National Capital Region Section
American Water Resources Association
AWRA

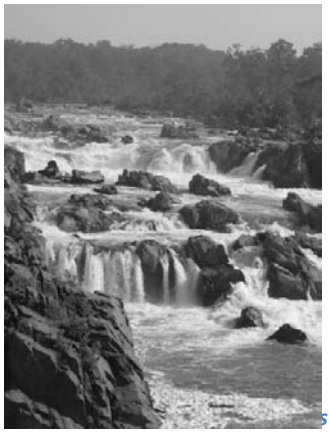
A Geologic and Natural History Tour of the Potomac Gorge below Great Falls

Saturday, June 7, 2014, 10 AM to 1 PM

***WARNING*: June crowds may cause delays – we recommend you arrive at park entrance by 9:15 AM to ensure that you have time to pay entrance fee, park, and walk to Visitors Center to join group**

(In case of inclement weather, check our website for alternative plans: www.awrancrs.org)

Great Falls Park
9200 Old Dominion Drive, McLean, VA 22102
(Meet outside of Visitors Center at 9:45 AM. Directions available at www.nps.gov/grfa/planyourvisit/directions.htm)



The Potomac River Gorge extends 15 miles from Great Falls to Roosevelt Island, crossing the transition region between the Piedmont Plateau and the Atlantic Coastal Plain. The Gorge is one of the longest and steepest fall zones on the Atlantic coast and is considered to be one the most significant natural areas in the Eastern United States. New bedrock age data has helped illuminate the nature of the geologic and flood-related processes that formed the Gorge, indicating that rates of bedrock gorge cutting can be very rapid.

Join us for a guided hike in Great Falls Park along the Virginia side of the Gorge to enjoy the breathtaking scenery and to learn about the geomorphic processes that formed the Gorge and the response of this landscape to climatic and sea level change. We will cover approximately 2 miles in distance, with stops to view geologic features that help tell the story of the evolution of the river's channel. (See field guide for the tour, attached.) In addition, commentary will be provided on the cultural and natural history of the Gorge, which is home to rare invertebrates, the bald eagle, fish like the American shad, and over 200 rare plant species.

Guides

Milan Pavich is a geomorphologist who served with the US Geological Service at its Headquarters in Reston, VA for 39 years and is currently a USGS Scientist Emeritus. Milan's research has explored the relations between earth surface processes and climate, including studies across the U.S., in Europe and Australia on chemical weathering, erosion, and sediment transport. He has also researched Quaternary paleoclimate in the eastern U.S., Mississippi Valley and Alaska and pioneered the use of meteoric beryllium-10 for dating soils and landscapes. His current research focus is on understanding landscape response to climate and improving sustainable land use in densely populated areas.

Jim Cummins is a biologist and Director for Living Resources at the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB). Jim has played an integral role in the restoration of the American shad fishery in the Potomac basin through his involvement in the installation of a fish passage in Little Falls (Brookmont) dam and his tireless work in the joint ICPRB/USFWS shad re-stocking program. Jim is also an amateur historian with a keen interest in the intersection of history and natural history.

Logistics

Location and schedule: Meet outside of the Great Falls Park Visitors Center at 9:45 AM. The hike will begin promptly at 10:00 AM and last approximately two hours. Afterwards, stay for a (bring-your-own) picnic lunch.

What to bring: Please wear appropriate clothing and a sturdy pair of shoes and bring sunscreen and an ample supply of drinking water for a 2-hour hike. You may find it helpful to print out and bring along a copy of the hike guidebook, *The Incision History of a Passive Margin River, the Potomac near Great Falls*. We invite you to join us for a bring-your-own picnic lunch after the hike.

Registration: The registration fee is $5. (This amount does not include the $5 vehicle fee required to enter the park.) We encourage you to register in advance, by May 25th, at our website at www.awrancrs.org/events/events-2014/51-potomac-gorge-tour-2014, or by sending an email to Jason at natcapawra@gmail.com.