C&O Canal Project Updates
By Stephanie Spencer

The following updates are for projects that were reported in *Along the Towpath* in 2018.

**Towpath Resurfacing and the Towpath Master Plan**

Towpath resurfacing efforts throughout the park are ongoing, by both park staff and construction companies. The contractor resurfaced a 5-mile section of towpath between Edwards Ferry (Mile 30.8) and Whites Ferry (Mile 35.5) with AASHTO #10 surface material. Currently, the contractor is resurfacing a 17-mile section between Brunswick (Mile 55) and Shepherdstown (Mile 72). Horse traffic is prohibited on the new surface until the surface has hardened and the signage is removed. This towpath section is expected to be complete by fall of 2019, and an 18-mile stretch of towpath will be resurfaced in 2020.

National Park Service staff are diligently working to repair much of the 2018 flood damage and towpath areas not covered under the construction projects. Since August of 2017, park staff have rehabilitated around 32 miles of towpath between Licking Creek Aqueduct (Mile 116.04) and Dam 4 (Mile 84.4).

*Refer to the June, 2018 issue for the original article.*

**Culvert 82 Bypass**

In May 2018, historic Culvert 82 (Mile 52.5) washed away during a flood event. One year has passed since the event, and crossing solutions remain underway. Near the end of 2018, National Park Service staff attempted an installation of a temporary bridge across Little Catoctin Creek. Due to frequent rain and high water levels, the bridge materials were washed away and the efforts ceased. Currently, the C&O Canal is waiting on permits in order to begin a temporary, low-water crossing. Frequent rains and flash flooding in the creek prevent the park from putting in the temporary crossing, due to high water levels. The area is routinely flooded, causing low-water crossing efforts to be temporary and expendable. The temporary crossing will remain in place until a permanent solution, in the form of a new towpath bridge, is installed. The permanent bridge is expected to be in place by the end of 2019.

*Refer to the September, 2018 issue for the original article. Details of a bypass shuttle are posted on page 3 of this issue.*

**Repair Watered Structures Locks 5-22**

Since December 2017, work has continued to progress on the $7.4 million “Repair to Various Watered Structures between Locks 5-22” project, in Montgomery County, Md. The purpose of the project is to improve several locks, waste weirs, bridges, and other water control structures within one of the most popular segments of the C&O Canal. These improvements will help the park’s historic structures withstand impacts from Potomac River floods and make the features easier to maintain. Currently, there are no detours in effect for this project. In May 2019, the construction crews re-opened the towpath at the last remaining detour at Rock Run (Mile 8.93). A new detour will go into effect at Lock 19 (Mile 14.17) in the near future.

With over 90% of the contract work completed, crews are currently installing timber lock gates and miter sills, raised steps against which the lock gates shut, at Locks 17, 18, and 19. Anticipated future work includes stabilizing a failed stone wall just downstream of Lock 19, which supports the towpath, and stabilizing a failing radius wall on historic Lock 17. Construction is currently anticipated to be completed in summer of 2019.

*Refer to the December, 2018 issue for the original article.*