

## *New Point Comfort Trail*

10.7 to 15.2 miles

This trail has most of its paddling in open waters. Circling clockwise around New Point, it first proceeds south in the open Chesapeake Bay to the southern tip of the county, and then it swings northwest into Mobjack Bay, also a large, open body of water. An outstanding feature of this section is the New Point Comfort lighthouse, now no longer in active use. It is often used as a symbol of the maritime heritage of the county.

The trail continues up Mobjack Bay across the mouths of several creeks, each inviting an exploratory excursion. It ends at the mouth of the eastern-most of the four rivers of Mobjack Bay - the East River. The others are the North, Ware, and Severn Rivers fanning out like the four fingers of a spread hand.

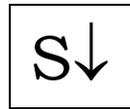
Of course, you can also paddle counter-clockwise around New Point Comfort starting near the mouth of the East River.

The eastern shore of the North River is also Mathews County, but the current lack of launch sites anywhere on it preclude our using it as a sixth trail. We hope to remedy this in the future.

*It is important that you read the Guide sections “Notes of Caution” and “Using the Guide” before using this trail guide.*

### **PADDLING NORTH TO SOUTH THEN EAST TO WEST**

#### **Section 1: Horn Harbor to New Point Campground - 2.7 to 3.8 miles**



The entrance to Doctor's Creek is just past the southern tip of Horn Harbor to the west of Mill Point. You will find a small sandy launch area on the shore of Doctors Creek.

As you travel south from Doctors Creek, you will see marshes and small beaches on your right (west). The next thing of interest is the remains of New Point Wharf. You may see osprey and heron nests on the old pilings, but keep an eye out for submerged pilings.

A short distance south is a white sandy beach that belongs to New Point Campground. The campground has camping trailers for rent and welcomes canoeists and kayakers.

#### Launch points

#12 - Doctors Creek Landing

#### **Section 2: Dyer Creek to New Point Lighthouse - 2.6 miles**



Be alert at the mouth of Dyer Creek for boat traffic and a challenging current. You will begin to see a community of beach homes along a sandy beach. The beach is private, but the shallow waters create some good wave action and a fun place to try surfing.

As you approach the point and the lighthouse you will see sand dunes and abundant wildlife in this area. An assortment of water birds can be found such as brown pelicans, cormorants, egrets, osprey and great blue herons. In the summer you will see wildlife of a human type. An island formed by sand dunes is a favorite meeting place for swimming and picnicking. On the east side of the island at low tide there are sand bars, and the water can be very shallow over them.

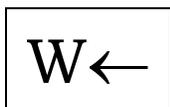
New Point Comfort Lighthouse was completed in 1804 and is the third oldest lighthouse on the Chesapeake Bay. It is a symbol of all local maritime interest and a monument to all those from this area who have lost their lives at sea in peace and war. At one time the lighthouse was part of the mainland, but it now sits on a small rocky island surrounded by riprap. Take note of wind and current, and stay a good distance from the rocks.

Deep Creek cuts behind the larger sandy island and can be taken as an alternative route if you do not wish to go out to the lighthouse. Watch the tidal currents in it.

Launch Points:

- #12 - Doctors Creek Landing
- #13 - New Point Comfort Landing

**Section 3: New Point Comfort Lighthouse to New Point Comfort Observation Platform - 1.6 to 2.2 miles**



As you travel northwest from the lighthouse, you will see marshes on the mainland.

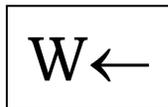
Follow the shoreline and keep an eye open for New Point Comfort Observation

Platform and launch site. New Point Comfort Preserve is owned and managed by the Nature Conservancy and can be accessed at the end of Route 600. It has an interpretive sign describing the area.

Launch Points:

- #13 - New Point Comfort Landing (no parking)

**Section 4: New Point Comfort Observation Platform to East River - 4.8 to 7 miles**



At the observation platform landing you are just inside of Harper Creek. You can explore up the creek before entering the bay and proceeding along the shore. As you paddle toward the mouth of the East River, you will pass, in succession, Davis Creek, Pepper Creek, and Sloop Creek. Davis Creek has a public landing and launch site. It also has many beautiful Chesapeake “deadrise” commercial fishing boats moored in it. Pepper Creek is the largest of the four creeks. The waters here are very open and are not very deep near the shore. Be careful in rough and windy conditions. Accurately assess the conditions, your skills, and your craft.

The put-in at the New Point Comfort Observation Deck has no parking and is for launch and retrieval only. An alternative with parking is the Davis Creek Public Landing at the end of Route 689 next to the Davis Creek Marina. The dock with this landing is designed for workboats, but to the right of the dock is a put-in for paddlers. Davis Creek is a deep-water access point for watermen, with channel markers indicating its entrance from Mobjack Bay. Water traffic can be busy at times.

From the Observation deck to the mouth of the East River is about 5 miles of open water, and a little wind can make it a long haul. About halfway along is Pepper Creek, which offers protection and a nice place to see wildlife. It is less developed and larger than most local creeks, with houses generally set back a little from the water. A circuit from one of the put-ins, around Pepper Creek, and back could make a nice outing.

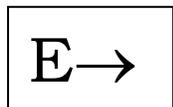
Launch Points:

- #13 - New Point Comfort Landing (no parking)
- #14 - Davis Creek Landing



**PADDLING WEST TO EAST THEN SOUTH TO NORTH**

**Section 4: East River to New Point Comfort Observation Platform - 4.8 to 7 miles**



From the mouth of the East River to the Observation Platform is about 5 miles of open water, and a little wind can make it a long haul. About halfway along is Pepper Creek, which offers protection and a nice place to see wildlife. It is less developed and larger than most local creeks, with houses generally set back a little from the water. A circuit from one of the put-ins, around Pepper Creek, and back could make a nice outing.

As you paddle toward the Observation Platform, you will pass, in succession, Sloop Creek, Pepper Creek, and Davis Creek. Davis Creek has a public landing and a launch site. It also has many beautiful

Chesapeake “deadrise” commercial fishing boats moored in it. Pepper Creek is the largest of the three creeks. The waters here are very open and are not very deep near the shore. Be careful in rough and windy conditions. Accurately assess the conditions, your skills, and your craft.

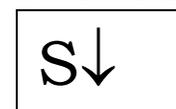
Follow the shoreline and keep an eye open for the New Point Comfort Observation Platform and launch site. New Point Comfort Preserve is owned and managed by the Nature Conservancy and can be accessed at the end of Route 600. It has an interpretive sign describing the area. At the observation platform landing you are just inside of Harper Creek. You can explore up the creek.

The launch site at the New Point Comfort Observation Platform has no parking and is for launch and retrieval only. A good alternative is the Davis Creek Public Landing is at the end of Route 689, next to the Davis Creek Marina. The dock with this landing is designed for workboats, but to the right of the dock is a put-in for paddlers. Davis Creek is a deep-water access point for watermen, with channel markers indicating its entrance from Mobjack Bay. Water traffic can be busy at times.

Launch Points:

- #13 - New Point Comfort Landing (no parking)
- #14 - Davis Creek Landing

**Section 3: New Point Comfort Observation Platform to New Point**



**Comfort Lighthouse - 1.6 to 2.2 miles**

As you travel south from the New Point Comfort Observation Platform, you will see

marshes on the mainland. There is little specific to point out in this section. The New Point Comfort lighthouse will stand prominently ahead of you as you paddle and to your left (east) before you get to the lighthouse is a sandy island.

Launch Points:

#13 - New Point Comfort Landing (no parking)

**Section 2: New Point Lighthouse to Dyer Creek - 2.6 miles**



New Point Comfort Lighthouse was completed in 1804 and is the third oldest lighthouse on the Chesapeake Bay. It is a symbol of all local maritime interest and a monument to all those from this area who have lost their lives at sea in peace and war.

At one time the lighthouse was part of the mainland, but it now sits on a tiny rocky island surrounded by riprap. Take note of wind and current, and stay a good distance from the rocks. Between the lighthouse and the mainland, there is a much larger island formed by sand dunes. It is a favorite meeting place for swimming and picnicking. On the eastern side of the island at low tide there are sandbars, and the water can be very shallow over them.

Deep Creek cuts behind the island at whose tip the lighthouse stands and can be taken as an alternative route if you do not wish to go out to the lighthouse. Watch the tidal currents in it.

As you leave the point heading north you will see sand dunes and abundant wildlife in this area. An assortment of water birds can be found such as brown pelicans,

cormorants, egrets, osprey and great blue herons.

You will begin to see a community of beach homes along a sandy beach. The beach is private, but the shallow waters create some good wave action and a fun place to try surfing. Be alert at the mouth of Dyer Creek for boat traffic and a challenging current.

Launch Points:

#12 - Doctors Creek Landing

#13 - New Point Comfort Landing

**Section 1: New Point Campground to Horn Harbor - 2.7 to 3.8 miles**

Just north of Dyer Creek is a white sandy



beach that belongs to New Point Campground. The campground welcomes canoeists and kayakers.

As you travel north from the campground, the next thing of interest is the remains of New Point Wharf. You may see osprey and heron nests on the old pilings, but keep an eye out for submerged pilings. As you travel north toward Doctors Creek, you will see marshes and small beaches on your left (west).

The entrance to Doctor's Creek is just past the southern tip of Horn Harbor to the west of Mill Point. You will find a small sandy launch area on the shore of Doctors Creek.

Launch points

#12 - Doctors Creek Landing