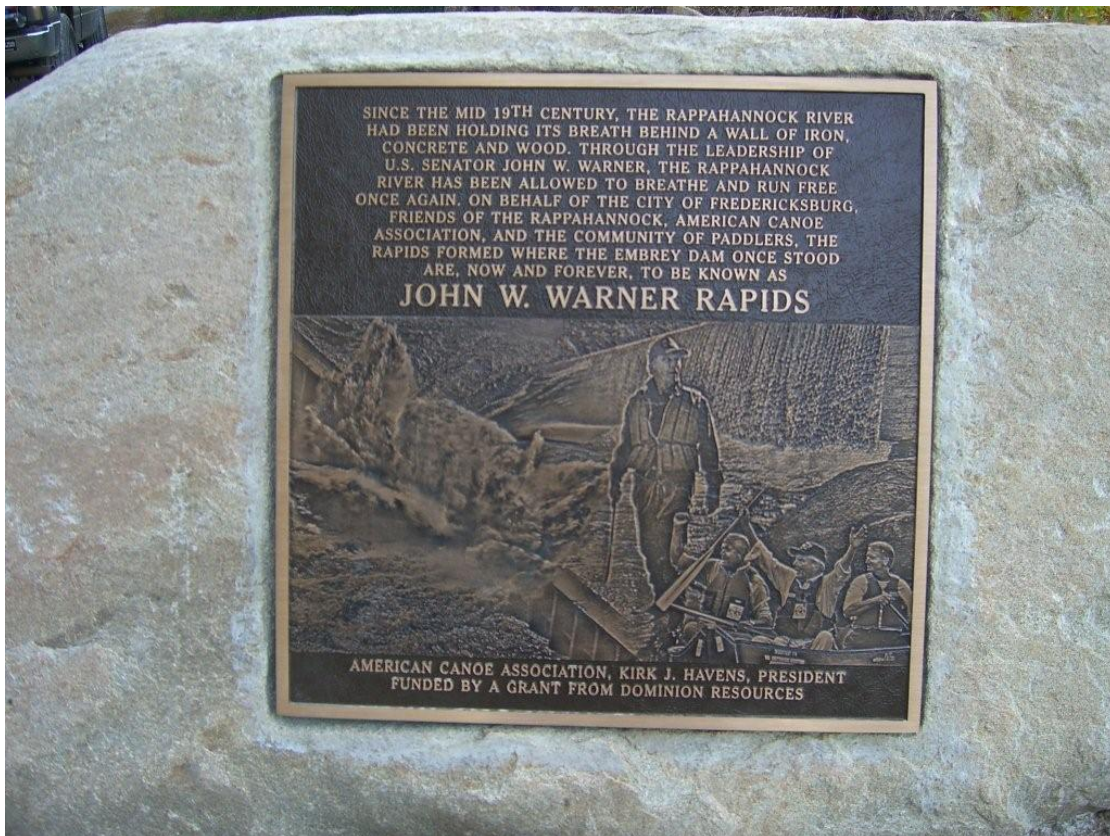


Dedication of the "John W. Warner Rapids" on the Rappahannock River Fredericksburg, Virginia

On 1 November 2008, Senator John W. Warner was presented with a bronze plaque that has been affixed to a permanent monument along the banks of the Rappahannock River at the rapids formed by the remnants of the dam denoting "John W. Warner Rapids".



General Location

Rappahannock River, downstream from Interstate 95, at former location of Embrey Dam.

Precise Location

Latitude 077.4900 degrees (77o 29' 24") by Longitude 38.3225 degrees (38o 19'21") and the UTM coordinates for the center of John W. Warner Rapids are E-0282350 and N-4244550).

The Rappahannock River in Virginia flows over 180 miles from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Chesapeake Bay. At historic Fredericksburg, founded in 1728

along the river's fall line, the Rappahannock was blocked by a wooden crib dam built in 1853 and a 22-foot high concrete dam built in 1910.

Until the 1960s the dam was used to generate hydroelectric power, and until 2000 the dam was used to divert water into a canal as a raw water source for the city. In the 1990s, the city began to develop a new regional water supply; and it was determined that the water facility connected to the dam could be closed.

Funding to remove the dam was a significant hurdle. The City sought support from the federal government and found a strong advocate in Senator John W. Warner. In the mid 1990s, the local river conservation group, Friends of the Rappahannock, invited Senator Warner to a discussion about the removal of the dam. After discussion and a paddle to the site, Senator Warner pledged that if the group could demonstrate community consensus regarding the dam's removal, he would personally support the effort.

Senator Warner visited the river on several occasions to fish and to help move migrating fish by bucket to the upstream side of the dam. Senator Warner arranged for a \$100,000 dam removal feasibility study and later led the effort to appropriate \$10 million to implement removal, waiving the normal non-federal matching requirement.

On 23 February 2004, on Senator Warner's signal, 600 pounds of explosives set by the Army and Air Force Reserves opened a 130-foot breach in Embrey Dam, setting the Rappahannock River to flow free for the first time since 1853. By reopening the Rappahannock River, more than 1,300 river and stream miles immediately became available to migratory fish in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.



On 30 July 2005, the Friends of the Rappahannock and the City of Fredericksburg honored Senator Warner in a "Rappahannock River Running Free" celebration. The American Canoe Association, established in 1880 and the nation's oldest and largest canoe, kayak, and rafting organization, stated: "For over 150 years the Rappahannock River has been holding its breath behind a wall of iron, concrete, and wood. US Senator John W. Warner's efforts have allowed the Rappahannock River to breathe free once again."

MEDIA GENERAL NEWS SERVICE

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A portion of the Rappahannock River will be named after Sen. John Warner, R-Va., under a bill President Bush signed into law Tuesday.

Warner, 81, who is retiring in January, attended a small signing ceremony in the Oval Office with members of his family.

The bill (S. 3550) designates part of the river near the former Embrey Dam in Fredericksburg, Va. as the "John W. Warner Rapids."

"As a canoeist and fisherman, Sen. Warner takes particular pride in having led the efforts to open the Rappahannock River. Today's signing creates a fitting legacy for a great Virginian," said Rob Wittman, R-1st, who introduced a bill in the House to rename the section of river in honor of Warner's five terms in office.



As Senator John W. Warner looks on President George W. Bush signs into law the S. 3550, The John W. Warner Rapids bill, Tuesday, Oct. 14, in the Oval Office at the White House. In honor of Senator Warner, the bill will designate a portion of the Rappahannock River in Virginia as the "John W. Warner Rapids."

The Senator is joined by from left, Virginia Warner, daughter, Jeanne Warner, wife, Shannon Warner, daughter-in-law, and his son John Warner.

In appreciation of his efforts, the community of paddlers and river users has bestowed upon him their highest honor. So, let it be known, on behalf of the City of Fredericksburg, the Friends of the Rappahannock, the American Canoe Association, and the community of paddlers, that the new rapids formed at the removal of the dam be known, now and forever, and recorded on all maps, as 'John W. Warner Rapids' and may all your travels through be smooth."

