

<b>Connecting Routes -- Water Trails</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	Provide water-based recreational experiences, serve as key physical and interpretive connections between other Gateways (hubs, information centers, sites, other routes), and provide key Network connections to the Bay watershed.
<b>Defining Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• many in each Bay region and above the fall line in the watershed</li> <li>• are publicly accessible paddling and/or boating routes, generally along rivers, streams and smaller bays</li> <li>• provide access to appropriate facilities and resources on land, and particularly to other Gateways where possible</li> <li>• provide adequate information to orient users to the route and the environment</li> <li>• have a designated organization responsible for coordinating management and information issues</li> <li>• emphasize low-impact use and foster stewardship of the water trail, the Bay and local watershed resources</li> <li>• provide an opportunity to interpret particular Bay-related resources and themes</li> <li>• provide an opportunity for developing volunteer projects that involve visitors in resources restoration or conservation activities</li> </ul>
<b>Achieving Network Goals</b>	<p><b>Interpretation:</b>  Along a water trail people have the chance to both directly experience Bay-related resources and use interpretive information addressing relevant themes in the context of over-arching and principal Bay themes. Interpretation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maps, guides and materials providing information on Bay-related interpretive themes along the route</li> <li>• interpretive signage at key access points or related sites</li> </ul> <p><b>Orientation &amp; Access:</b>  Users find helpful information on locating water trails through all of the Network's venues. At water trail access points people find maps and directional and user-information signage.</p> <p>Water trails make use of publicly navigable waters. In most cases, water trails use existing access points for put-in, take-out and docking spots. Access enhancements occur through projects that improve existing public access or facilitate new access at Gateway sites connected by a water trail or other suitable locations.</p> <p><b>Restoration &amp; Conservation:</b>  Like Gateway sites, water trails develop and provide on-going opportunities for people to volunteer in restoration or conservation projects. These opportunities are linked to interpretation of relevant Bay themes.</p>

