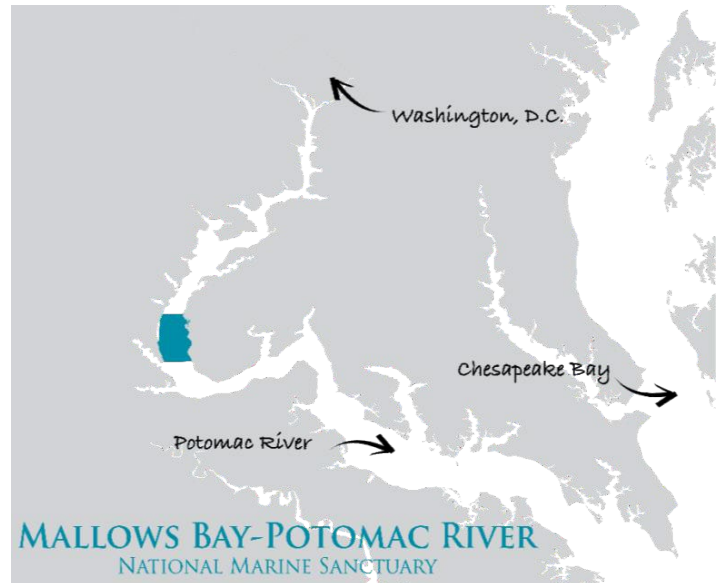


Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary Accomplishments Fiscal Year 2022

Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary was designated in 2019, the first new national marine sanctuary in nearly 20 years. Jointly managed by the state of Maryland and Charles County, Maryland, the sanctuary protects and interprets the remnants of more than 100 World War I-era wooden steamships, known as the "Ghost Fleet," and other maritime resources and cultural heritage dating back nearly 12,000 years. The sanctuary also supports recreational access, educational programs, and economic opportunity.

Visit sanctuaries.noaa.gov/mallows-potomac for more information.



Launch of 360° Virtual Reality Video

An immersive video of Malloys Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary was launched as part of the Sanctuaries 360° series of virtual reality experiences. Using an Oculus VR headset, participants can tour Malloys Bay virtually through a four-minute video that highlights the history of the Ghost Fleet, explores wildlife and habitat at the site, and replicates the feeling of kayaking through the sanctuary. Sanctuary staff have used this tool for outreach and engagement at numerous community events, making Malloys Bay accessible to all.



Attendee of a community event takes a virtual tour of Malloys Bay.
Photo: NOAA

Pilot Water Quality Summer Camp Program

Gabryelle McDaniel, an undergraduate intern with the Educational Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions, helped create a pilot water quality summer camp program for middle school students. The three-day camp program, in partnership with Charles County Recreation and Parks, introduced a diverse group of 22 students to the importance of monitoring water quality in our sanctuaries. The students learned about watersheds, point and nonpoint pollution, ocean acidification, how to test water quality, and more. The last day of the program included a field trip to Malloys Bay – Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary.



Students learn about water quality at Malloys Bay Park. Photo: NOAA

Events Help Connect with Community

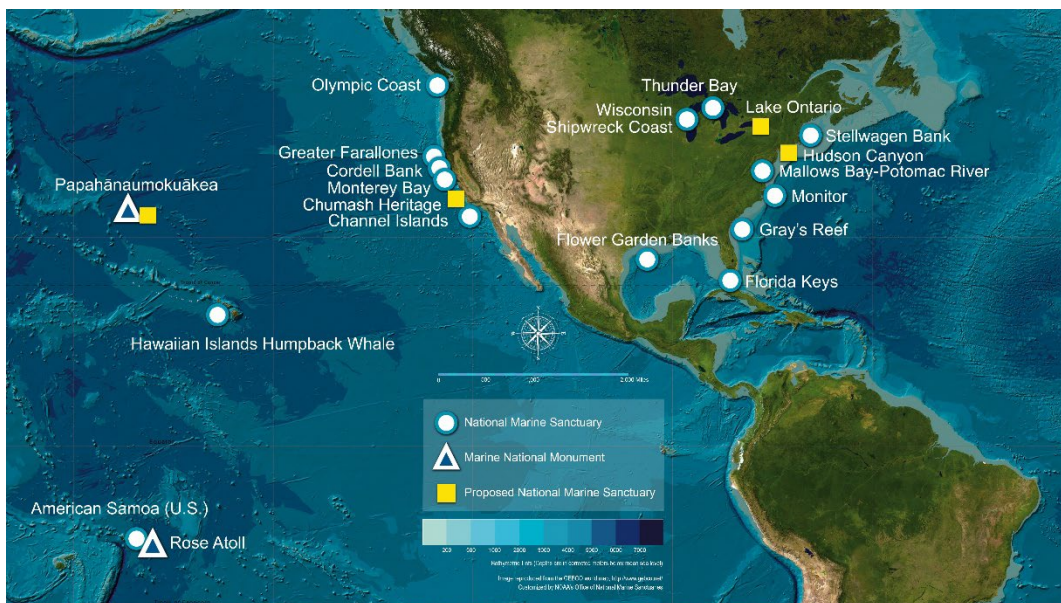
The sanctuary hosted three public events for Get Into Your Sanctuary: Juneteenth, a celebration and reflection of the national holiday; Pride Day at the Bay, a celebration of Pride Month; and Blue Star Families Welcome Week, an event to welcome active military families who recently relocated to the region. With the help of numerous partner organizations, participants of each event had the opportunity to kayak, join a guided hike, take a virtual tour with the Oculus VR headsets, and more. Between all three events, hundreds of visitors had the chance to experience the sanctuary and many new connections were made within the community.



Attendees of Pride Day at the Bay learn about our sanctuaries. Photo: NOAA

Looking Ahead

- Working with Terrain360, the Sanctuary Advisory Council, and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, staff will create virtual paddle and walking tours of sanctuary waters and Malloys Bay Park. These web-enabled tours will broaden public appreciation and stewardship and serve as catalysts for visitation, recreation, and tourism.
- The sanctuary will continue to host community events at Malloys Bay Park to engage visitors in a large-scale community science efforts and contribute to the ecological characterization, research, and monitoring efforts within the sanctuary.
- In an effort to better understand the ecological characteristics of the sanctuary, sanctuary staff will work with partner organizations to establish research and monitoring programs of submerged aquatic vegetation, wetlands, and fisheries through acoustic telemetry monitoring and more.



The National Marine Sanctuary System is a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 620,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters. The network includes a system of 15 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments.