Chickahominy River

Welcome to the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the nation’s first water trail. As you retrace the voyages of Captain Smith on the Chickahominy River, you can rediscover the Virginia he knew: its natural splendor and rich Native culture. As you explore the Chickahominy’s waters, imagine the abundance that greeted Smith and his fellow Englishmen. Great swaths of fish teemed in the clear, now bald cypress trees grew tall along the shore, and overhead waterfowl flew in flocks so thick the sky darkened as they passed.

The Chickahominy River, with its rich array of marshes, swamps and the wildlife they support, has played a vital role in our past. The river sustained a powerful Native people bearing its name, helped shape the founding Jamestown colony, and remains a cradle of ecological diversity and a destination for unparalleled recreational opportunities. Today, the modern Chickahominy and Eastern Chickahominy Indian tribes celebrate their culture that began centuries ago on the river’s banks. Explore the lore of the Chickahominy River by paddling its creeks, fishing its waters, birding its swamps, hunting its marshes, or tracing its history and culture by visiting interpretive signs at Chickahominy Riverfront Park, River’s Rest Marina, Rockhock Campground, and the Chickahominy Tribal Center.

**PADDLING & BOATING SAFETY**

**GENERAL SAFETY TIPS**
- Always wear a life jacket when on the water, and have a throwable flotation device ready to use.
- Never tie a rope to yourself or another person, especially a child.
- Be aware of other boats and give large vessels plenty of room, as they have three points of contact while maneuvering to safety.
- Be aware of tidal flows on this river.
- Keep weight centered and as low as possible.
- If capsized, stay on the upstream side of the boat or float feet first while maneuvering to safety.
- When moving on small boats, always have three points of contact (two feet and one hand or two hands and one foot).
- Be aware of tidal flows on this river.

**POWER BOAT OPERATORS**
- Do not ride or sit on the bow, gunwales, transom or the deckings over the bow while under power.
- Reduce speed to avoid endangering persons or property by the effect of the motorboat’s wake. Always operate at a safe speed.
- Display proper navigation lights and signals.
- Plan your trip carefully. Before beginning your trip, call the Virginia Department of Natural Resources at (757) 899-4200 to get tide, currents and wave action information.

**PADDLING & BOATING SAFETY TIPS**

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**
- **MEET YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**
  - Do not exceed the capacity of your boat.
  - Be aware of sudden weather changes.
  - Do not exceed the capacity of your boat.
- **SAFE AND MEMORABLE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES**
  - Habitat for threatened and endangered species
  - Safe and memorable recreation opportunities
  - A vital place to share traditions with the next generation

**HOW CAN WE SUPPORT A HEALTHY RIVER?**
- **Use minimal or no chemical fertilizer and pesticides**
- **Conserve water and energy in our homes**
- **Drive less; use transit, carpools, bikes and walking**
- **Remember that whatever goes onto our streets or down our storm drains goes into the river**

**FRESHWATER TIDAL MARSH**

The great plant diversity found in freshwater marshes makes them a vital source of food for waterfowl and other animals. Marshes keep our waterways clean by absorbing and filtering polluted storm-water runoff.

**ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES OF THE CHICKAHOMINY**

1. **Clean water for drinking, irrigation, and industry**
2. **Healthy fish populations for commercial and sport fisheries**
3. **Healthy populations of waterfowl and other game animals**
4. **A boost for local economies from tourism and recreation**
5. **Safe and memorable recreation opportunities**
6. **Habitat for threatened and endangered species**
7. **Protection from flooding and severe erosion**
8. **A vital place to share traditions with the next generation**

**MOTORBOAT OPERATORS**
- Display proper navigation lights and signals.
- Reduce speed to avoid endangering persons or property by the effect of the motorboat’s wake. Always operate at a safe speed.
- Plan your trip carefully. Before beginning your trip, call the Virginia Department of Natural Resources at (757) 899-4200 to get tide, currents and wave action information.
- Keep weight centered and as low as possible.
- If capsized, stay on the upstream side of the boat or float feet first while maneuvering to safety.
- When moving on small boats, always have three points of contact (two feet and one hand or two hands and one foot).
- Be aware of tidal flows on this river.

**PADDLERS**
- In canoes, kneel down when running through rough water and during windy conditions.
- Portage around obstacles if necessary.
- Use a powerful flashlight to alert other boaters from sunset to sunrise and during periods of reduced visibility.
- Use minimal or no chemical fertilizer and pesticides
- Conserve water and energy in our homes
- Drive less; use transit, carpools, bikes and walking
- Remember that whatever goes onto our streets or down our storm drains goes into the river
- Control erosion by planting bare ground
- Volunteer to help with a watershed restoration
- Support the conservation of undeveloped land
- Join an organization that advocates for clean water
Chickahominy Water Trail: The Tidal River

CAPTAIN SMITH’S EXPLOREATIONS AND CAPTURES, DECEMBER, 1607
In December 1607 Smith once again journeyed up the Chickahominy River. On this trip he aimed to capture the Chickahominy Indians. Smith and his companions were not successful in capturing the Chickahominy Indians. Instead, they were captured by the Chickahominy Indians. Smith and his companions were released after a few days.

FORT JAMES
In 1644 the English constructed Fort James on the “Ridge of the Chickahominy,” presumably meaning high bluffs overlooking the river in this vicinity. Fort James was a network of forts on several Virginia rivers built by the English as a defense against the Indians. After several years Fort James was transferred to Thomas Rolfe, son of Pocahontas.

NOROTOWANCE’S PATH
Near the present-day site of Walker’s Dam, routes used by Virginia Indians for travel and trade converged on the Chickahominy River. The name Norotowance’s Path appears in Charles City (land) patents after 1646, the year of Norotowance’s Treaty. Perhaps the name was applied to the trail because it was the authorized route for Indian messengers who were reporting to the Governor of Virginia. The Norotowance’s Path trail converged on the Chickahominy River, and it is likely that the Chickahominy Indians and Pocahontas tribesmen used this trail.

TANKS PASPAUGHE CREEK
Tanks - meaning little and Paspaugh meandering mouth of the creek — was the Algonquin name for Morris Creek. It may have marked a divide between the Chickahominy and Paspaugh territories. Today Morris Creek is a haven for fishermen, boaters, and bird watchers for its productive wetland and riparian areas.

CAPTAIN SMITH’S TRADING TRIPS, NOVEMBER, 1607
In the fall of 1607 the Jamestown settlers bemoaned the loss of their food supplies for the coming winter. The long-awaited second supply had not arrived and food stores were growing thin. Capt. John Smith set off on a series of trading expeditions that led him into Chickahominy territory. Smith successfully traded for sufficient corn to feed the colonists through the winter. Not far from this point at present-day Chickahominy Riverfront Park, John Smith was hailed by a Chickahominy Indian. The Indian offered to escort Smith to the Chickahominy district, which lies far beyond the James River. Smith and the guide traveled by moonlight to the quickest route back to Jamestown, a quarter of a mile from the river’s edge. The town contained 30-40 houses. At least one Englishman was brought before the village that night and feasted.

Smith found the Chickahominy eager to trade with him. He was able to secure several boat loads of corn that helped sustain the starving colony.

Chickahominy River Water Access Points

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Access Point</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Camping</th>
<th>Restrooms</th>
<th>Accommodations</th>
<th>Parking</th>
<th>Marina</th>
<th>Boat Fuel</th>
<th>Drinking Water</th>
<th>Restaurant</th>
<th>Grocery</th>
<th>Public Phone</th>
<th>Fishing Access</th>
<th>Route Coordinates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chickahominy Riverfront Park Canoe/Kayak Launch</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jccegov.com">www.jccegov.com</a></td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>N 37° 15.903’ W 76° 52.438’</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chickahominy Riverfront Park Boat Ramp and Campground</td>
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<td>N 37° 16.103’ W 76° 52.351’</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>James City County’s Brickyard Landing Boat Ramp</td>
<td>1770-250-5300</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pocohontas.com">www.pocohontas.com</a></td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>N 37° 22.221’ W 76° 52.810’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend
- = Access Point
- = Canoe/Kayak Launch
- = Boat Ramp
- = Campground
- = Marina
- = Boat Fuel
- = Drinking Water
- = Restaurant
- = Grocery
- = Public Phone
- = Fishing Access
- = Route Coordinates

The map and guide were created by the James River Association with the assistance of the James River Association, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Forestry. For more information contact the James River Association at (804) 787-6711 or visit www.jamesriver.org. The above information and following Capital 1607 expedition shipyards of Virginia at www.jamesriver.org and the Virginia Historical Society at www.vh.org.

The Chickahominy Indians were a tribe of the Algonquian language family. They were a small group of about 400 people. They lived in the area of the modern-day Chickahominy River, between the James and Rappahannock Rivers. The Chickahominy Indians were known for their trade and commerce. They traded with the Jamestown settlers and with other tribes in the region.

The Chickahominy River is one of the major rivers in Virginia. It is about 152 kilometers (95 miles) long and flows through the counties of James City, Isle of Wight, and Surry. The river is a tributary of the James River, which is an important waterway for commerce and recreation in the region.

The Chickahominy River is known for its abundant fish and wildlife. The river is home to a variety of fish, including bass, catfish, and striped bass. The river is also home to a variety of wildlife, including ducks, geese, and herons.

The Chickahominy River is also known for its history. The river was an important trade route for the Chickahominy Indians, who used it to trade with other tribes in the region. The river was also an important trade route for the Jamestown settlers, who used it to transport goods and supplies to the colony.

The Chickahominy River is a popular destination for fishing and boating. The river is a popular destination for fishing, with a variety of species available year-round. The river is also a popular destination for boating, with a number of marinas and boat ramps located along the river.

The Chickahominy River is also a popular destination for tourism. The river is a popular destination for tourism, with a variety of attractions available for visitors. These include a variety of parks and natural areas, as well as a number of historic sites and landmarks.

The Chickahominy River is also a popular destination for outdoor recreation. The river is a popular destination for outdoor recreation, with a variety of activities available for visitors. These include hiking, biking, and cycling, as well as a variety of other outdoor activities.

The Chickahominy River is also a popular destination for wildlife viewing. The river is a popular destination for wildlife viewing, with a variety of species available year-round. The river is also a popular destination for bird watching, with a variety of species available.