



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Office of Communications
and Public Affairs

1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240
202-208-6843 phone
202-219-0910 fax

National Park Service

News Release

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Contact: Kathy Kupper or Gerry Gaumer (202) 208-6843

“Talking Buoys” highlight NPS & NOAA Chesapeake Bay Partnership

WASHINGTON, DC – “Talking buoys” may not replace park rangers, but buoys are providing tidbits of history to boaters on the Chesapeake Bay as part of an agreement between the National Park Service (NPS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

NPS Director Mary A. Bomar and NOAA Administrator Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., USN (Ret.), signed a Memorandum of Agreement to cooperate on projects such as the Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, and the Chesapeake Bay Gateway and Watertrails Network.

“Under this agreement, the National Park Service and NOAA will promote enjoyment and stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay,” said Bomar. “We will use projects like the interpretive buoy system to tell the story of the Bay through science, history, and recreation.”

Bomar also encouraged expansion of the buoy program. “Calling a toll-free number on your cell phone is a great way for boaters to get information about the Chesapeake Bay. We should consider buoys for other national park sites, such as San Francisco Bay at Golden Gate National Recreation Area or Jamaica Bay at Gateway National Recreation Area in New York.”

The Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System consists of six strategically placed buoys providing scientific data and historical information to the public. The buoys collect and wirelessly transmit real time weather, oceanographic, and water-quality conditions to boaters, scientists and others via the internet at www.buoybay.org or by phone toll-free at 877-BUOY-BAY (877-286-9229).

“The buoys also help mark and interpret the nation’s first national water trail,” said Bomar. “The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, is not only a great partnership with NOAA, but reflects the enthusiasm of many partners including Gil Grosvenor from National Geographic, Pat Noonan from the Conservation Fund, Will Baker from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and Charlie Stek from the Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail.”

The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office administers the 3,000 mile water trail commemorating Captain Smith’s explorations of 1607-09, as well as the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, a partnership of more than 160 parks, refuges, watertrails, historic sites, and museums throughout the watershed. Further information is available at <http://www.nps.gov/cajo>.

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