



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of Interior

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal  
National Historical Park

1850 Dual Highway  
Suite 100  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
301.739.4200 phone  
301.739.5275 fax

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## C&O Canal National Historical Park News Release

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For Immediate Release

**Contact:** Pete Peterson, Supervisory Park Ranger, Palisades District (301)-767-3702

### Repairs Close Olmsted Island Bridge and Overlook

Potomac, MD- The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal) will temporarily close the Olmsted Island Trail and Great Falls Overlook on or about March 1, 2017 for repairs that will improve visitor safety and better protect park resources. Construction on the bridges is anticipated to last 90-120 days with completion and re-opening in late June 2017. Completion of construction may be impacted by weather conditions.

Once complete, the project will provide a safe, reliable, and enjoyable trail to view the Great Falls of the Potomac River. Restoration, repair and refinishing work includes bridge railing, decking and concrete foundation. Noticeable improvements will be sturdier bridge railings and a smoother concrete walking surface.

Park natural resource managers have developed measures to protect the delicate ecosystem of Olmsted Island. This project will be conducted in full compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and additional park regulations.

During construction, the C&O Canal encourages visitors to take advantage of the alternate views of the Potomac on the Maryland side that including Mather Gorge, Conn Island, and the Washington Aqueduct. Full access to all hiking trails, including the River Trail, all sections of the Billy Goat Trail, and the Goldmine Trail offer great outdoor opportunities for adventure. The Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center will offer talks and programs in alternate locations while construction is ongoing. Unimpeded views of the Great Falls will continue to be enjoyed at Great Falls Park on the Virginia side of the Potomac River. We encourage visitors to plan visits to Great Falls Park well ahead, especially on weekends, as the park often sustains high visitation and wait times.

For more information on the project and Great Falls, please visit our website at:

<https://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/greatfallstavernvisitorcenter.htm> or visit our Facebook page. Be sure and tag your park posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter with #candocanal, #greatfalls and #towpath.

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**ABOUT THE C&O Canal:** The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park preserves and interprets the historical, natural and recreational resources of the C&O Canal. Over 5,000,000 visitors a year enjoy the opportunities for recreation and understanding that the Park has to offer. For more information, visit the Park's website at [www.nps.gov/choh](http://www.nps.gov/choh).