

# The Shad Run at Fletcher's Cove - Potomac River





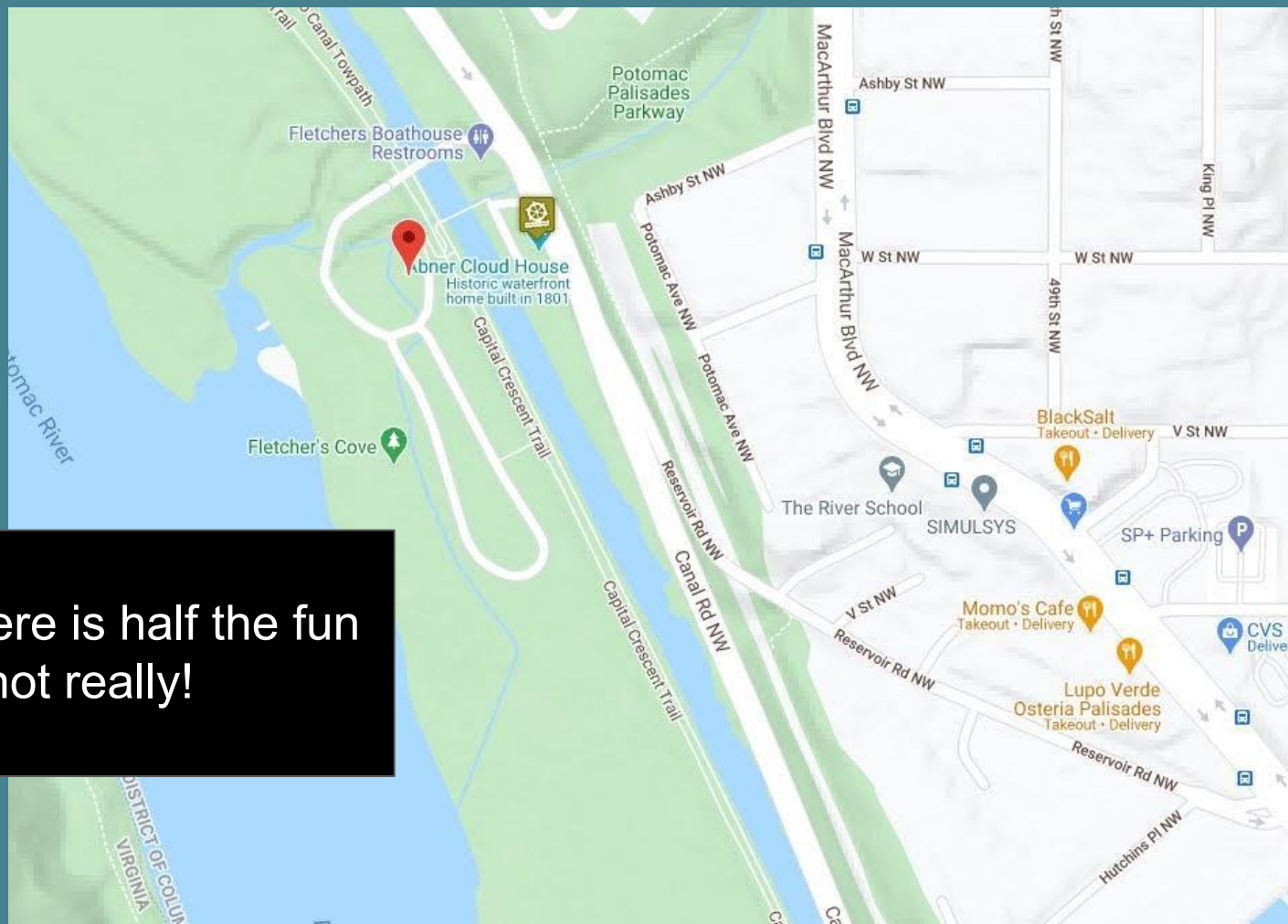
## AMERICAN SHAD

*Alosa sapidissima*

**OFFICIAL FISH OF THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

A species naturally distributed on the North American coast of the Atlantic ocean, the shad spends most of its life in the ocean, but swims up fresh rivers to spawn. The American shad has been described as "the fish that fed the nation's founders." Adult shad weigh between 3 and 8 lbs.

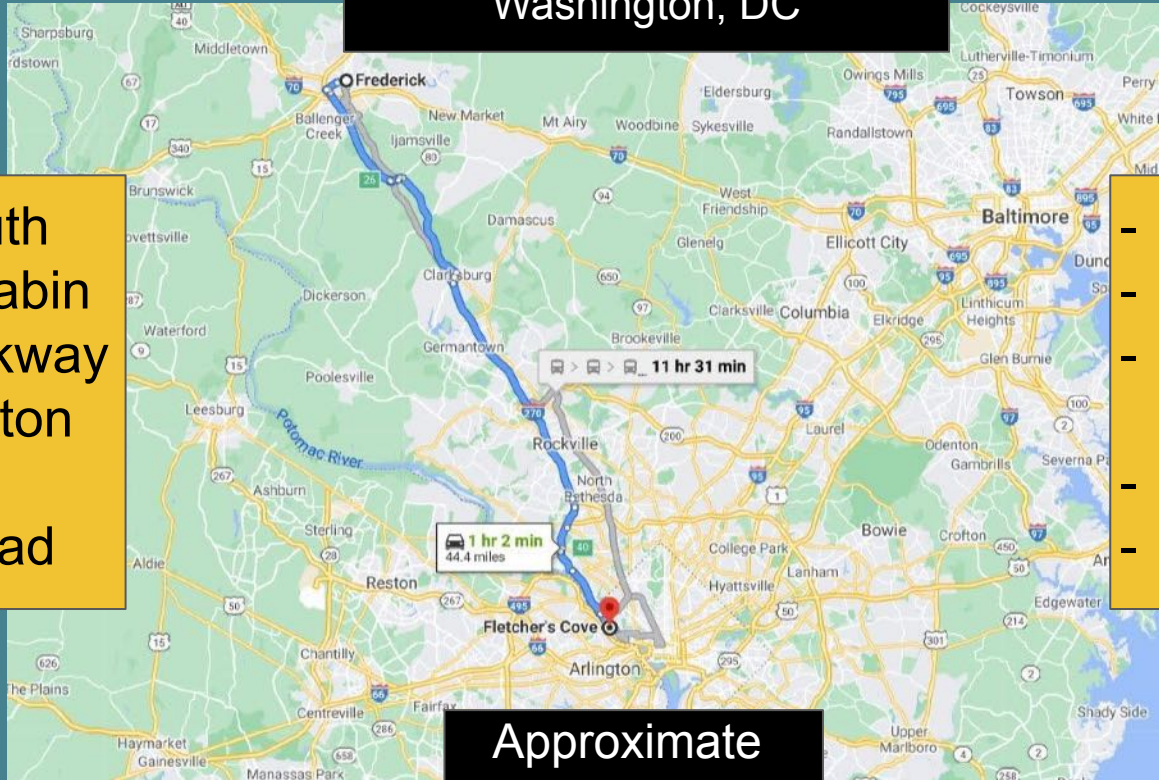
Getting there is half the fun  
...not really!



Fletcher's Cove  
4940 Canal Road NW  
Washington, DC

Most direct  
route

- I-270 South
- Exit 39 Cabin John Parkway
- Clara Barton Parkway
- Canal Road



Alternate  
route

- I-270 South
- I-495
- Exit 43 GW Parkway
- Key Bridge
- Canal Road

Approximate  
One hour drive  
From Frederick

# Directions to Fletcher's Cove

4940 Canal Road NW, Washington, DC

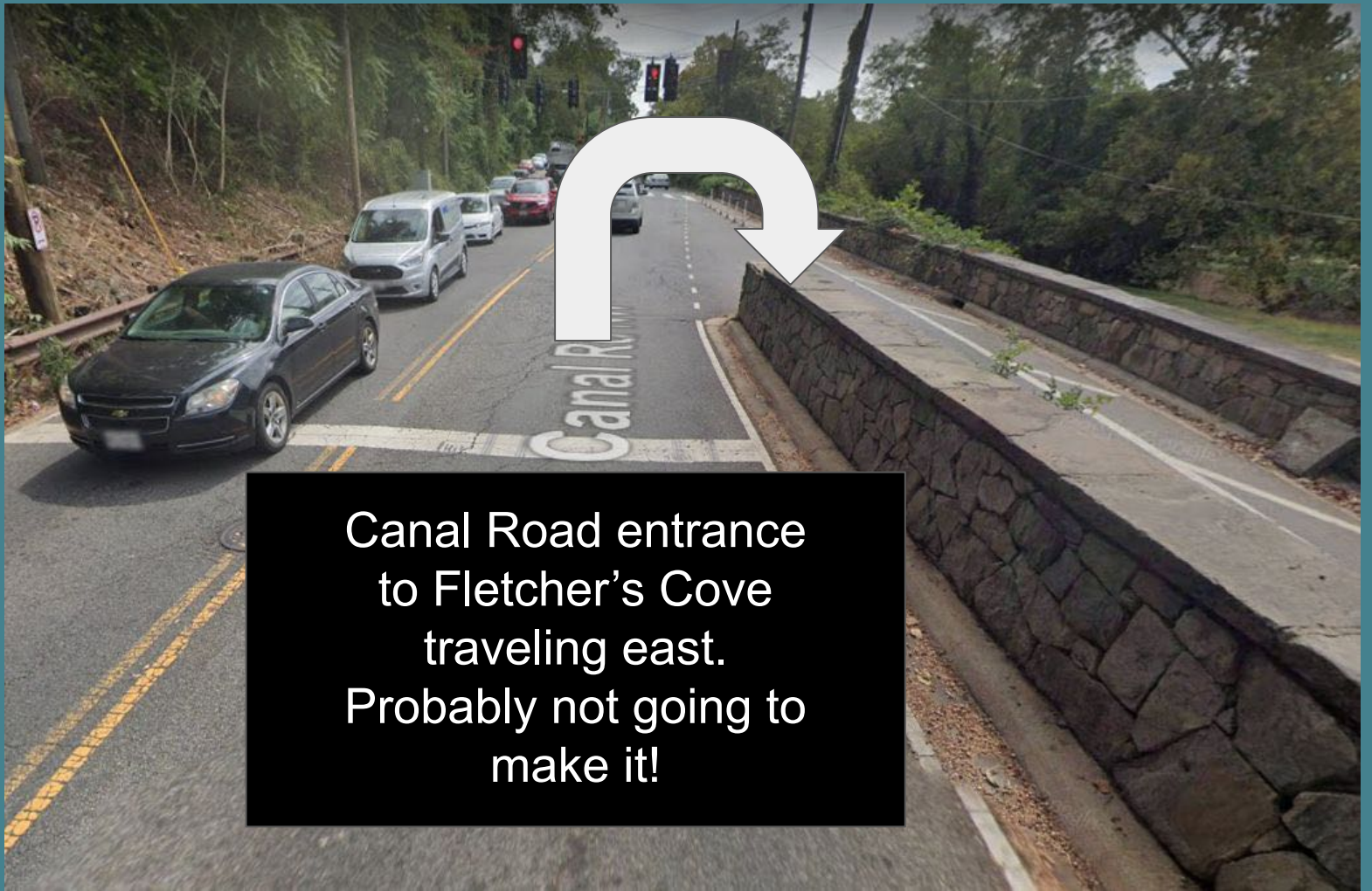
Fletcher's Boat House is located on the Potomac River in Washington, DC, two miles north of Key Bridge and one mile south of Chain Bridge, at the intersection of Reservoir Road and Canal Road. You will know you have reached the entrance to Fletcher's when you see the traffic lights and the Abner Cloud House, an old white stone building, which is next to the canal, and will appear on your left if you approach from Key Bridge, or it will be on your right approaching from Chain Bridge.

### Canal Road entrance to Fletcher's Cove

**WARNING:** The entrance to Fletcher's Cove is a very narrow ramp that can accommodate only ONE car at a time. There is a stop light and a small pull-off area where a car can wait for the light to turn without blocking incoming access. And it is REALLY difficult to negotiate this ramp if you approach Fletcher's Cove via Chain Bridge because the entry ramp will be facing away from your direction of travel. There is NO RAMP facing Chain Bridge, so you will probably have to drive backwards down the ramp. Park in the upper lot on your left or continue through the low tunnel (if you have a large SUV or van with roof racks, I suggest checking the tunnel height BEFORE entering) to the lower parking lot and dock access. Watch out for cars exiting the tunnel!

### Traffic flow restrictions on Canal Road

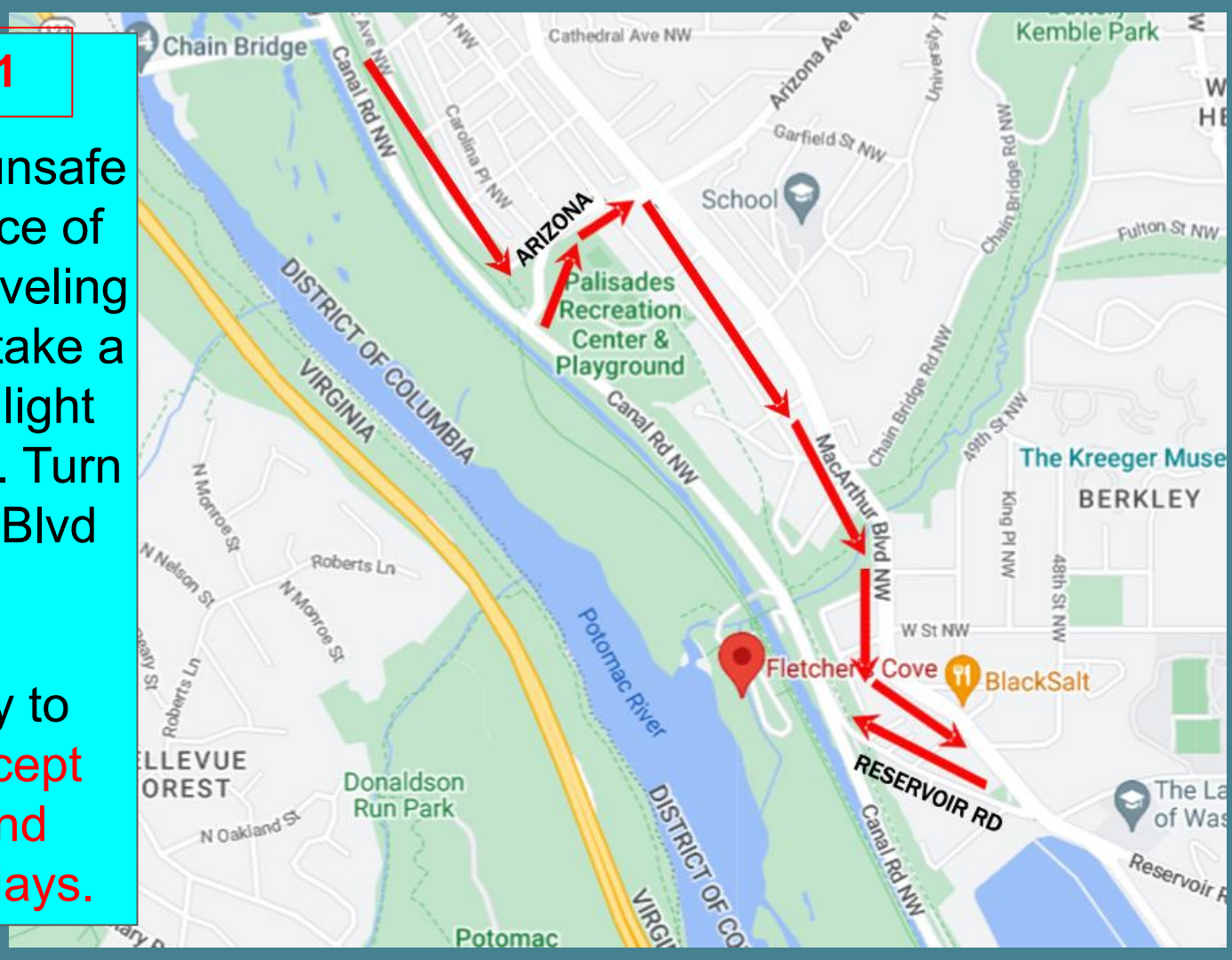
**WARNING ON WEEKDAYS:** Both lanes of Canal Road become ONE WAY into and out of the District during morning and evening rush hour during the weekdays. If you're hitting Fletcher's in the morning and following the route above you have to get on Canal Road BEFORE 6am. If you miss this window you must wait until 10:20am because all traffic on Canal Road is ONE WAY into the city. You must use Canal Road via Chain Bridge. Canal Road goes the other way, towards Chain Bridge, from 2:45 to 7:15pm.



Canal Road entrance  
to Fletcher's Cove  
traveling east.  
Probably not going to  
make it!

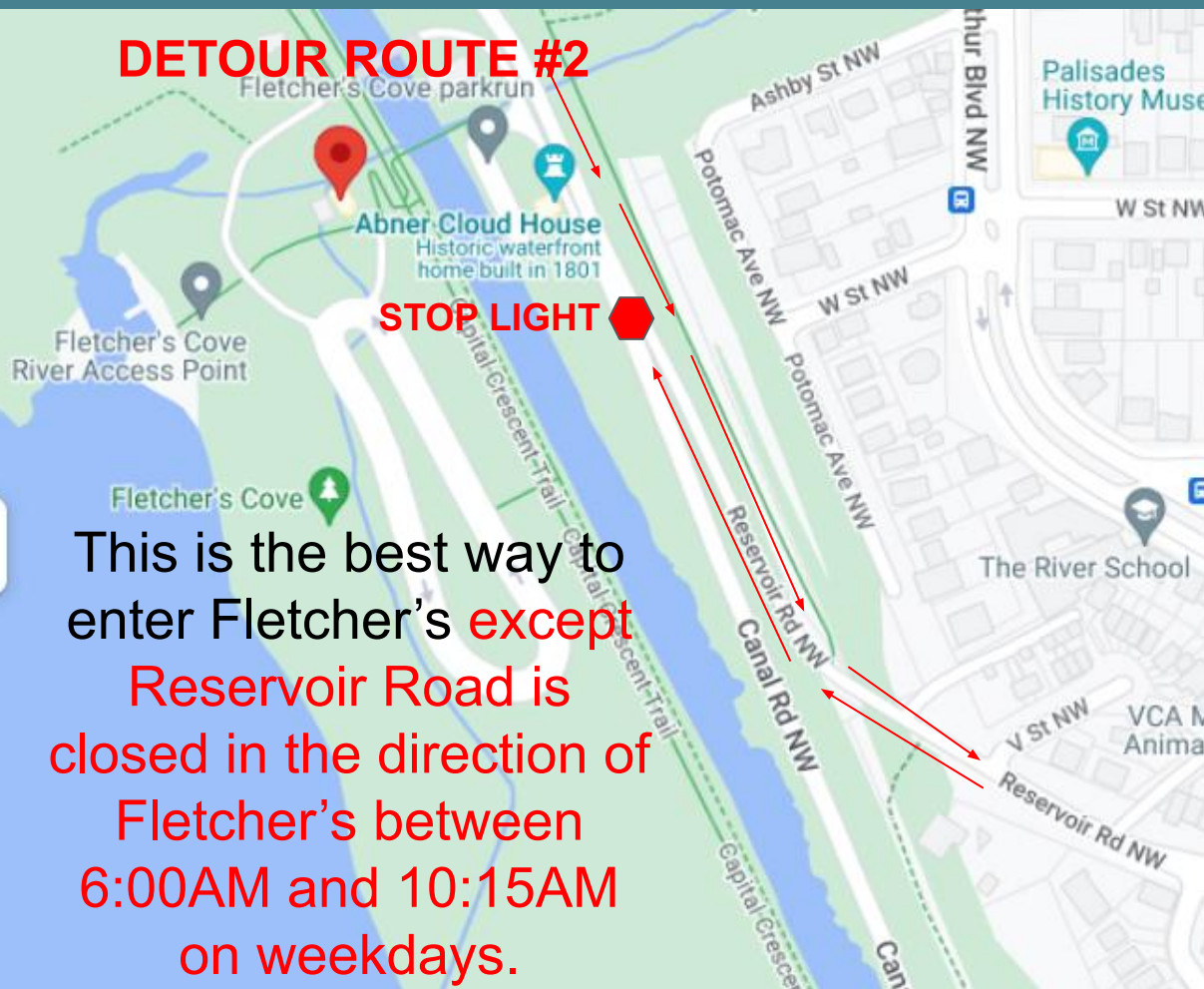
## DETOUR ROUTE #1

Note: To avoid an unsafe turn into the entrance of Fletcher's when traveling east on Canal Rd, take a left on Arizona (1st light after Chain Bridge). Turn right on MacArthur Blvd and then right on Reservoir Road. This is the best way to enter Fletcher's **except between 6:00AM and 10:15AM on weekdays.**





## DETOUR ROUTE #2



This is the best way to enter Fletcher's **except** Reservoir Road is closed in the direction of Fletcher's between 6:00AM and 10:15AM on weekdays.

When arriving from the north on Canal Road, instead of backing down the ramp or taking the Arizona & MacArthur detour, at the Fletcher's Cove stop light, simply veer left onto Reservoir Road. Drive uphill to the first or second left and turn around. Then proceed downhill on Reservoir Road, where you will have a protected stop light to enter the Fletcher's ramp.



Canal Road entrance  
to Fletcher's Cove  
traveling west





←  
C&O  
Canal  
parking  
area

↑  
To  
Boathouse

C&O tunnel  
Entrance

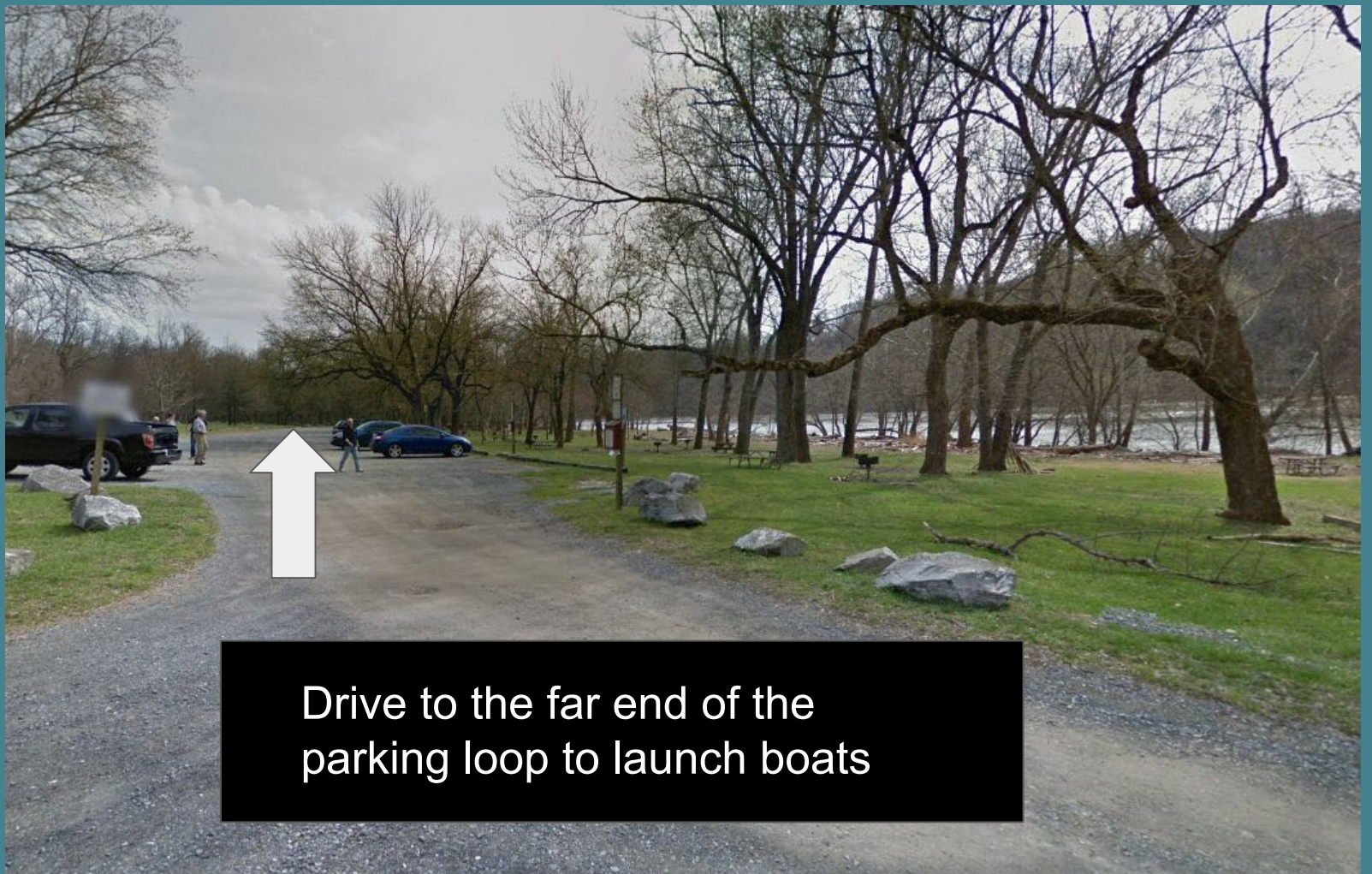
7' in center



C&O tunnel  
Entrance

Tight fit!





Drive to the far end of the parking loop to launch boats

The Fletcher's boat rental office usually opens at 7am, but when the shad are biting hot and heavy they open earlier to accommodate anglers. They also sell basic fishing equipment, bait, lures, hot dogs, candy, chips, drinks and ice cream.





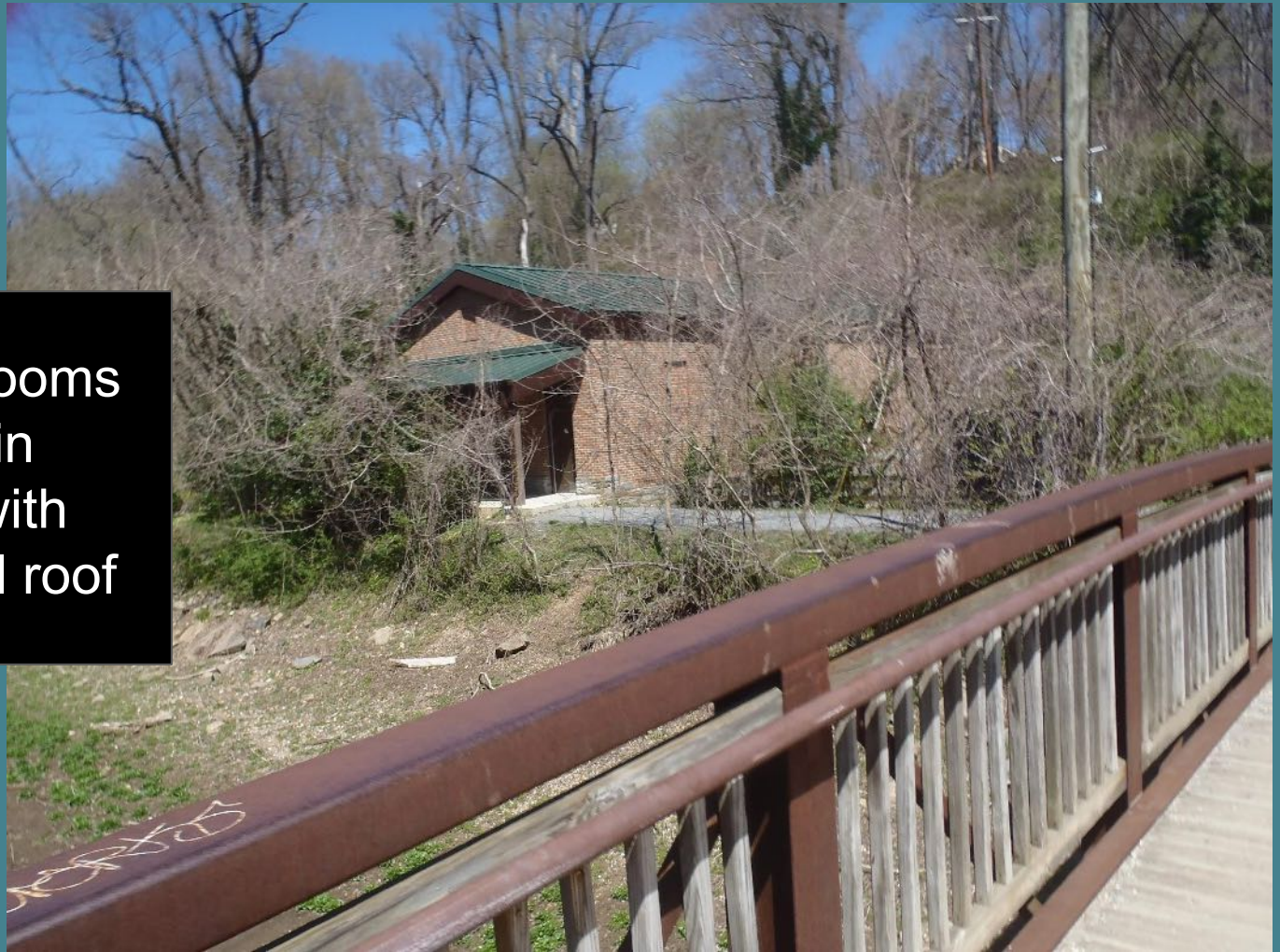
Dock area

Boathouse

Public Restrooms



Public restrooms  
located in  
building with  
green metal roof



Dock at low-tide



# Picnic Area



# Fish from a rental boat

[WWW.BOATINGDC.COM/RESERVATIONS](http://WWW.BOATINGDC.COM/RESERVATIONS)



The Boathouse at  
FLETCHER'S COVE



- New on-line reservation system
- Complete online waiver
- Some walk-up rental available
- Return time carefully monitored
- Limited number of boats
- Rentals are in high demand during the shad run but not so much as summer approaches.

*“The cherished tradition of public boat rentals goes back to the late 19th century when the Fletcher family first appeared.”*

*- Mark Binsted*

# Fish from Canoe



# Fish from Kayak



Sit/Stand-On



Sit-In



# High-end kayak

## Bluesky Angler 360 tandem hull



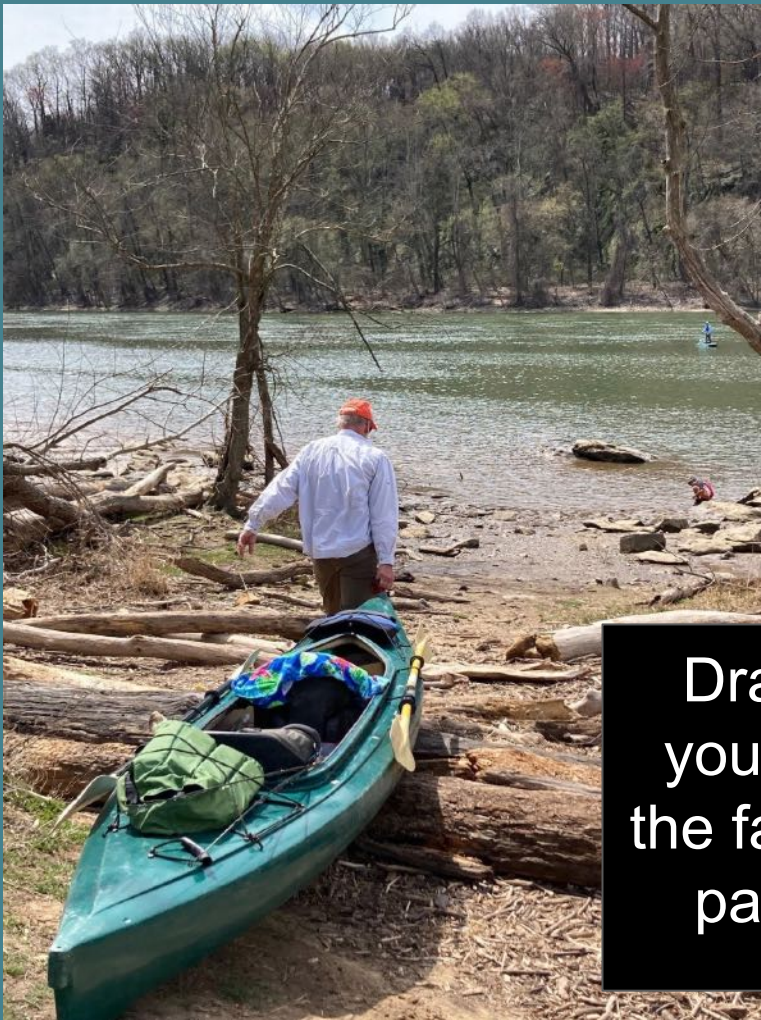


## Low-end kayak

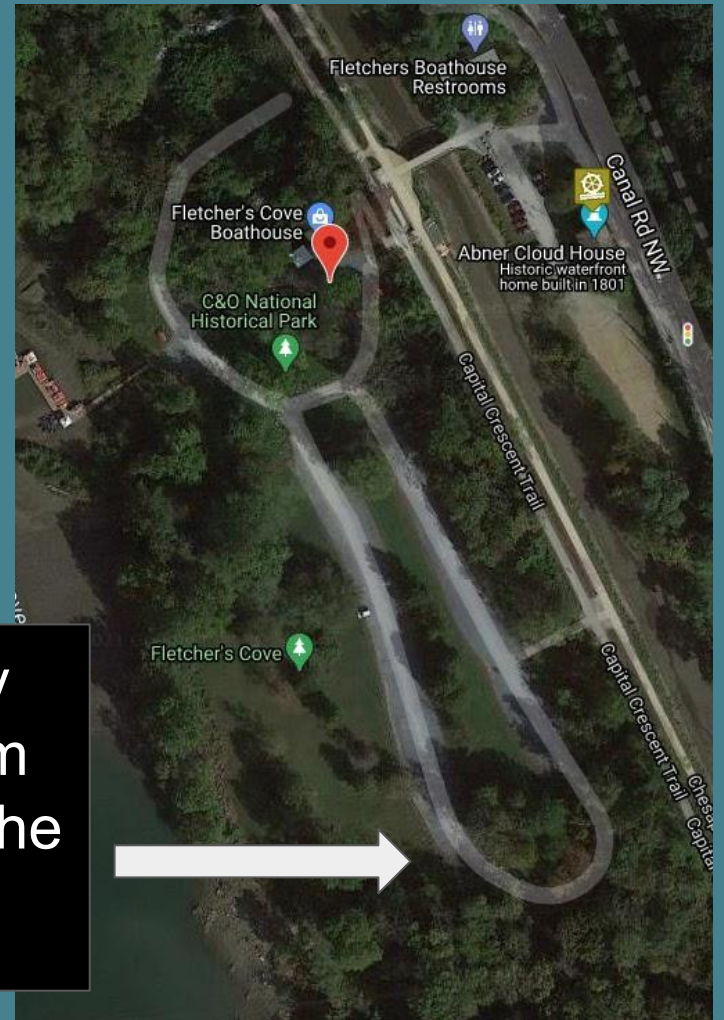
OR....

Fish using  
a boat you  
built from  
found objects!





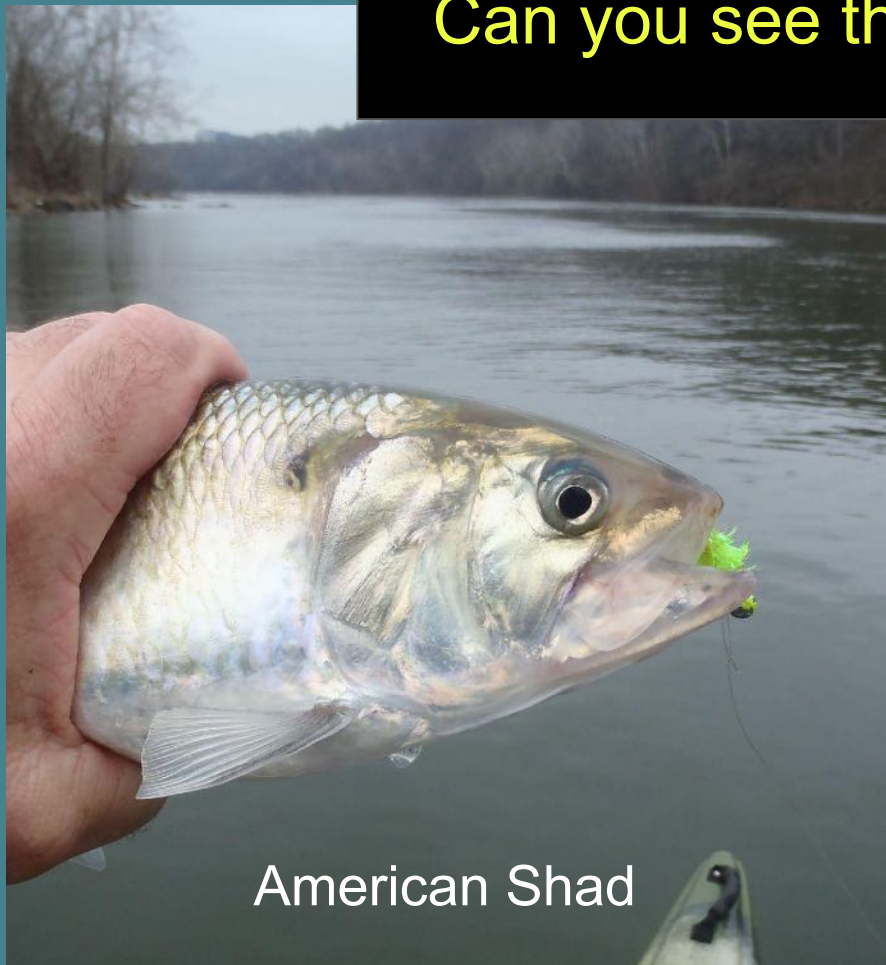
Drag or carry  
your boat from  
the far end of the  
parking loop



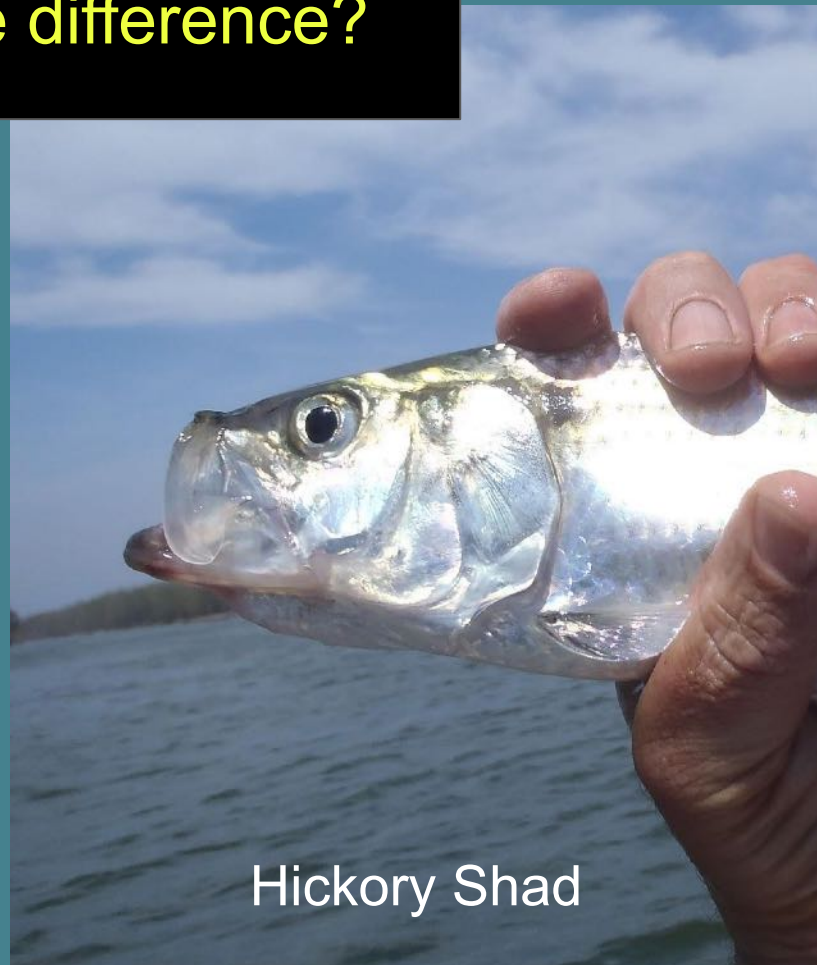
# Hickory or American Shad?



Can you see the difference?



American Shad



Hickory Shad

American / White Shad



# Hickory Shad



Go deep!

Sinking lines or sinking heads are a must-have especially for the bottom-hugging American shad.

I use a 7-wt rod with a 250-gr sinking line with success.

Do not go too light!

My experience is that shad are not line shy. I do not use trout tippet instead I go with 8 or 10 lb. Maxima Ultragreen leader because it is very abrasion resistant.



# Shad Flies

<http://binstedlures.com/>

- Sold at Fletcher's Boathouse



Binsted shad fly



Shad Killer

Jigs



PLEASE DO NOT LITTER!

Made in the USA - Hermiston, Oregon

Nungesser

TROLLER BAIT CO.

ORIGINATOR OF THE SHAD SPOON

SHAD DARTS

Nungesser

TROLLER BAIT CO.

ORIGINATOR OF THE SHAD SPOON

SPOON

Spin anglers can cast shad darts, spoons and jigs. All available at boathouse. Use a 3-way swivel for a deadly double rig. Attach a short (14-18") leader with the heavier lure and a long (30-36") leader for the smaller lure. Be prepared to catch two shad at once!



More things to  
know  
before you go



The shad run  
begins in  
mid-March  
and continues  
into early May



## Tides for Chain Bridge, D.C. starting with March 29, 2021.

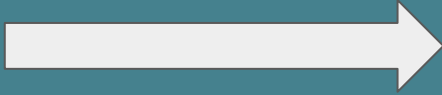
Day	High /Low	Tide Time	Height Feet	Sunrise Sunset	Moon	Time	% Moon Visible	
M	29	Low	4:09 AM	0.0	6:57 AM	Set	7:44 AM	99
	29	High	9:45 AM	3.5	7:29 PM	Rise	8:48 PM	
	29	Low	4:46 PM	-0.1				
	29	High	10:15 PM	3.3				
Tu	30	Low	4:54 AM	0.0	6:56 AM	Set	8:15 AM	98
	30	High	10:30 AM	3.6	7:30 PM	Rise	10:03 PM	
	30	Low	5:38 PM	-0.1				
	30	High	11:04 PM	3.2				
W	31	Low	5:39 AM	0.0	6:54 AM	Set	8:49 AM	94
	31	High	11:17 AM	3.7	7:31 PM	Rise	11:19 PM	
	31	Low	6:30 PM	-0.1				
	31	High	11:55 PM	3.2				
Th	1	Low	6:26 AM	0.1	6:52 AM	Set	9:28 AM	87
	1	High	12:06 PM	3.6	7:32 PM			
	1	Low	7:24 PM	0.0				
F	2	High	12:49 AM	3.1	6:51 AM	Rise	12:33 AM	78
	2	Low	7:17 AM	0.2	7:33 PM	Set	10:14 AM	
	2	High	12:59 PM	3.5				
	2	Low	8:19 PM	0.1				

Check the tides

Falling tide is best

<https://www.saltwatertides.com/cgi-bin/neatlantic.cgi>

Check the  
Water Level

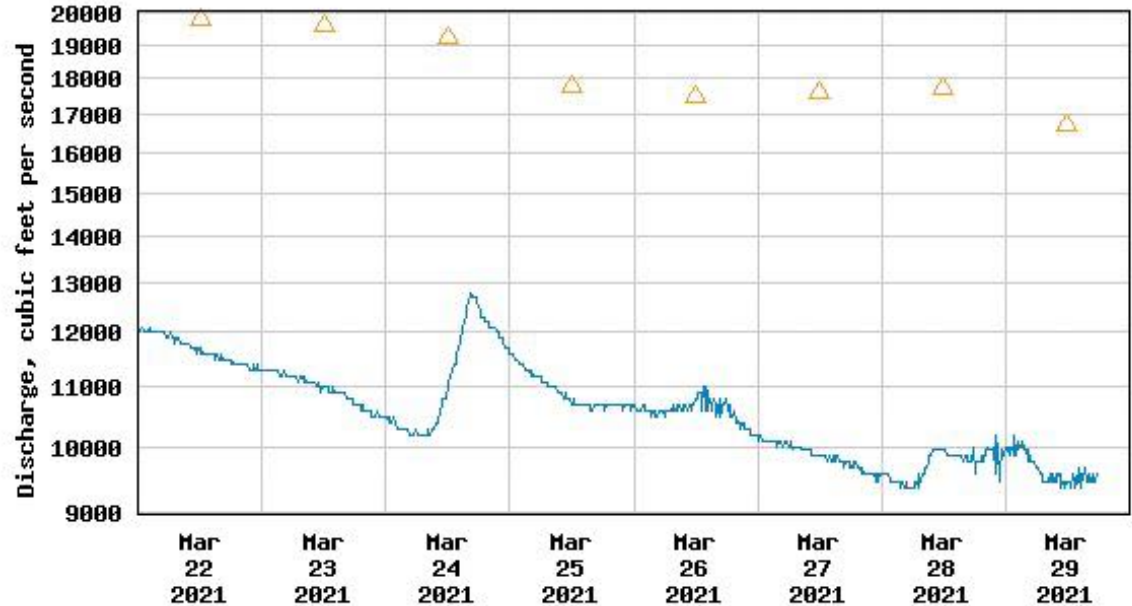


Below 15,000 CFS  
is a safe flow.

## Discharge, cubic feet per second

Most recent instantaneous value: 9570 03-29-2021 17:45 EDT

USGS 01646500 POTOMAC RIVER NEAR WASH, DC LITTLE FALLS PUMP STA



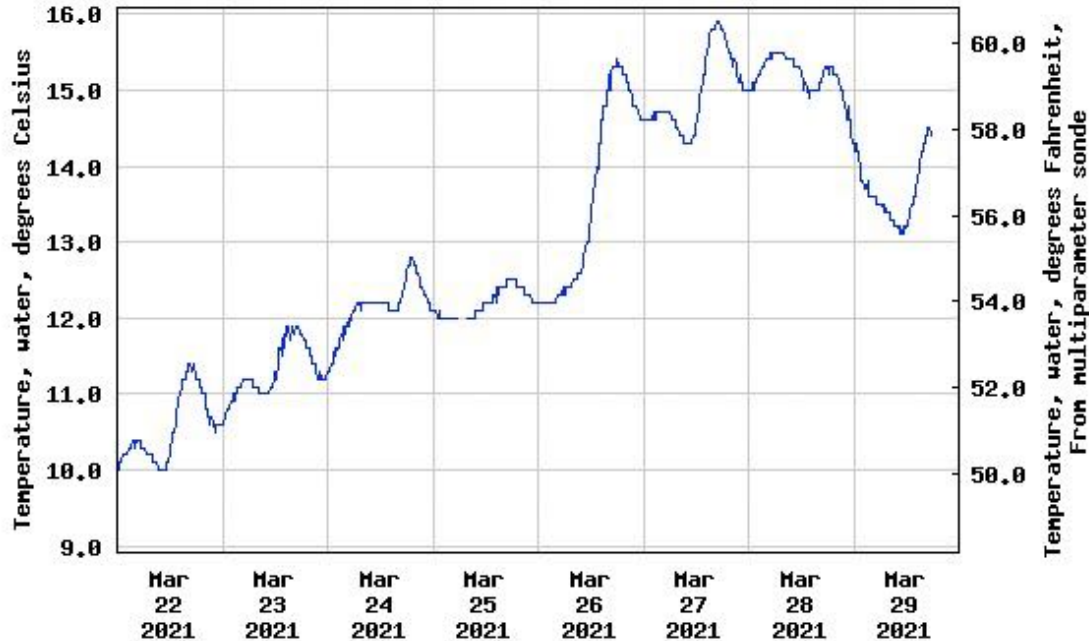
[https://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/uv?site\\_no=01646500](https://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/uv?site_no=01646500)

Check the  
Water temperature

### Temperature, water, degrees Celsius, From multiparameter sonde

Most recent instantaneous value: 14.4 03-29-2021 17:45 EDT

USGS 01646500 POTOMAC RIVER NEAR WASH, DC LITTLE FALLS PUMP STA



Above 50 degrees

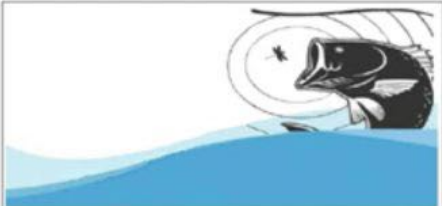



[https://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/uv?site\\_no=01646500](https://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/uv?site_no=01646500)

# Purchase your DC fishing license online

<https://doee.dc.gov/service/get-fishing-license>

\$13 annual non-resident fishing license

<p>THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</p> <p>DISTRICT SPORT FISHING LICENSE</p> <p>NOTE: IF YOU ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 16 OR 65 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER, A LICENSE IS NOT REQUIRED TO FISH IN DISTRICT WATERS</p>  <p>THIS LICENSE MUST BE PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED WHILE FISHING</p>	<p>*** </p> <p>DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY &amp; ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>FISHERIES and WILDLIFE DIVISION 1200 FIRST STREET NE 15TH FLOOR WASHINGTON, DC 20002 (202) 535-2600</p> <p>*** DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY &amp; ENVIRONMENT</p>							
	<table border="1"><tr><td><b>EMAIL ADDRESS</b> <input type="text"/></td><td><b>VALID THROUGH</b> 12-31-2021</td></tr><tr><td><b>DRIVER LICENSE ID</b> <input type="text"/></td><td><b>DATE OF BIRTH</b> <input type="text"/></td><td><b>SEX</b> male</td></tr><tr><td><b>LICENSE NUMBER</b> <input type="text"/></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr></table> <p><b>NAME</b> Daniel Neuland <b>ADDRESS LINE 1</b> 124 Sunhigh Drive <b>ADDRESS LINE 2</b> <b>CITY</b> Thurmont      <b>STATE</b> MD      <b>ZIP</b> 21788 <b>ISSUED DATE:</b> 03/20/2021</p>	<b>EMAIL ADDRESS</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>VALID THROUGH</b> 12-31-2021	<b>DRIVER LICENSE ID</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>SEX</b> male	<b>LICENSE NUMBER</b> <input type="text"/>	
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## Best times to fish:

- Falling Tide
- Overcast
- Early morning
- sun setting



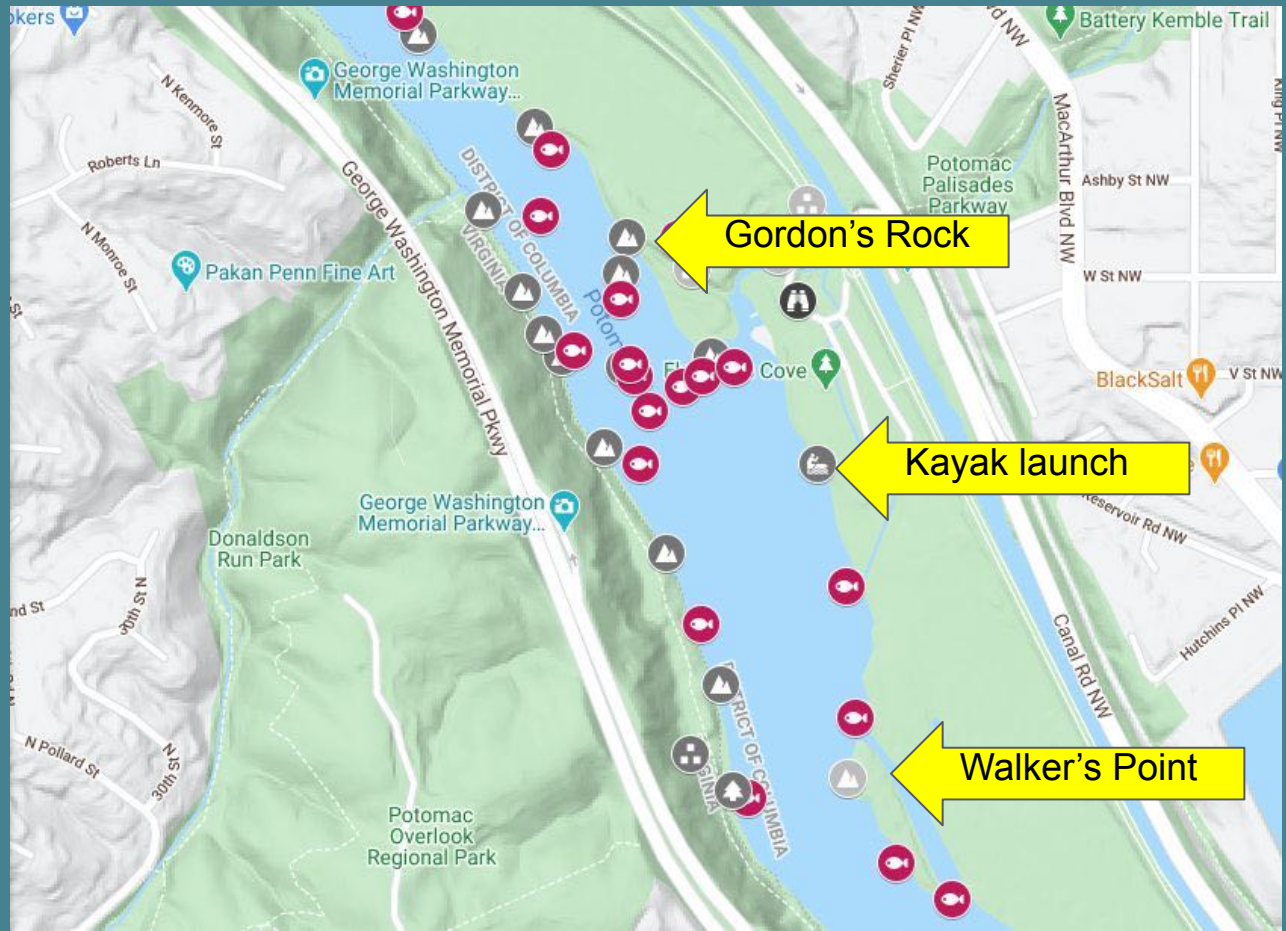


- Cast across and downstream
- Allow flyline to sink
- Feed line after cast
- Strip & pause



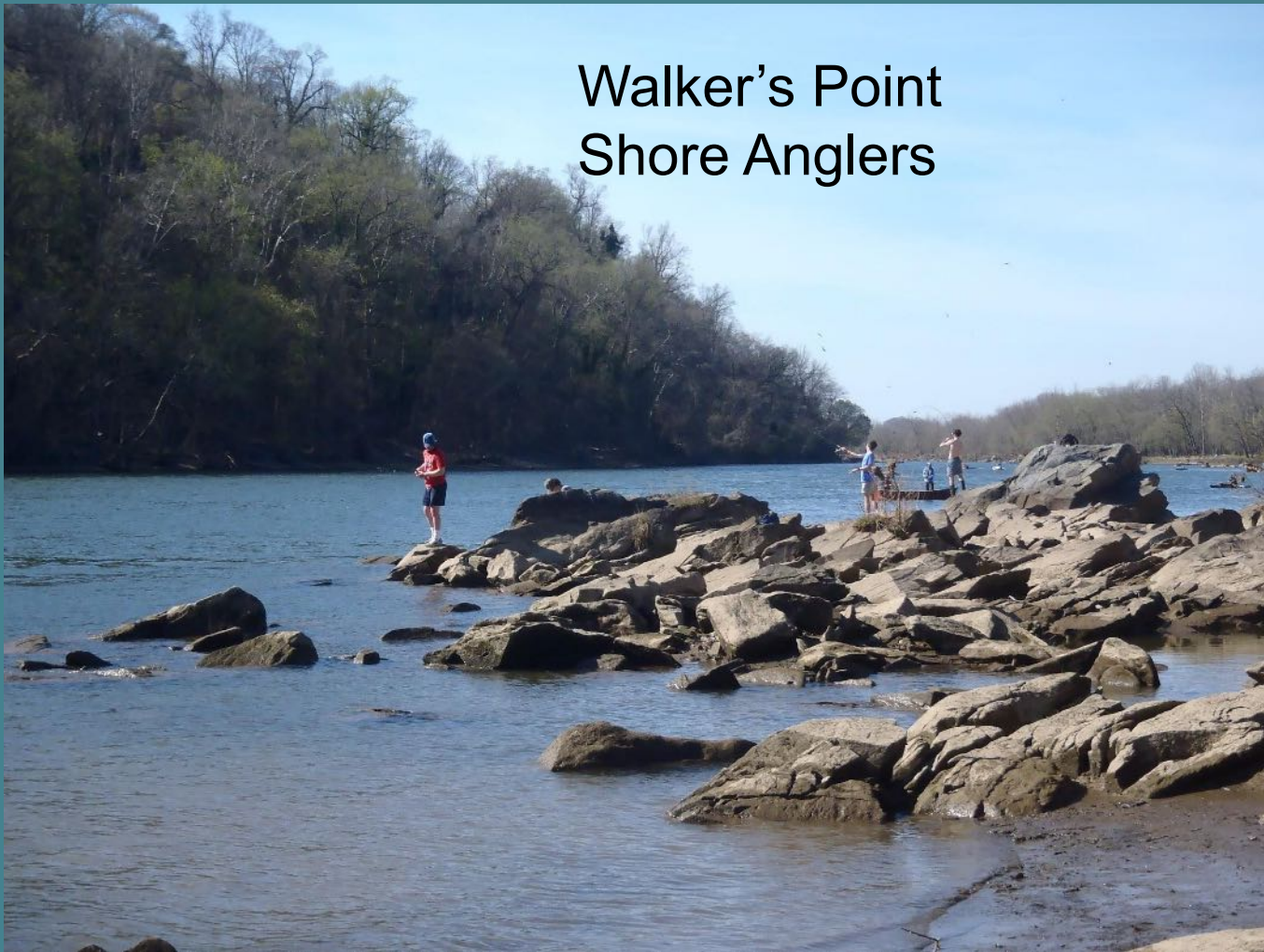
# Potomac River Landmarks

Best places to fish from shore:  
Upstream:  
Gordon's Rock  
Downstream:  
Walker's Point



<http://www.friendsoffletcherscove.org/fletchers-landmarks/>

# Walker's Point Shore Anglers



Boat anglers  
have a big  
advantage



You never know  
what might hit  
your shad fly?

## Striped Bass

Caught at Fletcher's  
On 03/24/22





## Blue Catfish

Caught at Fletcher's  
On 03/31/22

# Quillback Carp sucker

Caught at Fletcher's  
On 03/24/22



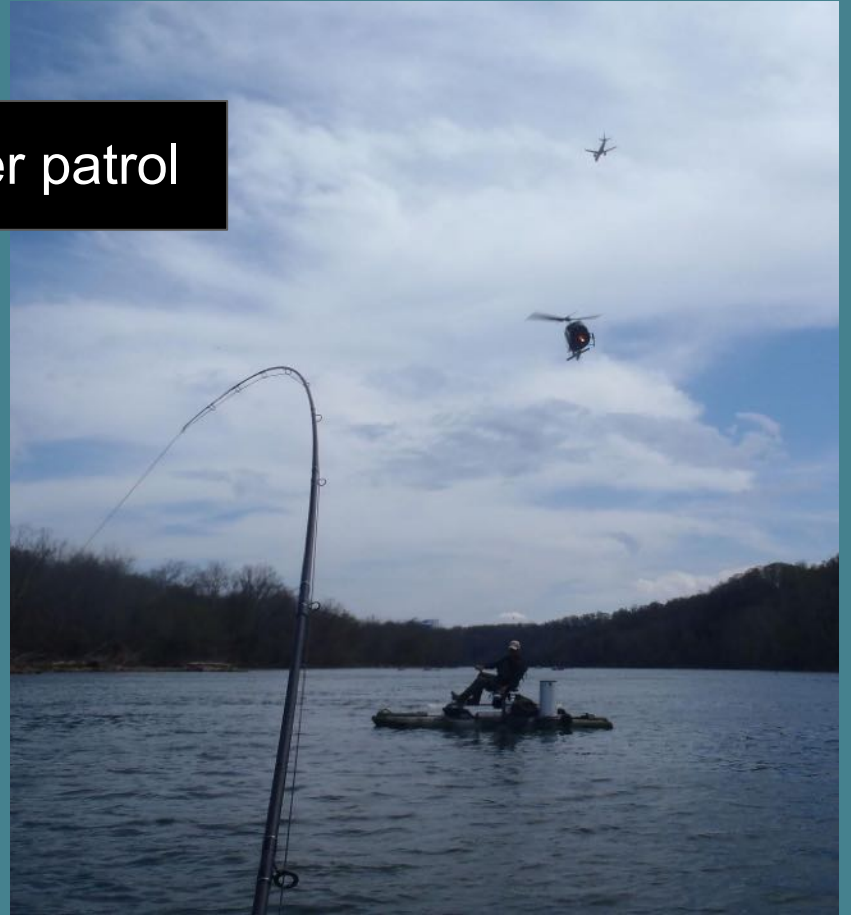




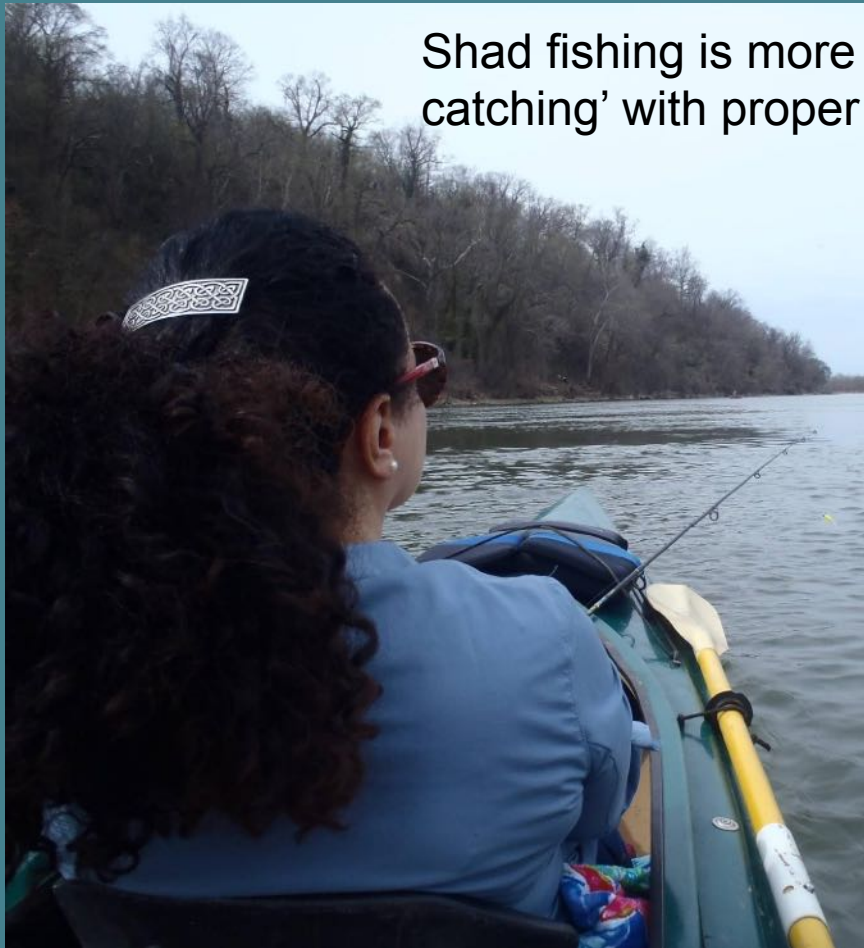
Lots of bird life



# DC river patrol



Shad fishing is more like 'shad catching' with proper planning!





I love shad  
fishing at  
Fletcher's



Warning shad fishing is addictive!