



National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal
National Historical Park

1850 Dual Highway
Suite 100
Hagerstown, MD 21740
301.739.4200 phone
301.739.5275 fax

C&O Canal National Historical Park News Release

Release Date: October 2, 2018

For Immediate Release

Contacts: Linzy French, 301-714-2201, linzy_french@nps.gov OR

Katie Liming, 202-619-7156, katelyn_liming@nps.gov

National Park Service seeks applicants for long-term agricultural land leases along the C&O Canal

Hagerstown, Md. – Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal NHP) plans to lease 24 agricultural properties throughout Allegany, Washington, Frederick and Montgomery counties in Maryland. The bidding process opens today, Wednesday, October 3, and all applications must be received by Friday, November 16, 2018.

C&O Canal NHP maintains more than 1,000 acres of agricultural land to preserve historic agricultural landscapes and viewsheds. The prevalence of agricultural lands throughout Maryland's Potomac River Valley played an influential role in the development of both the C&O Canal and adjacent communities. C&O Canal NHP has worked with local farmers to maintain historic properties since the creation of the park in 1971.

Agricultural leases will be awarded for a 10-year period beginning in March 2019. Applicants may apply to lease multiple properties. Application forms, property maps and additional information are available by contacting the park at 301-745-5802 or by emailing kristen_shelton@nps.gov.

Applicants will be evaluated on experience in agricultural operations, ability to achieve park conservation goals and their proposed bid amount for the lease. Preference will be given to applicants who can demonstrate knowledge and experience in sustainable agriculture and conservation practices. In a continuing effort to protect the Chesapeake Bay and local watersheds, applicants will work closely with National Park Service staff to ensure best conservation management practices.

C&O Canal NHP currently manages agricultural land through short-term permits. The transition to historic leases allows lessees to maintain agricultural properties for longer periods of time. Through the 10-year leases, farmers and the park will be able to collaborate more closely to achieve

environmental stewardship goals. The ability to maintain properties for longer periods of time will also give farmers more financial stability.

-NPS-

ABOUT THE C&O Canal: Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park preserves and interprets the historical, natural and recreational resources of the C&O Canal. More than 5 million visitors a year enjoy the opportunities for recreation and understanding that the park has to offer. For more information, visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/choh