

## *Hiking the Trail*

### Lock 12 to Holtwood Dam

#### **MDT Map 5** | Mile 20.5 to 22.4 E→W

**E**ven though Lock 12 is in York County, it's easier to find from Lancaster County. From there, you can't miss the first right turn onto River Road after you cross the Susquehanna River on PA Rt. 372. From the York side it's a little trickier. If you're not paying attention you'll miss the turn and find yourself on the Norman Wood Bridge. I know. I've done it recently. From PA Rt. 74 in York County, turn east onto PA Rt. 372, drive 2.2 mi., then turn left onto River Road.

During the warmer months the large parking lot and the pit toilets are open but don't stay too late or you'll find your car locked behind the gate. If you drive another 0.2 mi up River Road, you'll come to a smaller parking lot but this one is open all year. From either parking lot walk down hill towards the river and follow the signs and orange blazes (Conestoga Trail) to Lock 12.

This section of the Mason-Dixon Trail is one of the most popular and great for families with children. It's also the



only section ever featured in *Backpacker Magazine* or on their website (We need to add some more MDT hikes).

After exploring Lock 12 and reading the information board, cross the canal on the footbridge and hike upriver (north) along the towpath of the Susquehanna & Tidewater Canal.

A half-a-mile later, the trail turns left at Mill Creek and goes past the ruins of the mill for which the creek was named. Across the road from the ruins is a small reservoir covered in ivy. I'm not sure what it was used for. I guess it was connected to the mill race.

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## **Mason-Dixon Quarterly Meeting and Worktrip**

### **Quarterly Meeting and Worktrip**

Sat, June 22, 2013

**Worktrip:**

9:00 am

**Meeting:**

12:00 pm

Arrive by 9:00 a.m. at the Conowingo Dam Visitors Center, 4948 Conowingo Road, Dublin, MD. Several visitors are expected, so the worktrip will involve training them in the skills required to build and maintain the Trail, as well as providing them some hands on experience. Besides educating and possibly recruiting our visitors, our purpose is to relocate the Trail from the confusing clearing of large dumpsters near Hopkins Cove (Map 6: mile 8.4) to a more pleasant walk through the woods nearby. Most of this relocation is flat so the primary effort will be clearing branches and brush using loppers. Please bring an extra pair of loppers if you have them. Come prepared to share you experience in trail stewardship/maintenance with one or two visitors who will work with you. We will return to the Visitors Center for the meeting which will begin at noon. If you have questions or need directions, contact Tim Schmidt at 717-235-5940 or [wanderfool@comcast.net](mailto:wanderfool@comcast.net).

# Lock 12 to Holtwood Dam continued from page 1



Enjoy the view of the rapids from the bridge before you turn left and follow the old road upstream for a beautiful view of the falls. If you decide to climb down to the base of the falls, be very careful. Many of the rocks are slanted and usually slick from the mist from the falls. Continue upstream through the gorge filled with rhododendrons, which usually bloom between the last week in June and the first week in July.

A quarter mile or so from the falls the old road crosses the creek but the trail bears right and starts its climb through rhododendrons and hemlocks. Switchbacks make the 200 foot ascent less challenging. Follow the ups and downs along the ridge and the view of the river through the trees from the rock outcrop. After one more, short climb you will begin your descent. Stop under the power lines and carefully look for Osprey in the towers below you (don't forget your binoculars). The large tower on the left had an eagle's nest that was occupied for several years. Now the smaller tower on the right has an Osprey nest. You also have a nice view of Holtwood Dam.

Continue downhill, pass through the first tower and turn left at the second one. A little further on, you pass under more power lines with another

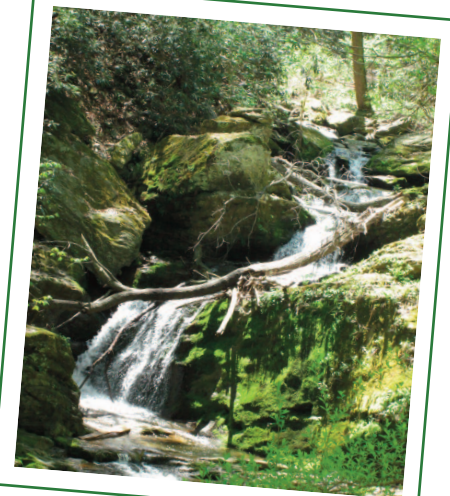


chance to observe the Osprey. Continuing downhill you will pass the ruins of an outbuilding on your right and a canal hotel on your left (possibly hidden in the undergrowth) just before you emerge from the woods onto River Road.

The view of Holtwood Dam is currently obstructed because of the trailers and fences related to the construction of a whitewater "feature" for kayakers on the west side of the dam. Hopefully, the view of the dam will be restored or improved when the construction is completed later this year.

At this point you have hiked about 2 miles, you could return by retracing your steps or you could avoid the hills and shorten the walk by following River Road downstream (south) for a mile to the Lock 12. There are two other options for longer hikes. If no water was coming over the dam, you may be able to hike south from Lock 12 on the Mason-Dixon Trail and explore Pea Vine Island which has beautiful views of several islands in the

river (about 2 miles roundtrip). If you're really adventurous, you can continue north on the Mason-Dixon Trail from Holtwood Dam and explore Oakland Run, another gorge filled with rhododendrons and hemlocks; much longer than Mill Creek but no sizeable waterfalls. The mouth of Oakland Run is about a mile north of the dam. The trail follows Oakland Run for about 2 miles before the trail crosses the run and climbs out of the gorge (6 mi roundtrip from the dam). M-DTS Map 5 describes both of these optional hikes.





# President's Message

## VULCAN QUARRY

We had a good meeting with the Vulcan Quarry, Maryland's DNR and the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway. The plan is a three phase relocation of the Mason-Dixon Trail off of the roads from where the trail crosses over I-95 to Havre de Grace. The Greenway will handle the program management part of the project and the M-DTs will handle the actual building of the trail. A MOU is required to be signed by all of the parties. Also, there are several wet areas that will need permits. Once the permits are obtained, two bridges will be required in the first phase. These sound like they would be ideal for a Boy Scout Eagle project.

## CECIL COUNTY

We had a friendly meeting with the Cecil County council. However, they have limited influence on the trail location on private property. After the meeting we had a short meeting with Sarah Colenda of the Principio Foundation. She has plans to get permission for people to walk thru the old furnace property, but has some safety issues that need to be resolved. We agreed to work together to resolve the issues that we have with the Principio route.

## ROUTE 40 BRIDGE BUS ROUTE

There is now a bus service between Havre de Grace and Perryville over the route 40 bridge. The schedule is at <http://harfordcountymd.gov/services/transportation/download/Schedule9.pdf>

## GRACE PLATEAU

The Water Street Rescue Mission has decided to sell Grace Plateau including the land that the Mason-Dixon is on. We met with their property committee to request a right-away and they turned us down. If you have any contact with the WSRM please let them know that you want the trail protected.

## BLAZING

It is now the time to clear the brush and reblaze the trail. We need to refresh the blazes every several years. Often we know the trail too well and do not notice the problems. Get someone to go with you who does not know the trail. That person will spot where there are missing blazes. Mike Ott has been leading an effort to reblaze the trail in Delaware.

## FACEBOOK

John Beatty has established us on Facebook. The location is [www.facebook.com/theMDTS](http://www.facebook.com/theMDTS). Share your photos of your hikes with us so that we can share them with all of our followers.

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### Central Section

Vacant

### Eastern Section

Vacant

## M-DTS ELECTION RESULTS

All current members of the Mason-Dixon Trail System received an election ballot for the Board of Directors election. This is for the three-year term from January 2013 – December 2015. Results of the election are posted to the right. Thirty members submitted ballots, either electronically via email or sending back the hard copy.

New officers include Tim Schmidt, Rick Pavao, Mike Ott and John Beatty.

We are in need of a volunteer to assume the Treasurer role. We also need to find members who will serve as Trail Coordinators for the Central and Eastern Sections of the trail.

## MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM

Rob Campbell, *Secretary*  
811 Marvell Drive  
York, Pennsylvania 17402

### *History Along the Trail* **Principio Furnace**

The Mason-Dixon Trail passes many iron furnaces dating back to the 1700's to 1800's. The most well known is the Principio iron furnace located in Cecil County (map 7). Both the iron masters house and the furnace office still stand. The remains of the 1837 blast furnace still stand. At this time the grounds are not open to the public due to safety concerns.

A leading iron producer during the Colonial period, Principio started operating in 1719. It held Maryland's first blast furnace, operating 1725, and first refinery forge, constructed 1728. Most of the pig and bar iron manufactured in the colonies was exported to England, where it would be made into more profitable finished goods. One of the partners of the Principio Company was Augustine Washington, father of George Washington. He operated their blast furnace at Accokeek, located in Stafford County, Virginia. When



Augustine died, his share in the company passed on to his son Lawrence. George inherited it when Lawrence died.

After the American Revolution, Principio made cannons and other ordnance until the British destroyed the complex in a raid during the War of 1812. Cannons were made for the USS Navy's *Constitution*—Old Ironsides. The Whitaker Family revived the operation in 1837, and Principio remained an active iron manufacturing site for much of the nineteenth century.

The M-DTS Newsletter is published about four weeks in advance of each of the four M-DTS board meetings held annually. Submissions are welcomed.

The Mason-Dixon Trail System, Inc. is a non-profit all-volunteer, service-oriented association of trail clubs and individual hikers that has as its purpose the use and conservation of the backcountry through the development of new trails in the mid-Atlantic states. The nucleus of M-DTS is the 193-mile Mason-Dixon Trail which passes through historic and scenic areas of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware.

New members are welcome. To join, send \$25 (which covers cost of M-DT maps and patch) to:

**Mason-Dixon Trail System**

**Rick Maerker**

**13 Denise Drive**

**Thornton, PA 19373**

Thereafter, the annual fee is \$7. Life membership is available for \$250.

**Visit the Mason-Dixon Trail web site at: [www.masondixontrail.org](http://www.masondixontrail.org)**