

Maryland's Natural Resources

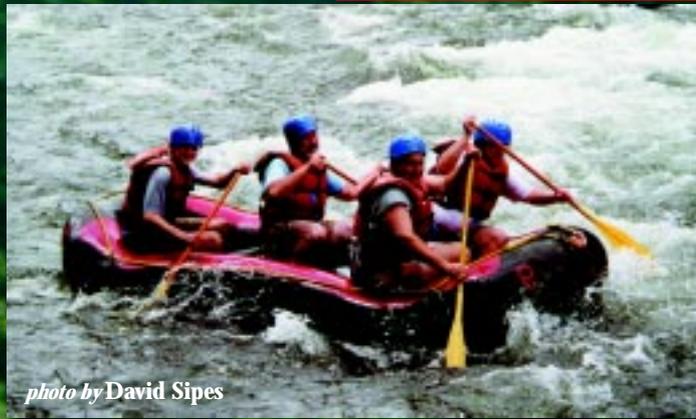


photo by David Sipes

Nature Tourism In Allegany and Garrett County, Maryland



Broken Bar Stable Trail Ride at Herrington Manor State Park. *Photo by Lance C. Bell*

Maryland's Nature Tourism Program — sponsored by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), State Forest and Park Service and partnered with the State Office of Tourism Development (OTD) — was created to “inspire a stewardship ethic and appreciation for Maryland's natural resources by increasing opportunities for the public to experience adventures in Maryland's great outdoors,” has far-reaching benefits for visitors and locals alike. By partnering with the tourism industry, private guides and outfitters provide rural communities with a form of sustainable economic development. After all, sometimes even the most avid hikers, mountain bikers and campers may have a taste for roasted quail or eggplant rollitini followed by a night in a flannel-covered, down-filled bed after a day of backpacking through the Savage River State Forest or kayaking through the swirling whitewater of the Upper Yough.

Each Nature Tourism (NT) office tailors their outdoor adventure offerings to utilize the natural geography of the area, with some understandable overlapping. For instance, activities such as rappelling, caving and rock climbing might be more popular in Allegany County,



Camp Earth bonfire extravaganza—drum beating, dancing and story telling for all at Deep Creek Lake State Park.

Photo by Lance C. Bell

while the profusion of lakes and streams (including the magnificent Deep Creek Lake area) may make kayakers, rafters, boaters, skiers and swimmers lean more toward Garrett County. Additionally, both counties offer abundant hiking, fishing and camping opportunities as well as guided mountain bike and ATV tours, just to name a few.

NT recognizes the fact that many of us left all remnants of our athletic ability, if not our desire, hanging in our high school gym lockers alongside soiled sneakers. Appropriately, a less-aerobic NT program might find you learning to navigate your way out of the woods using only a compass and map, scouring the branches through binoculars for a glimpse of a red-crested warbler or breathing in a hint of paradise as you relax on a twilight lake cruise. Learn to ride a horse, kayak or the art of fly fishing. The intent, always, is to give the public a vast array of outdoor activity choices while protecting, preserving and conserving Maryland's public lands, wildlife and aquatic species and their habitats for the continuing enjoyment of all.

written by: Titos Menchaca

Editor's note: Most Nature Tourism activities are seasonal or affected by inclement weather. These photos show just a few of the Nature Tourism Vendor activities.



Kayaking



ATV Trail Rides



Hands-on Nature



Mountain Climbing



Bicycle Touring



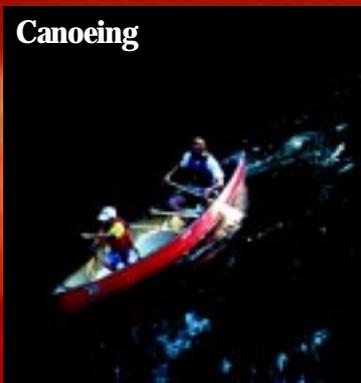
Hands-on Nature Education



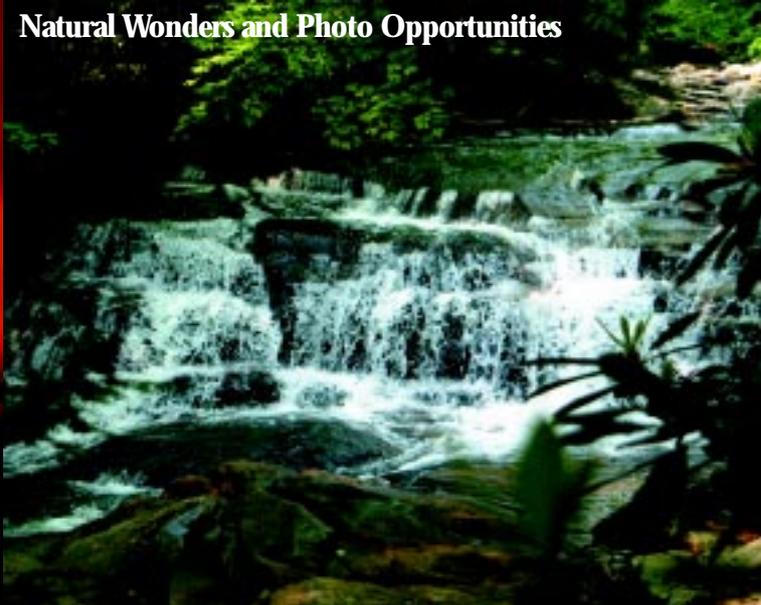
Learning Casting Techniques



Snowshoeing



Canoeing



Natural Wonders and Photo Opportunities



Fishing



Wild Nature Watching



Campfire Events

Fossil Cutting and Hands-on Archeology



Sporting Clays and Hunting



The Nature Tourism Vendors, some shown on these pages, are the backbone of DNR's Nature Tourism program. DNR has a partnership agreement with them — to be a part of the program vendors have to meet various requirements, including safety, insurance, experience and knowledge. There is something for everyone, from passive educational experiences to more active and physical experiences like whitewater rafting, mountain climbing, and everything in between.

Regretfully, we do not have room here to show and list all of the vendors, but for a complete state list log onto www.dnr.state.md.us/outdooradventures

DNR Nature Tourism coordinators in this area are:

Patty Manown Mash, 301-387-7314

Discovery Center, Garrett County.

Shelley Miller, 301-784-8403

Rocky Gap State Park, Allegany County.



Mountain Biking



Easy ATV Trail Rides

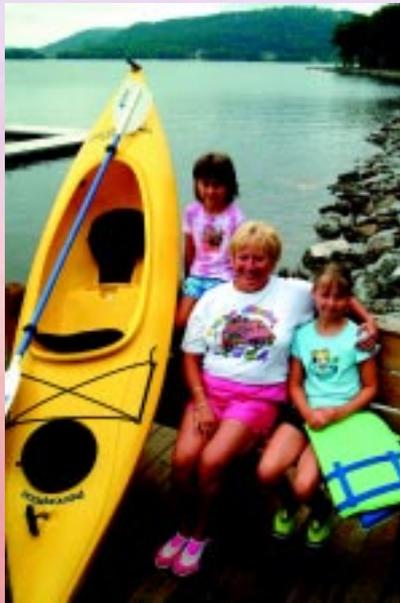


Water Sports



Caving

photo by Tom Darden



Patty Manown Mash, DNR Nature Tourism coordinator, center, with friends on dock at Deep Creek Lake State Park.



photo by Tom Darden

Shelley Miller, DNR Nature Tourism coordinator repels a mountain side in Allegany County.

Nature Tourism Vendors Participate in Railey Mountain Lake Welcome Parties.

Every Monday afternoon from early June through late August, Railey Mountain Lake Vacations hosts its welcome party for all visitors to Deep Creek Lake. The party offers all DNR Nature Tourism vendors the opportunity to meet visitors and offer their unique services. The vendors also supply door prizes such as float trips, lake cruises, horseback rides or any number of other activities. "The party has been a great success and is a great way to find out what you can do while staying in the area," says Zack and Linda Taylor of Railey Mountain Lake Vacations. They are the first vacation rental company to bring this concept to the lake and welcome all lake visitors. It's free and it's fun for all!



Shown above are just a few of the many Welcome Party door prize winners. Every week door prize certificates, supplied by vendors, are given to lucky winners. The certificates provide discounted and complimentary vendor services. Railey Mtn. Lake Vacations supplies visors and coolers as part of the drawing. They also provide free refreshments and entertainment.

Unless otherwise noted all photos in this story are by Lance C. Bell

