in this sacred woodland are marked by the melodious din of thousands of warblers and vireos. The three-hour paddle through the primeval forest downstream to Snow Hill is a birder’s and wilderness lover’s dream. This paddle should serve as a focal point of Snow Hill’s nature tourism efforts.</p>
<p><u>Red House Rd. Canoe Launch (4)</u></p>	<p>This bird-rich bald cypress-laden launch along the Nassawango Creek is great for trips downstream to Nassawango Road or the whole way to Snow Hill after a left turn onto the Pocomoke. Entirely forested and nearly completely protected, a trip down Nassawango Creek is like a trip back in time. Snow Hill is the only location within three hours of the metro regions to offer such an experience.</p>



Tourism group explores Furnace Town.

5
MILES

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
<p><u>Furnace Town (4.9)</u></p>	<p>Nestled amidst 40,000 acres of protected land, the restored living museum revisits the iron ore heyday of 1828-1850. In this small town of 300, craftsmen and women gathered bog ore from Nassawango swamp, brought clam and oyster shells up the canal via the Pocomoke River from the Chesapeake Bay, and made charcoal in the Pocomoke forest. By 1929, only the foundations of the buildings and the furnace remained. In the mid-1960s the Worcester County Historical Society began restoration and in 1982, Furnace Town Foundation Inc. was formed to own, operate, and interpret the museum historic site. This site provides a key local tourism draw for both nature and heritage tourists.</p>
<p><u>Horse Trails</u></p>	<p>There are more than 30 miles of horse trails within a stone’s throw of Snow Hill--from the Algonquin Trail to the Chandler-Colburne Trail to Milburn Landing, Hudson-Tarr and Mattaponi. These trails are a huge draw for horseback riders and an ideal marketing target for Snow Hill. Scores of horse trailers line the large parking area on weekends at Furnace Town.</p>



The Nature Conservancy’s Prothonotary Birding Trail.

5
MILES

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
<p><u>Prothonotary Birding Trail (3.5)</u></p>	<p>At the corner of Creek Rd. and Nassawango Road just 3.5 miles outside of Snow Hill, this short but biologically rich hiking trail boasts an incredible array of warblers in spring and summer. It was recently dedicated as an old growth forest by the Old Growth Forest Network. Parking is limited but this gem adds to the distinctive character of the Snow Hill area offerings.</p>
<p><u>Algonquin Cross County Trail (9)</u></p>	<p>It may be hard for megalopolis jetsetters to believe but just three hours from the metrocore on the Eastern Shore of Maryland they can hike through 12.5 miles of deep woods. Perfectly sized for a day hike, the newly minted Algonquin Trail traverses some 47 square miles of wildlife-rich woodlands just nine miles north and west of Snow Hill. The sheer length of this trail makes it one-of-a-kind on the Eastern Shore and helps advertise the wildness of the Snow Hill area. http://www.visitworchester.org/index.php/site/article/algonquin-cross-county-trail</p>
<p><u>Paddling</u></p>	<p>Snow Hill should set its sights on being a Delmarva paddling hub. With a river running through town, Snow Hill has everything it needs to be the next paddling destination, including a steady provider. Ample accommodations, trail maps, marketing additional paddling trails, multi-day trips and institutionalizing the “Delmarva Paddling Weekend” could transform the town into a must-visit installation for the burgeoning mid-Atlantic paddling crowd.</p>



Paddling the Pocomoke with Natalie Warren. See her article in Canoe & Kayak Magazine [here](#).

Tourism assets within a five- to 12-mile radius around Snow Hill

12
MILES

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
<p>Shad Landing (5.1) and Milburn (5.9) Landing in Pocomoke State Park</p>	<p>Perhaps one of Worcester County’s most beloved natural assets, Pocomoke River State Park brings hundreds of thousands of people to the county every year. The park’s two recreation areas (Shad and Milburn Landing) on both sides of the river offer ample opportunities for camping, fishing, hiking, stargazing, cycling, and kayaking. A nature center and swimming pool add to the lure. The park is the bedrock of Snow Hill’s nature tourism crusade. At less than 10 minutes from the park, Snow Hill provides the perfect small town setting for the outdoor-minded. In addition to enticing the park’s visitors to the town, the addition of paddling and cycling trails that link both the town and the park could prove lucrative.</p>
<p>Hudson-Tarr Mountain Biking Trail (5.4)</p>	<p>This 9 miles of wooded biking trails on the southwest side of Shad Landing have .7-3.8 mile loops through managed woods and wetlands. Cycling here is easy but fun and in a beautiful setting that visitors can’t find elsewhere in Maryland. The trails add to the rich outdoor experience that defines Snow Hill.</p>
<p>Whiton Crossing (9.4)</p>	<p>The recent state acquisition and restoration of almost 2,000 acres of land around this glorious Pocomoke River crossing in Whiton about 9.4 miles north of Snow Hill have brought this crossing to the forefront for more exploration. Currently the heavily forested 7.5-mile paddle from here to Porters Crossing requires numerous portages due to downed logs. To make this a viable route, the town, state, and county should collaborate to make the route passable, thereby allowing Snow Hill and Worcester County to promote it to paddlers.</p>



12
MILES

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
<p>Mt Olive Church Rd. (Sturgis Mill Pond and Bridge over Nassawango Creek) (8.2)</p>	<p>Mt Olive Church Rd is simply one of those iconic roads visitors to Snow Hill should drive the length of. Its wooded vistas include songbird-laden stops at the bridge over Nassawango Creek and at The Nature Conservancy-owned Sturgis Mill Pond—the site of a historic dam breach. Here ancient sand hills called xeric dunes descend into the darkness of the cypress swamp. The mix of history and nature combined with access from the road to a variety of Nature Conservancy and state land hiking trails render the road, the pond, and the bridge a nature lover’s dream.</p>
<p>Mattaponi soft launch (6.7)</p>	<p>This brand new soft kayak launch adds a whole new dimension to paddling the Pocomoke. Set in the deep woods just south of Shad Landing, it allows for both lengthening north river trips and beginning south river trips toward Pocomoke Sound. This spectacularly beautiful addition to Pocomoke put-in spots adds a slate of new options for paddling this Wild and Scenic-designated river.</p>
<p>YMCA Bike Trail (11)</p>	<p>The well maintained single track trails at the Lower Shore YMCA 11 miles south of Snow Hill provide a great 1-3-mile ride for the nature-oriented mountain biker. Fast becoming a destination for mountain biking enthusiasts, the Lower Shore needs hubs like this trail to spurn more mountain biking trail development and create the social media buzz to bring these outdoor adventurers to the shore.</p>



Forester Mike Schofield contemplates creative ways to bring nature and heritage tourism to the 60,000 acres of state forest surrounding Snow Hill.

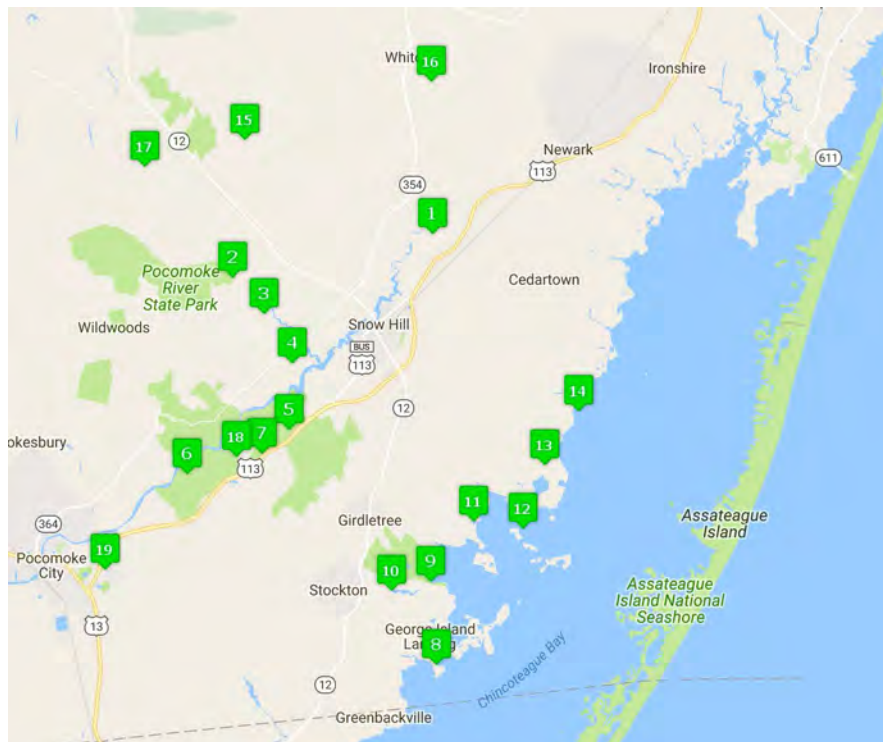
12
MILES

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
Public Landing (6.3)	A small unincorporated community on Chincoteague Bay, 6.3 miles east of Snow Hill, Public Landing is replete with a boat launch, a public crabbing friendly pier, and a beautiful vista overlooking Chincoteague Bay. In the 1920s and early 1930s, carnival rides, a bowling alley, and other amusements were an integral part of the landing. After the 1933 hurricane destroyed Public Landing's waterfront, only the pier was rebuilt. All of the land surrounding Public Landing is now protected by conservation easements, ensuring the landing will forever remain as quaint and marketable as it is today.
Figg's Landing (7.2)	While this "landing" doesn't actually allow public access to Chincoteague Bay, restored wetlands on Figg's Road draw hundreds of birders every fall, spring and winter to view the incredible diversity of duck species and wading birds that grace the shallow ponds near the roadway. While warblers provide the birder draw to the Pocomoke, ducks and shorebirds are the draw amongst the Chincoteague Bay area landings. A conservation easement protects this privately held site.
Scott's Landing (6.6)	Another amazing vista along the landings circuit is Scott's Landing. The secluded forests of the hilly, winding road lead to an open marsh vista like few in the world. Makeshift parking at the end of the road leaves for great sunsets or even picnics outside of mosquito season. Birders like this location for shorebirds and rare saltmarsh sparrows.
Truitts Landing (7.1)	Truitts Landing is one of the best and most highly recognized spots for bird watching on the Delmarva Peninsula. With freshwater marsh on the north side of Truitt's Landing Rd. and saltmarsh on the south side, the diversity of rail, shorebird, raptor, and duck species is unparalleled. As famous as it is, the spot is also one of the least user friendly. The skinny sand road to the bay leaves little room for error and flood water sometimes covers the pothole-laden road in winter and spring. With both sides of the road privately owned but in conservation easements, the county should work with the landowner to make the site more user friendly.
<u>Taylor's Landing/EA Vaughn Wildlife Management Area & Kayak Trail (8.6)</u>	On the north side of the 3,500-acre <u>EA Vaughn Wildlife Management Area (WMA)</u> , Taylor's Landing serves the dual purpose of a working landing with beautiful vistas and the main entryway to the EA Vaughn Wildlife Management Area. The landing also has a kayak launch and sits at the northern terminal for the EA Vaughn Kayak Trail. Wayfinding signs here help guide paddlers down the remote Scarboro, Pikes, Cottman and Beasey creeks surrounding the WMA. Outside of deer and turkey season the trails at EA Vaughn are also accessible from MD 12 and MD 366 and wind through fields and woods ending in beautiful Chincoteague Bay panoramic views.

12 MILES

ASSET	DESCRIPTION
George Island Landing (12)	On the south side of the EA Vaughn Wildlife Management Area, this landing is another remote gem on Chincoteague Bay. The southernmost of the Maryland landings, the site still retains an old-time feel with crab shacks and duck blinds painting the wide expanse of marsh. The landing also has a kayak launch and sits at the southern terminal for the EA Vaughn Kayak Trail. This and the other four landings should be marketed together as a sightseer’s, birder’s and paddler’s wilderness dream.

Additional non-locational attractions that could be utilized at these sites include ghost tours, historic weddings, Underground Railroad interpretive information, photography tourism, and geocaching.



Nature and heritage assets within 12 miles of Snow Hill.

- | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Porter’s Crossing Canoe/
Kayak Launch | 7. Hudson-Tarr Tract Mountain
Bike Trails | 14. Public Landing |
| 2. Furnace Town | 8. George’s Island Landing | 15. Mt. Olive Church Road |
| 3. Red House Road Canoe/
Kayak Launch | 9. Taylor’s Landing - E.A.
Vaughn Kayak Trail | 16. Whiton Crossing |
| 4. Prothonotary Birding Trail | 10. E.A. Vaughn Wildlife
Management Area | 17. Algonquin Trail |
| 5. Shad Landing (Pocomoke
River State Park) | 11. Truitts Landing | 18. Mattaponi soft launch |
| 6. Milburn Landing (Pocomoke
River State Park) | 12. Scotts Landing | 19. YMCA Bike Trail |
| | 13. Figgs Landing | |

NATURE & HERITAGE TOURISM PLAN

Goals for first year of the Nature and Heritage Tourism Plan

**YEAR
1**

GOAL: FIRST YEAR	DESCRIPTION
Inventory existing nature & heritage tourism websites, brochures, trail maps, and articles about Snow Hill, the Pocomoke, and Chincoteague Bay.	Develop photo and video inventory of wildlife images to celebrate the diversity of the cypress swamp and coastal marshes. Digitize all existing resources that are currently unavailable online, and collect these online resources on SnowHillOutdoors.com. Regularly update new SnowHillOutdoors.com website and social media platforms (Snow Hill Paddlers group, Snow Hill Outdoors Facebook page).
Further develop seasonal Top 10 lists of outdoor activities in and around Snow Hill.	Creating campaigns for each season can serve as an excellent marketing tool and bring tourism dollars at an otherwise slow time of year. Horseback riding, paddling, cycling, fishing, birding, and heritage tourism could fit snugly in a season, and Snow Hill offers all of these. Name and market the seasons to fit Snow Hill's brand.
Invest in marketing the town to position Snow Hill as a center for nature and heritage tourism.	Sell the river, the preponderance of open space, the more than 70 miles of paddling trails, bike trails, and horse trails, warbler watching, B&Bs, and historic and scenic landings. When promoting trails, sites, and parks weave nature and history together to enrich visitor's experience (www.eBird.org).
Promote existing nature and heritage tourism events.	Utilize Return to Goat Island Stand-Up Paddleboard Festival, Iron Furnace 50, Blessing of the Combines, Snow Hill Canoe Joust, Snow Hill Oyster Roast, Iron Furnace 50 Bicycle Ride, and Native Plant Sale and Pollinator Festival, Worcester County fair, Delmarva Birding Weekend, and Delmarva Paddling Weekend to boast the town's and region's natural and historical assets.
Identify opportunities to responsibly consume craft beer and wine during outdoor experiences.	Outdoor revelry has worked without incident in other towns like Berlin and could become an important draw for events like the Delmarva Paddling Weekend, Return to Goat Island, and The Iron Furnace 50.



EA Vaughn Kayak Trail marker.



Rural roads surrounding Snow Hill are ideal for cycling.

GOAL: FIRST YEAR	DESCRIPTION	YEAR 1
Advertise the town's assets that heritage tourists may not be aware of.	Tourists will pay to see and learn about places like All Hallows Episcopal Church , Chanceford , Old Friendship United Methodist Church , Samuel Gunn House , Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church , James Martin House , Nassawango Iron Furnace Site , Nun's Green , George Washington Purnell House , and Gov. John Walter Smith House . Historic buildings provide the kind of story and rich history Americans yearn for. A historic homes walking tour would provide an excellent marketing piece.	
Tell stories unique to the Snow Hill region.	The primary thing nature and heritage tourists seek is authentic experiences. Did you know that in the 1750s, a free black man, George Blake, purchased and owned one of the largest colonial plantations in Maryland? These stories tell a tale that belongs only to the Snow Hill region. This authenticity is what adventure travelers seek and Snow Hill should weave this fascinating history into its portfolio of natural wonders.	
Invest in a community imaging and branding workshop.	Seasoned public relations guru Ben Muldrow turns fresh ideas into viable marketing plans. Snow Hill needs a refreshed brand to entice would-be tourists and Muldrow is the best in the business.	
Hold more FAM tours.	Especially enticing would be a stakeholder group paddling familiarization, or FAM tour, on the Pocomoke (Porter's Crossing to Crisfield) to showcase the possibilities and elicit enthusiasm for the town's nature and heritage tourism efforts.	
Inventory access issues for hiking and cycling trails, birding sites, and paddler launches, and prioritize improvements.	With the preponderance of trails and natural sites it's not surprising that issues with access to some of them exist. For example, the take out at Nassawango bridge is in need of improvement and some of the birding sites have limited parking. Many cycling, hiking, and horseback riding trails lack adequate access. After identifying needs and prioritizing them, the town should work with the state and private entities to improve selected sites.	
Protect the Pocomoke.	The town's biggest lure and most important economic asset is the Pocomoke River. Whenever possible, Snow Hill should advocate for protection of the Pocomoke watershed from the Delaware line all the way to the town. In town, Snow Hill should limit impervious surfaces, protect existing forests and plant riparian areas with trees. The economic viability of Snow Hill is wholly contingent on what happens upstream.	
Invest in Sturgis Park.	Make the park more user-friendly and render it a destination for nature and heritage tourists with story panels, an interpretive plan, and an educational walking tour.	

TOP 10 OUTDOOR THINGS TO DO BY SEASON

Winter Top 10: December 1 through February 28



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	WEB
Paddle	If you are a skilled paddler and have the proper equipment, kayak or canoe Nassawango Creek from Red House Road after a light snowfall. The sound of your boat cracking through the thin ice of the Nassawango in winter is a sound you won't forget.	http://delmarva-almanac.com/index.php/content/article/backwater_paddling_adventures
Birds	The fields around Snow Hill frequently turn white from huge flocks of Snow Geese and Tundra Swans. Bald Eagles congregate along the Pocomoke in the winter months near Milburn Landing.	http://www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/birding-in-worcester-county
Eat	Snow Hill is known for its comfort food selections that keep visitors warm during the shore's cool winters. During the last Sunday in February, the Snow Hill Oyster Roast draws folks from all over the mid-Atlantic to devour the savory bivalves at the peak of their delectability.	https://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurants-g41381-Snow_Hill_Maryland.html
Wildlife	The Pocomoke's river otters and beaver den and raise young in winter. Spring peepers and New Jersey chorus frogs begin calling in late winter, to remind you that spring is just around the corner.	http://www.marylandbiodiversity.com
Camp	"Glamp" in one of the mini-cabins at Shad Landing. This campus of Pocomoke River State Park stays open year-round, and the mini-cabins are heated.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/parkmaps/shadlandingmap.aspx
Hike	Hike at Shad Landing and Milburn Landing, both part of Pocomoke River State Park on opposite banks of the Pocomoke.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/parkmaps/milburnmap.aspx
Cycle	Cycle the ViewTrail 100 during our mild winters to enjoy scenic landscapes filled with open fields and waterfowl.	http://www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/the-view-trail-100
Hunt	The marshes of Chincoteague Bay east of Snow Hill are a winter waterfowlers paradise. Duck and goose hunters can hunt October through January, but check the Maryland DNR website for dates for specific seasons.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/huntersguide/Pages/default.aspx
Fish	Largemouth bass and chain pickerel delight all winter long with crank baits.	http://www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/pocomoke-river-fishing-boating

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	WEB
Explore History	A walk through Snow Hill is a walk through the eras of U.S. architecture. Snow Hill's historic homes range from Colonial to Art-Deco, and many have been restored to their former grandeur. During the holiday season, Snow Hill looks like a Norman Rockwell painting.	http://www.snowhillmd.com/moveHere/townHistory.cfm

Spring Top 10: March 1 through May 31



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	WEB
Paddle	Paddling season begins in late April with the re-opening of the Pocomoke River Canoe Company. Get on the river early to enjoy the light fog created by warm air on cool, dark water. The lush greens of spring will change the Pocomoke and Nassawango with each passing week.	http://www.pocomokerivercanoe.com
Birds	Celebrate the arrival of the spring migrants by birding in the Audubon-identified Important Bird Areas of the Pocomoke/Nassawango and Maryland Coastal Bays. "Bird the Bridges" by cruising the back roads of the baldcypress swamp between Snow Hill and Salisbury to search for Prothonotary Warblers, Scarlet Tanagers and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers.	http://delmarvabirding.org
Plants	Spatterdock, also known as Yellow Pond Lilly, begins to emerge from the mud of the Pocomoke river bottom. Green, feathery needles reappear on the Baldcypress. Fallow farm fields turn purple with Henbit.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/Wildlife/Pages/plants_wildlife/home.aspx
Wildlife	As temperatures warm, Eastern Painted and Redbelly Turtles bask on emerged logs on the Pocomoke during the day. A paddle down either the Pocomoke or Nassawango Creek also offers a good chance to see beavers and their associated lodges. Northern watersnakes bask along the riverbanks and in abandoned duck blinds (we don't have water moccasins).	http://www.marylandbiodiversity.com
Camp	Spring is a great time to avoid mosquitoes and chiggers. Nearby Shad Landing boasts ample wooded campites with related facilities. This campus of Pocomoke River State Park stays open year-round.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/eastern/pocomokeriver.aspx



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	WEB
Hike	Hike at Shad Landing and Milburn Landing, both part of Pocomoke River State Park. Or embark from nearby Furnace Town amidst the miles of trails owned and operated by the Nature Conservancy's 11,000-acre Nassawango Creek Preserve.	http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/maryland_dc/placesweprotect/nassawango-creek-preserve.xml
Cycle	Mountain bike the trails through thousands of acres of public forest, or bring your road bike to explore the lightly traveled scenic country roads of the Viewtrail 100.	http://www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/the-view-trail-100
Hunt	Wild Turkeys abound in the wide open spaces of Maryland's Eastern Shore. With so much public land, places to hunt and the abundance of turkeys do not disappoint.	http://www.eregulations.com/maryland/hunting/wild-turkey
Fish	Fish for abundant lunker bass, white and yellow perch, shad, and herring in the cypress-lined creeks and rivers.	http://www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/pocomoke-river-fishing-boating
Explore History	A walk through Snow Hill is a walk through the eras of U.S. architecture. Snow Hill's historic homes range from Colonial to Art-Deco, and many have been restored to their former grandeur. Snow Hill is also home to several historic churches, including the Makemie Memorial Presbyterian, the oldest continuously operating Presbyterian Church in the U.S. Browse the numerous art galleries and studios that line the quaint streets of the historic town. Be sure to explore the exhibitions at the Julia A. Purnell Museum and its 10,000 artifacts. Also, step back in time to the Village of Nescongo, which was operated as a company town by the Maryland Iron Company from 1831 to 1850. The 19th-century village and restored Iron Furnace have been restored by the Furnace Town Living Heritage Museum.	http://www.purnellmuseum.com/JuliaPurnell_history.php http://www.furnacetown.org
Rest	Stay in one of the rustic bed and breakfasts nestled on the quiet side streets or in the adjacent unspoiled countryside.	https://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotels-g41381-Snow_Hill_Maryland-Hotels.html
Crab	Chicken neck for crabs in Chincoteague Bay at nearby Public Landing. (Chicken necking involves tying a chicken neck to a string with a small weight, tossing it into the bay, then slowly pulling it in to net unwitting blue crabs.)	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/regulations/blue-crab.aspx

Summer Top 10: June 1 through August 31



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	WEB
Paddle	Kayak or canoe through a Southern swamp without leaving Maryland! Launch from the Pocomoke River Canoe Co. to paddle the Pocomoke and Nassawango creeks through the Northernmost stand of the Southern baldcypress on the East Coast. River Otter, Beaver, Redbelly Turtles, Barred Owls and Prothonotary Warblers are just a few of the species you may encounter while paddling through the giant baldcypress. Pocomoke and Nassawango relatively insect free.	http://www.walkonwatersupco.com/return-to-goat-island-race.html
Birds	Go birding in the Important Bird Areas of the Pocomoke/Nassawango and Maryland Coastal Bays. Audubon Maryland-DC has designated these areas as critical for neotropical migrants and elusive saltmarsh birds. During migration, tally well over 100 species in a day between the two ecosystems. Check out summer breeders, herons and egrets at EA Vaughn WMA.	http://netapp.audubon.org/iba/Site/363
Plants	Native orchids and wildflowers adorn the lowlands and creeksides of the Nassawango Creek and Pocomoke River in summer. It's a heavenly time for plant enthusiasts.	http://www.marylandbiodiversity.com
Wildlife	In summer, rich, deciduous forests yield a biologically diverse landscape boasting box turtles, gar, Delmarva fox squirrels, colorful songbirds and over 20 species of amphibians. A short jaunt to the bays yields bald eagles, herons, egrets, terrapins and the wild ponies of Assateague.	https://www.nps.gov/asis/index.htm
Camp	Summer is the most popular time for camping in and around Snow Hill. Book your site early because campsites fill fast when school is out.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/eastern/pocomokeriver.aspx
Hike	Explore marked trails of the lowland swamp and upland forest on 11,000 acres protected by The Nature Conservancy and 17,000 acres of the Pocomoke State Forest.	https://alltrails.com/trail/us/maryland/paul-leifer-nature-trail-furnace-town-historic-site
Cycle	Cycle through greenery gone from much of the East Coast but still abundant here. Both road biking and mountain biking are popular here. Check out both the Viewtrail 100 and Great Delmarva Bicycling Trail maps.	http://www.ironfurnacefifty.org



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	WEB
Fish	Fish for abundant lunker bass, white and yellow perch, and herring in the adjacent cypress-lined creeks and rivers	http://www.visitworchester.org/index.php/site/article/pocomoke-river-fishing-boating
Explore History	A walk through Snow Hill is like a walk through time. With museum offerings from pre-colonial history to early settlement and 19th century architecture Snow Hill and nearby Furnace Town offer it all. Top the cultural experiences off with the world-famous Blessing of the Combines parade through Snow Hill the first Saturday in August.	http://www.purnellmuseum.com/JuliaPurnell_history.php http://www.furnacetown.org http://blessingofthecomboines.org



The view at EA Vaughn Wildlife Management Area.

Autumn Top 10: September 1 through November 30



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	WEB
Paddle	Enjoy the reflection of the fall foliage on the placid waters of Chincoteague Bay. The coastal marshes along the EA Vaughn Kayak Trail will immerse you in true wilderness. The Pocomoke River Canoe Company rents canoes and kayaks and will take you there until late fall.	http://www.pocomokerivercanoe.com
Birds	Fall migrants are passing through the Pocomoke on their way south. Catch warblers, vireos, hummingbirds, and raptors in the Audubon-identified Pocomoke/Nassawango Important Bird Area before they are gone for the winter.	http://ebird.org/content/ebird
Plants	Bald cypress colors change from green to rusty orange before they turn bald! Bald cypress are named for their appearance after their needles fall.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/Wildlife/Pages/plants_wildlife/home.aspx
Wildlife	Eastern Painted and Redbelly Turtles bask on emerged logs on the Pocomoke during the day.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/plants_wildlife/herps/FieldGuide_OrderTestudines.aspx
Camp	Cool nights and warm days are perfect for tent camping and cooking over an open fire at Pocomoke River State Park.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/eastern/pocomokeriver.aspx
Hike	After the first frost, the trails of the Pocomoke State Forest and the EA Vaughn Wildlife Management Area are refreshingly devoid of ticks and chiggers. Wildlife abounds on the trails, but be mindful of the dates, rules and regulations of deer hunting season.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/wildlife/pages/publiclands/eastern/eavaughn.aspx
Cycle	Cycle the ViewTrail 100 during the autumn to enjoy the scenic landscape of corn stubble fields and fall foliage.	http://www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/the-view-trail-100
Hunt	Reap the rewards of years of wildlife management that have returned Whitetail Deer and Wild Turkey to the forests. Enjoy some of the East Coast's best duck and deer hunting. Bowhunters can enjoy some of the best Whitetail Deer hunting in Maryland. Archery season runs from September 11 through January 30.	http://dnr2.maryland.gov/huntersguide/Pages/default.aspx
Fish	Fish for abundant lunker bass, white and yellow perch, and herring in the adjacent cypress-lined creeks and rivers. Capt. Bruce Wooten can guide you.	http://www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/pocomoke-river-fishing-boating
Explore History	Fall is a crowd-free time to explore the exhibitions at the Julia A. Purnell Museum and Furnace Town Living Heritage Museum.	http://www.purnellmuseum.com/JuliaPurnell_history.php http://www.furnacetown.org

Goals for Years 1–2 of the Nature and Heritage Tourism Plan

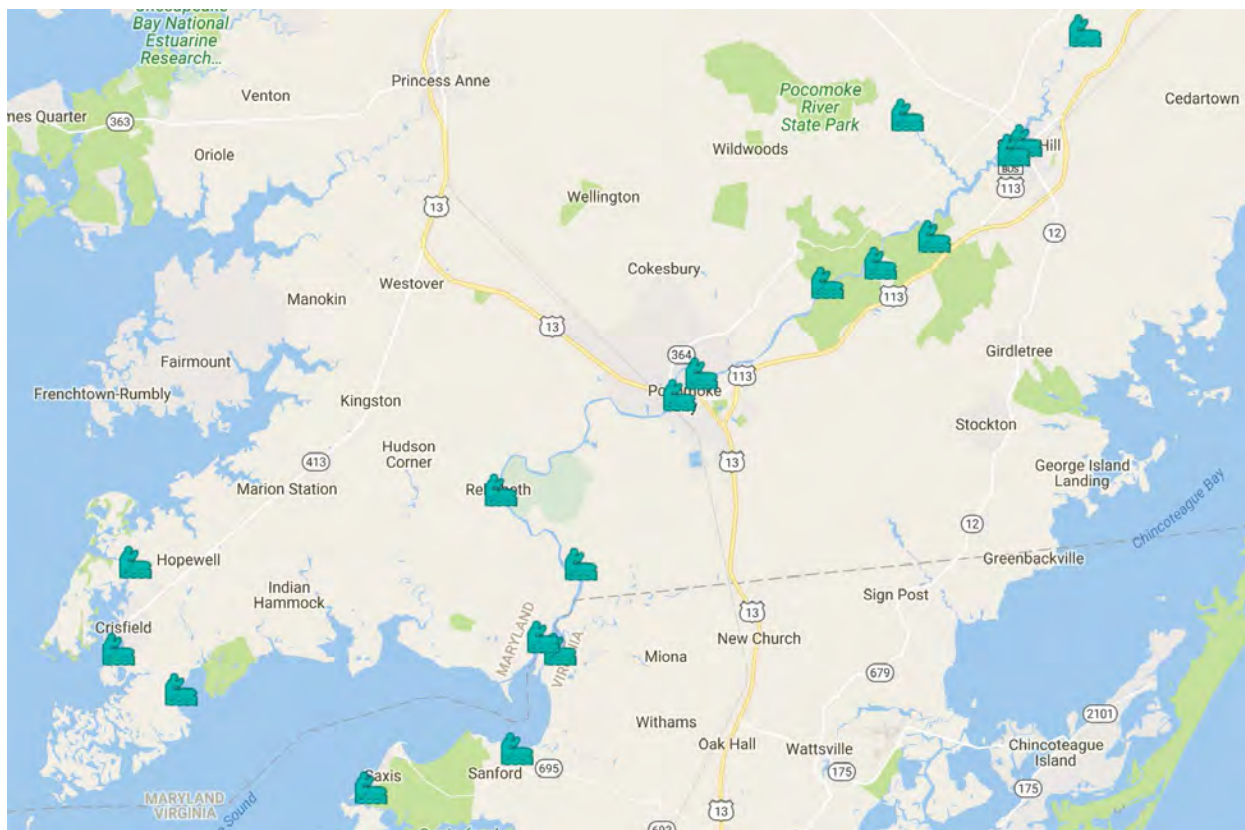
GOAL: YEARS 1–2	DESCRIPTION	YEAR 1–2
<p>Make improvements to wayfinding signs and trail heads.</p>	<p>Once the branding campaign is complete and needs are inventoried, use the new logo and branding campaign to improve trail heads, parking areas, access, and trail signage.</p>	
<p>Explore local, state and federal funding sources to support projects.</p>	<p>From advertising and social media to resource protection, signage, trails, access, and façade improvements, government and private grants abound. If Snow Hill doesn't take advantage of them other municipalities will. Identify funding sources that realize Snow Hill's vision and go for it!</p>	
<p>Partner with other towns and popular destinations in the region for marketing.</p>	<p>Use popular tourist towns like Ocean City and Chincoteague to bring visitors to town for day trips. They have millions of multi-day visitors each year who are yearning for a day or two of something new. Let OC and Chincoteague increase their visitor experience by selling Snow Hill. Partnerships with places like Shad Landing, Captain's Cove, Greenbackville, Laurel, and Berlin can drive more visitors to all locations.</p>	
<p>Use US 113 to Snow Hill's advantage.</p>	<p>While it wouldn't be prudent to market US 113 as part of Snow Hill's image, large and inviting signage advertising the town's natural and historical attractions should be utilized to draw people and ultimately investment in town. Snow Hill should also take advantage of the Worcester County Tourism Center at the Virginia line by keeping it well-stocked and Snow Hill-focused.</p>	
<p>Retain strong county agricultural zoning.</p>	<p>What makes Snow Hill a unique small town in the countryside is Worcester County's zoning. At five lots per parcel, the county's Ag. zoning has kept subdivisions from adulterating Snow Hill's appeal with sprawling subdivisions and the decline of water quality and loss of forests, farmland, and wildlife that come with them. In turn this zoning has protected the integrity of state parks, trails, birding spots, the Pocomoke River and Chincoteague Bay. The Town of Snow Hill must be an active advocate in keeping this protective zoning and resisting annexation urges..</p>	
<p>Design new trails and host new events that highlight Snow Hill's position as a "Trail Town."</p>	<p>With 85 square miles of protected land and more than 70 miles of trails within an 18-mile radius of Snow Hill, the town is tailor-made to be a Trail Town. The "Trail Town" concept was developed in the early 2000s to recognize and create a network of such towns that are hubs for non-mechanized trails. Serving as the base camp to swamp and shore, Snow Hill visitors already have a variety of trails traversing the region. But there are many more opportunities to develop more hiking, biking, birding, and paddling trails. The existing concept of a hiking trail from Snow Hill to Shad Landing and trails to and from the Mattaponi launch are already generating excitement. Likewise, the Delmarva Paddling Weekend is a good first step in showcasing the town as a viable Trail Town. Snow Hill should actively engage local, state, and federal economic interests to get this done.</p>	

GOAL: YEARS 1-2	DESCRIPTION
-----------------	-------------

YEAR 1-2

Begin planning for multi-day backcountry camping and paddling experiences.

Develop packaging around multi-day paddling experiences, birding, craft beer, and hiking. A new crop of young adventure travelers is yearning for this and the Eastern Shore is one of the closest places to find it from the DC metro area. Work with state and willing private landowners to create camping sites and chickees.



Possible campsites, launches, or resting spots for multi-day Pocomoke sojourns.

FUNDING SOURCES THAT SUPPORT NATURE & HERITAGE TOURISM

[Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development](#)

[Waterway Improvement Funds \(DNR\)](#)

[Program Open Space \(DNR\)](#)

[Chesapeake & Coastal Service Grant \(DNR\)](#)

[US Department of Housing and Urban Development](#)

[Community Resilience Grant \(DNR\)](#)

[Natural Filters Grant Program \(DNR\)](#)

[Small-Scale Construction and Acquisition Program](#)

[Community Development Block Grant](#)

[National Trust for Historic Preservation](#)

[Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council](#)

[Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore](#)

[Humphreys Foundation](#)

[Perdue Foundation](#)

[Maryland Heritage Area Program](#)

[Worcester County Arts Council](#)

[Housing Preservation Grants \(USDA\)](#)

[Rural Business Development Grants \(USDA\)](#)

[Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund \(RMPIF\)](#)

[Maryland State Arts Council](#)

[Maryland Dept of Transportation Bike, pedestrian and trail projects](#)

[Maryland Traditions Project Grant](#)

[Maryland Bikeways Program](#)

[Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund](#)

Goals for Year 3+ of the Nature and Heritage Tourism Plan

GOAL: YEAR 3+	DESCRIPTION	YEAR 3+
Update building and zoning codes to make the town more enticing to potential visitors.	The town should consider adopting building codes and ordinances to ensure the long-term protection of the town’s historic homes and to fill or dress up empty storefronts. Likewise on Market and N. Washington streets, adjusting planning and zoning codes and finding state and federal dollars to improve this important thoroughfare would be a prudent long-term investment. The ingress and egress to the town are what derives visitors’ first and last impressions.	
The town should do whatever it takes to discourage big box or chain store commercial entities on US 113.	Mom and pop stores that bring authenticity to towns can’t compete with commercial chains buying in bulk from Third World countries, and few things are less enticing to heritage tourists than a place that looks like where they just came from. Chain and big box stores on the town’s ingress and egress will destroy its tourism appeal in an instant.	
Investigate ways to improve the waterfront where government office buildings sit.	The use of this important space could be improved dramatically with an inviting setting that showcases the river and the town’s association with it. The waterfront is Snow Hill’s greatest asset, yet it continues to be underutilized.	
Be creative with existing rail lines whenever and wherever possible.	Take advantage of new railroad excursions by making sure the rail lines include a parallel hiking and biking trail, and make Snow Hill a primary stop that offers a variety of sites and activities.	
Strategically protect unprotected touristic assets.	The myriad natural and historic assets around Snow Hill are what will bring the town economic prosperity. However, many of these assets are not protected from development, encroachment from development, water pollution, or commercialization. While the town doesn’t currently have the means to protect all of these areas, they should use every recourse to both lobby the county and state for their protection and dissent when one or both of these entities espouses a policy that would threaten them.	
Attract nature and heritage-related businesses to Snow Hill.	Through tax incentives, viable events, and a shown investment in the town, Snow Hill can and should actively seek more nature and heritage-related businesses. This might include a brewery or other heritage-related entity that makes Snow Hill a destination.	



Efforts to utilize rail lines for tourism excursions should include parallel hiking and biking paths.

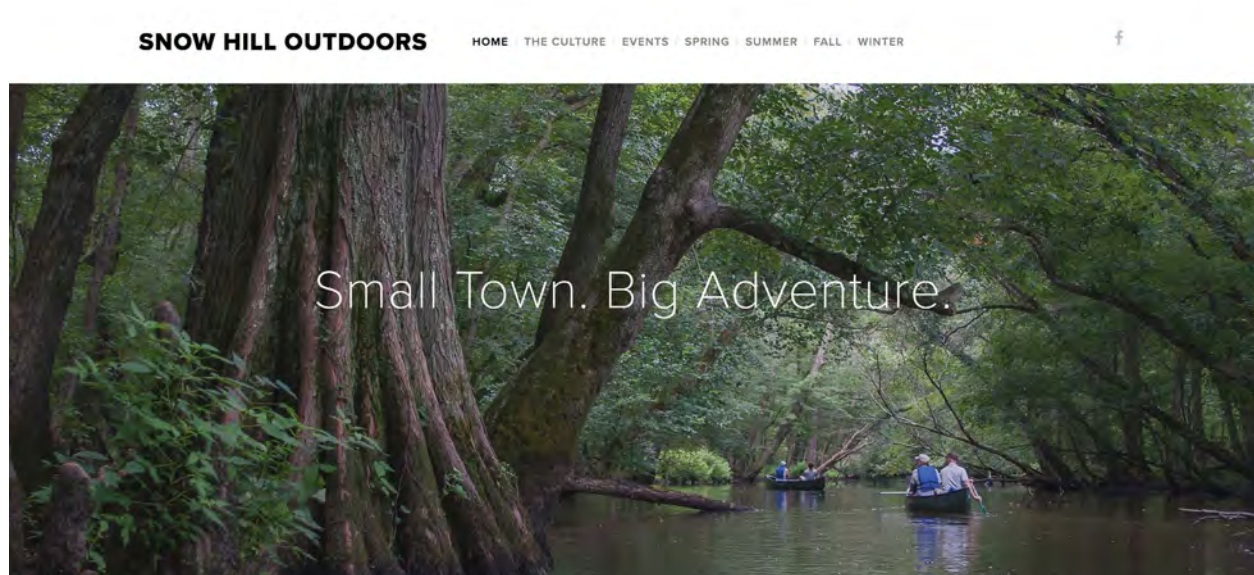


Paddling Chincoteague Bay.

EXISTING ONLINE RESOURCES FOR NATURE & HERITAGE TOURISM

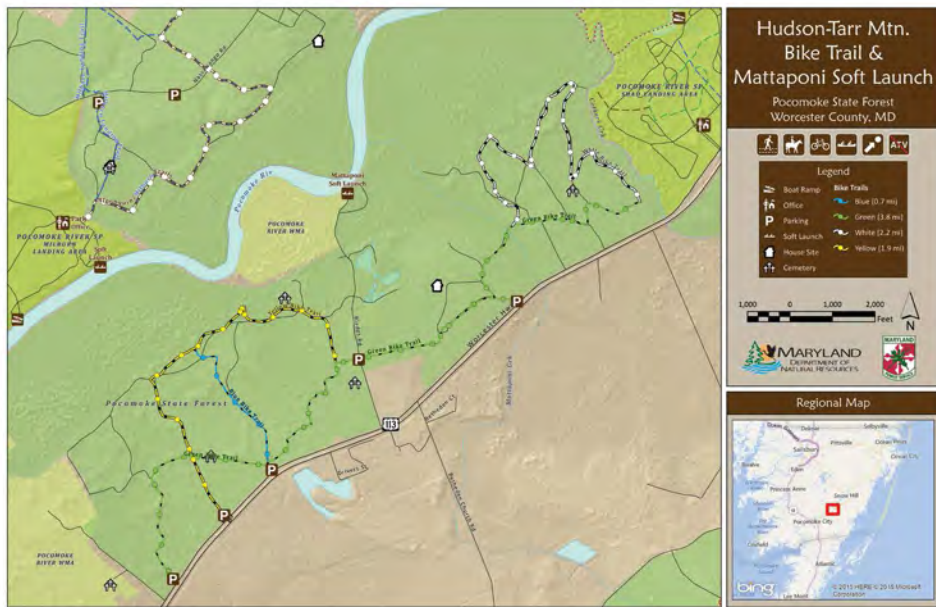
Many organizations promote Snow Hill and the surrounding region as a destination for cycling, paddling, hiking, birding and heritage tourism.

SNOW HILL TOWN RESOURCES	WEBSITE
Snow Hill Outdoors	snowhilloutdoors.com
Town of Snow Hill	www.snowhillmd.com
Snow Hill Chamber of Commerce	www.snowhillareachamber.com
Julia Purnell Museum	www.purnellmuseum.com
Worcester County Tourism	www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/snow-hill1
Pocomoke River Cruises	pocomokerivercruises.com
Pocomoke River Canoe Company	www.pocomokerivercanoe.com
Trip Advisor	www.tripadvisor.com/Tourism-g41381-Snow_Hill_Maryland-Vacations.html
YouTube: Beach & Beyond...	www.youtube.com/user/BeachAndBeyondMD
Snow Hill demographics	censusviewer.com/city/MD/Snow%20Hill
Snow Hill Comprehensive Plan	planning.maryland.gov/PDF/OurWork/CompPlans/Worcester/SnowHill/10_CMP_SnowHill.pdf
Snow Hill basics	www.city-data.com/city/Snow-Hill-Maryland.html






CYCLING	WEBSITE
Viewtrail 100	www.visitworchester.org/index.php/site/article/the-view-trail-100
Iron Furnace 50	www.ironfurnacefifty.org
MapMyRide	www.mapmyride.com/us/snow-hill-md
Eastern Shore IMBA Tarr Tract Mountain Bike Trails	esimba.org/maps
YouTube: Beach & Beyond...	www.youtube.com/user/BeachAndBeyondMD
Hudson-Tarr Bike Trail	dnr2.maryland.gov/forests/Documents/hudson-tarr_bike_trail_mattaponi_soft_launch.pdf
YMCA bike trail	www.mtbproject.com/trail/3512054





PADDLING	WEBSITE
Find Your Chesapeake (National Park Service)	www.findyourchesapeake.com/places
TNC Nassawango Creek Preserve	www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/maryland_dc/placesweprotect/nassawango-creek-preserve.xml
Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail	www.nps.gov/cajo/index.htm
Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail: map	www.smithtrail.net
Paddling.net	www.paddling.net/places/showReport.html?1856
Worcester County Tourism Paddling Trails	www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/water-trails-of-worcester-county
Maryland DNR Water Trails - Lower Eastern Shore	dnr2.maryland.gov/boating/Pages/eastern_south.aspx
EA Vaughn Kayak Trail	www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/ea-vaughn-kayak-trail
YouTube: Beach & Beyond...	www.youtube.com/user/BeachAndBeyondMD
Delmarva Paddling Weekends	delmarvapaddling.com
Pocomoke River Canoe Company	www.pocomokerivercanoe.com/index.asp



HERITAGE	WEBSITE
Julia Purnell Museum	www.purnellmuseum.com
Furnace Town	www.furnacetown.org
Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council	www.lowershoreheritage.org
Beach to Bay Indian Trail	lowershoreheritage.org/index.php/LESHeritage/about_beachbaytrail
Chesapeake Country Blue Crab Byway	bluecrabbyway.org
Cape to Cape Scenic Byway	www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article_spotlight/cape-to-cape-scenic-byway
YouTube: Beach & Beyond...	www.youtube.com/user/BeachAndBeyondMD
Museums of Worcester County	worcestermuseums.org/index.php

HIKING/HORSEBACK RIDING

WEBSITE



Pocomoke State Forest	dnr2.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/publiclands/eastern_pocomokeforest.aspx
Pocomoke River State Park	dnr2.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/eastern/pocomokeriver.aspx
YouTube: Beach & Beyond...	www.youtube.com/user/BeachAndBeyondMD
Horseback riding in Worcester County	www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/pages_horseback

BIRDING/WILDLIFE WATCHING

WEBSITE



Prothonotary Birding Trail	www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/prothonotary-birding-trail
Birding in Worcester County	www.visitworcester.org/index.php/site/article/birding-in-worcester-county
YouTube: Beach & Beyond...	www.youtube.com/user/BeachAndBeyondMD
EA Vaughn Wildlife Management Area	dnr2.maryland.gov/wildlife/pages/publiclands/eastern/eavaughn.aspx
Delmarva Birding Weekends	delmarvabirding.com

REGIONAL RESOURCES

WEBSITE



Cape to Cape Scenic Byway	www.visitmaryland.org/scenic-byways/cape-to-cape
Maryland Tourism	www.visitmaryland.org





The Snow Hill Nature and Heritage Tourism Plan was prepared by Dave Wilson and Jim Rapp of Conservation Community Consulting, LLC. Photos courtesy of Jim Rapp, Dave Wilson, Lisa Challenger, Michael Day, Ann Gibb, Ann Coates, Frode Jacobsen, Doug Wight, Rick Lesser, and Dwayne Mease.



10705 Par 5 Lane

Berlin, Maryland 21811

Dave Wilson • 443-523-2201 • marshhawk67@gmail.com

Jim Rapp • 443-614-0261 • dlitedirector@comcast.net

Design by Jane Thomas