

Guidelines for PA Fish & Boat Commission designation.

The PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) is the state agency that officially designates water trails as part of the Pennsylvania Water Trails System. Designation brings a variety of resources including assistance with mapping, access to the statewide logo, and inclusion in the Paddle PA publication. The following are the specific guidelines that must be met by a local group in order to be designated as an official Pennsylvania Water Trail.



❑ **Public Planning Process**

In order to designate a water trail, there must be a public process. This includes multiple public meetings that are publicly advertised. The purpose of the meetings is to collect information about the water trail (access points, amenities, etc.) and to gain support for the water trail. A steering committee is also recommended, which is made up of targeted stakeholders.

❑ **PFBC Water Trail Logo**

All designated water trails must use the water trail logo as developed by the PFBC. The top portion of the logo is a standard Pennsylvania Water Trail image. Local groups can customize the bottom portion of the logo within the bordered format.

❑ **Mapping and Signage**

Any maps provided in partnership with the PFBC as part of the PFBC technical assistance must be distributed at no cost. Key access points should have trailhead signs. Other signage like interpretive signage and trail markers are desirable.

❑ **Local Government Notification**

As part of the public process it is highly recommended that water trail organizers work with the local governments that are traversed by the trail. The purpose is both to notify and involve them in the development of the water trail-local support is critical. Water trails benefit local governments so it is only logical that they should be involved. Also, if the local government is not involved at the outset of the project there may be unforeseen conflicts as the trail goes into development.

❑ **Access Points**

For ease of use, water trails should have at least one access point every ten miles. These points must be able to accommodate boats appropriate for the water trail.

❑ **Management & Stewardship Commitment**

There must be a local group who is willing to sign a Water Trail Partnership Agreement with the PFBC. The agreement is for a length of five years and includes specific agreements about signage, mapping, roles of the local group and the PFBC, stewardship goals, etc.

❑ **Safety Information**

Managers of water trails have a responsibility to provide safety information and to warn of hazards. No waterway is completely safe. However, by providing pertinent information about the waterway and good safety tips, hazardous conditions can be addressed appropriately. For example, users may be asked to portage around a particularly hazardous area.

