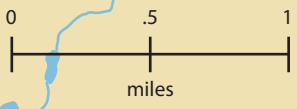


THE SEARCH FOR GOLD

During the past century, more than 5,000 ounces of the precious metal have been produced in Maryland, almost all of them in southern Montgomery County. Gold mines pocket the Great Falls area, some on National Park Service property. The Ford Mine was the site of gold discovered in the 1800s; some mine structures are still present. They Maryland Mine is according to legend, haunted by "Tommyknockers." The most systematic exploration for gold began in 1915 when A.A. Hassan, a mining geologist, directed an exploration program that included 12 miles of trenches over 2100 acres. Trenches are still visible.

MARYLAND

- 1 **Rock Run Culvert:** Outstanding culvert once carried Rock Run under canal at an angle.
- 2 **Plummers Island:** Home of the Washington Biologists' Field Club since 1901. Site of many biological studies.
- 3 **Turning Basin:** Place where canal boats changed direction; now a good place to spot turtles. Camp during the Great Depression for workers restoring the canal was located nearby.
- 4 **Widewater:** 500-foot wide, 3/4 mile long old river channel used for the canal. Damaged in 1972 flood, restored.



GREAT FALLS

Spectacular rock formations mark the area where the Potomac begins its change from a free-flowing stream into a tidal estuary. The Potomac River has been flowing through the area for 180 million years; rocks are remains of a zone or resistant mountain range 500 million years old. Parks on both sides of the river preserve the area for visitors, but be careful—slippery rocks have led to many drownings in the turbulent rapids. *Great Falls Tavern* is a Park Service headquarters and museum for interpretation and information about the park and the C&O Canal. In Virginia, *Great Falls Park* is an 800-acre preserve with a spectacular view of the falls. The park has a visitor center and picnic areas and trails leading to the locks of the *Patowmack Canal*, a project of George Washington, who saw navigation around the falls as a hope for national expansion, unity, and prosperity. The canal operated from 1802 to 1830. Only thoroughly experienced canoeists should attempt the rugged river between Great Falls and Little Falls. Many drownings have occurred here.

