

1 BLACK HILL ROAD

Where did the road go? The crumbling asphalt path that disappears into the lake was once Black Hill Road before the valley was flooded. Now it serves as an underwater corridor for bass, crappie, bluegill, catfish and perch.

2 SILOS

Looking across the lake through the trees, you will see two silos. The land around and now under the lake was used for dairy farming. Up until the 1940's, farmers would deliver their milk jugs to one of the B&O railroad stops to meet the trains on their way to Washington, DC. Today the barn serves as a station for the Park Police Mounted unit and their horses.

3 WILDFLOWERS

Different kinds of wildflowers grow around the lake. Can you find them?

4 OSPREY PLATFORM

Osprey can be seen flying and fishing around the lake in the spring, summer, and fall. This nesting platform was constructed by the Black Hill maintenance crew. Man-made platforms are proven to help increase osprey population numbers, which have been effected by pesticide use and habitat loss. **Ask a Park Naturalist:** *How does an osprey carry a fish?*

5 THE INVADERS

From mid-June into the fall, you will see a plant similar to seaweed growing underwater in the shallow parts of the lake. This is Hydrilla- an exotic plant from Asia that was used in fish aquariums. It escaped and now pushes out many of our native aquatic plants. Carp are also invasive species you will find in the lake that cause environmental problems.

6 WOOD DUCK BOXES

Many of the coves of Little Seneca Lake contain special elevated nest boxes for wood ducks. Wood ducks typically nest in the cavities of trees next to waterways. When forests started to disappear due to development so did the wood duck. Luckily these man-made boxes help fledge 78 to 100 wood ducks on the lake every year.

7 DEEP WATER

The deepest part of Little Seneca Lake is just to your left. It is estimated to be 70 feet deep here! **Ask a Park Naturalist:** *What is Lake Turnover?*

8 CLARKSBURG ROAD BRIDGE

You've just paddled under the Clarksburg Road Bridge, but you've also paddled over another older Clarksburg Road that lies beneath the lake, forty feet down. This road, also known as the Seneca Path, followed the course of a trail used by Indians of the Seneca Nation in the seventeenth century.

9 TREES

The trees along the lake shore act like buffers, protecting the lake from erosion and nutrient runoff from fertilizers.

10 STALEY'S BOARDING HOUSE

If you look carefully into the brush, you can see the foundations of Staley's Boarding House, owned by Fleet and Mary Jane Staley in the late 1800's. After the B&O Railroad's Metropolitan Branch opened for passenger service in 1873, visitors from Washington D.C. began coming to Boyds in the summertime to enjoy a healthy vacation in the country. When the visitors returned to Washington, they would take containers of clear spring water with them.

11 TURTLES

Red-bellied cooters and the smaller painted turtles like to bask on logs in this cove. On sunny days, hundreds of these solitary creatures come together, sometimes piled on top of each other like checkers, to warm their muscles and raise their body temperatures so that they can digest their food.

12 THE DAM

Water can be released at different levels from the dam to control the amount of water in the lake for different purposes. In the summer, dam operators release cool water from the lake bottom so that trout can live downstream in Little Seneca Creek.

13 BLACK HILL

The wooded slope on your right is called Black Hill. The hill acquired its name from a railway fire, so the story goes. The early B&O Railroad trains threw off hot cinders, and one day these cinders started a fire that burned the hill black.

According to another story, Black Hill was named after the gold fields of Black Hills, South Dakota. In the late 1800's, a few farmers who lived nearby discovered gold on their land. The amount of gold in the ore was low, but not low enough to discourage enthusiastic locals, who excavated several open pits. You can see one of these old mining pits if you walk past the Park Manager's office along the Black Hill Trail.

14 EAGLES

Ahead is a large dead tree that is a favorite perch of our resident bald eagles. Since 2006, Black Hill Regional Park has been home to nesting bald eagles and their offspring. **Ask a Park Naturalist:** *Does a Bald eagle always have a white head and tail feathers?*

15 ROCK OUTCROPS

Along the sides of the channel you can see bluish rocks, layered like pages pressed together. This is the local bedrock known as marbling schist, formed in the late Precambrian Era, before life emerged from the oceans. You rarely find this rock on the surface of the earth, except in deep stream valleys.

16 BEAVER LODGE

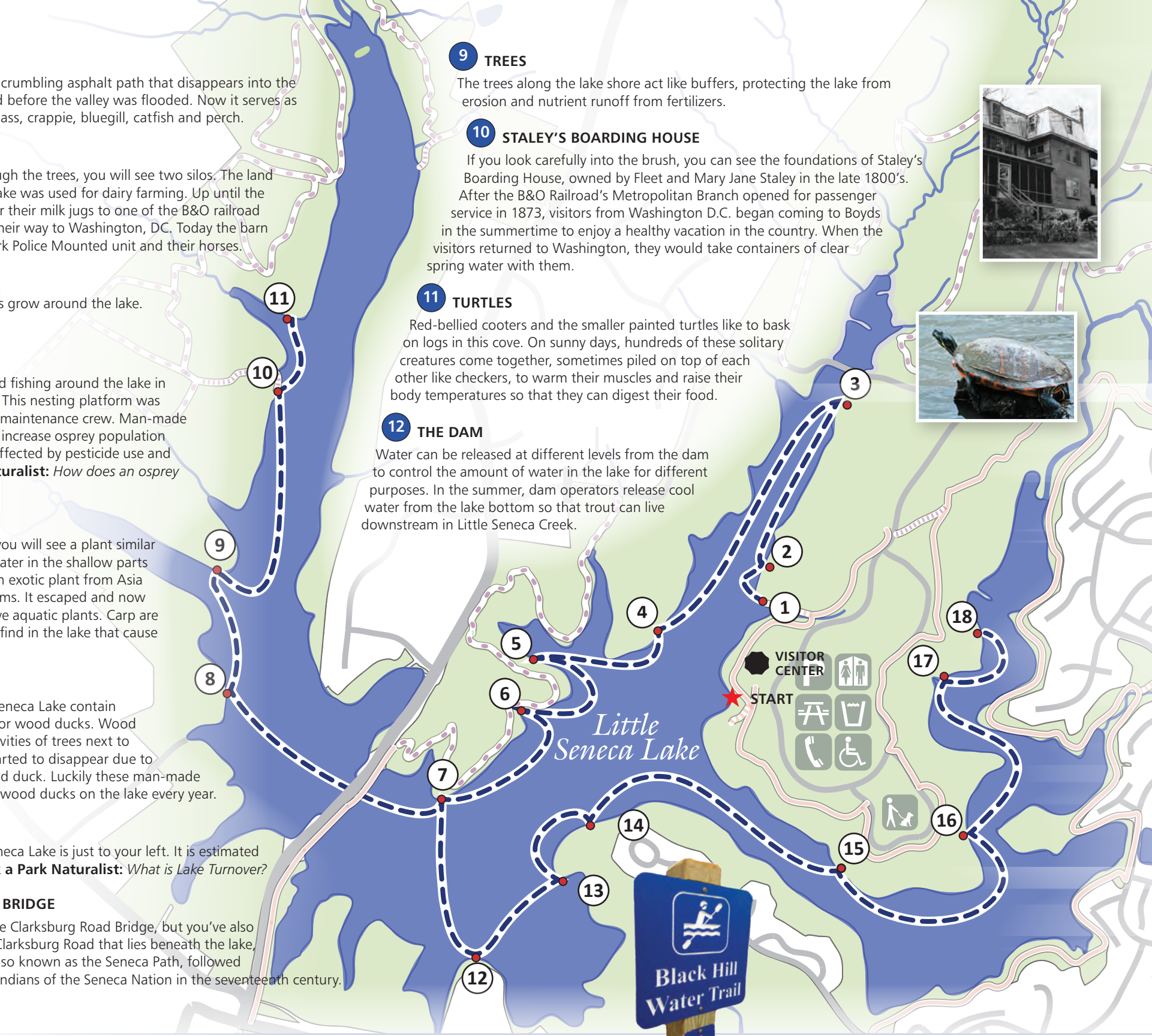
There are numerous active beaver lodges on the lake. You may have noticed pointed stumps and trees missing bark at their bases along the lake shore. These are telltale signs of beaver activity. The entrance to the lodge is underwater. Inside the lodge is an air-filled chamber where the beavers sleep, eat, and raise their young.

17 FOREST OF DEAD TREES

When the stream valley was flooded to create the lake, many trees were left standing on purpose. These snags provide excellent habitat for creatures such as birds and fish. What do you see around the trees, above and below the watery depths?

18 THAT'S WEIR

The small islands ahead are actually man-made weirs used in each of the three branches of the lake to keep the water clean. The weir system causes water to enter into the lake at a curve and traps sediment with underwater rock walls.



Black Hill Water Trail



MontgomeryParks.org

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

THREE CREEKS, Little Seneca, Cabin Branch and Ten Mile come together to form Little Seneca Lake here in Black Hill Regional Park. Little Seneca Lake was created as a drinking water reservoir by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). To create the lake, a dam was built on Little Seneca Creek, which flows into Great Seneca Creek and then the Potomac River. By 1986 the three creeks had completely flooded the stream valley, which once held a farming community. Today, water from the lake is released through the dam as needed to supplement water levels in the Potomac River during times of drought.

The water trail tours all three creeks, which will take approximately three to five hours of paddling. If you do not have the time or endurance to complete the entire trail, please consider enjoying the trail in sections over a course of days. We strongly recommend that you have prior paddling experience before setting out on the trail. Black Hill Nature Programs offers a variety of kayak and canoe lessons and trips to help you gain confidence and experience.

Have a great paddle!



BLUEGILL



CRAPPIE



CARDINAL FLOWER



ROSE MALLOW



MOUNTAIN LAUREL



INVASIVE HYDRILLA



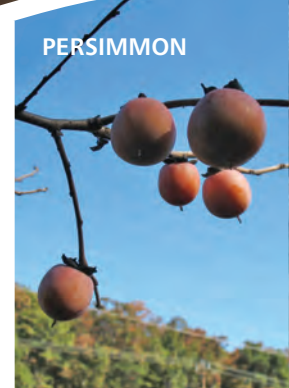
INVASIVE CARP



PAINTED TURTLE



SYCAMORE BARK



PERSIMMON



TULIP TREE



BALD EAGLES



AMERICAN WATER WILLOW

For more information on any of the spots listed on the trail, please visit the Black Hill Visitor Center. A Park Naturalist will be happy to answer your questions.

BLACK HILL REGIONAL PARK

20930 Lake Ridge Drive | Boyds, Maryland 20841

Park Hours: Black Hill Regional Park is open year round, sunrise to sunset. Contact specific facilities within the park for operating hours.



M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks

M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks provides residents and visitors with access to more than 35,000 acres of parkland. Our park system includes a variety of recreational facilities, such as ice rinks, indoor and outdoor tennis courts, athletic fields, event centers, campgrounds, nature centers and public gardens. We are stewards to more than 10% of the County's land and work hard to preserve a number of beautiful natural areas for walking and viewing the local wildlife. We also offer a wide range of classes and programs for all ages and interests.

MontgomeryParks.org

Parks Matter! Love the Parks? Help Support Them!

Visit MontgomeryParksFoundation.org to learn more.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Park Police – Emergency	301-949-3010
Visitor Center	301-528-3480
Accessibility Information	301-495-2595
TTY	301-495-1331

PARK REGULATIONS

- Park in designated areas only.
- **Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.**
- Pets must be kept on a leash.
- Buses require parking permits and are not allowed in the park on Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays.
- **Swimming and wading in the lake is prohibited.**
- No motorized vehicles on trails.
- For a complete list of park regulations contact the Park Permit Office or visit ParkPermits.org.



Black Hill Nature Programs encourages you to follow Leave No Trace ethics as a way to maintain a healthy environment for the wildlife that live here. Please do not litter. If you see

floating debris or trash along the shore, be a good steward and pick it up. Please do not pick flowers or plants. This disturbs habitat and denies other visitors an opportunity to see the beauty the park has to offer. The member-driven Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics teaches people how to enjoy the outdoors responsibly. This copyrighted information has been reprinted with permission from the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics:

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