

# *Bristol Blueways*



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# *Our Story*

- *A Blueways Primer*
- *Why do we care and why did we do it?*
- *What did we create, and how did we do it?*
- *Impact so far*

# What are Blueways?

- *A water trail system, primarily through rivers and estuaries. From the RI Blueways Alliance:*
  - *The trails link Rhode Island's rivers, lakes and ponds to Narragansett Bay and to the rivers in Massachusetts that flow into the Bay. They are used to promote safety, conservation, recreation and economic development.*
- *More than 3 dozen trails in RI*
- *Funded by public/private (primarily non-profit) orgs*
- *The Blueways “trail maps” are .pdf’s accompanied by descriptive text and information*
- *You can find the RI Blueways on: [www.exploreri.org](http://www.exploreri.org)*
  - *Interactive maps, Downloadable Water Trail maps, etc.*

## *Why do we care in Bristol?*

- *Bristol has a vibrant recreational and tourism economy*
  - *We are looking for new ways to “grow the pie” – give folks new reasons to visit*
    - *Shops and restaurants, cultural sites, environment/natural resources*
- ***We’re a darn peninsula for Pete’s sake!***
  - *Leveraging our natural resources for our residents and as an econ. development engine is a no brainer*

# *What did we create?*

➤ *3 “trails” in/around Bristol:*

➤ *East (Mt. Hope Bay)*



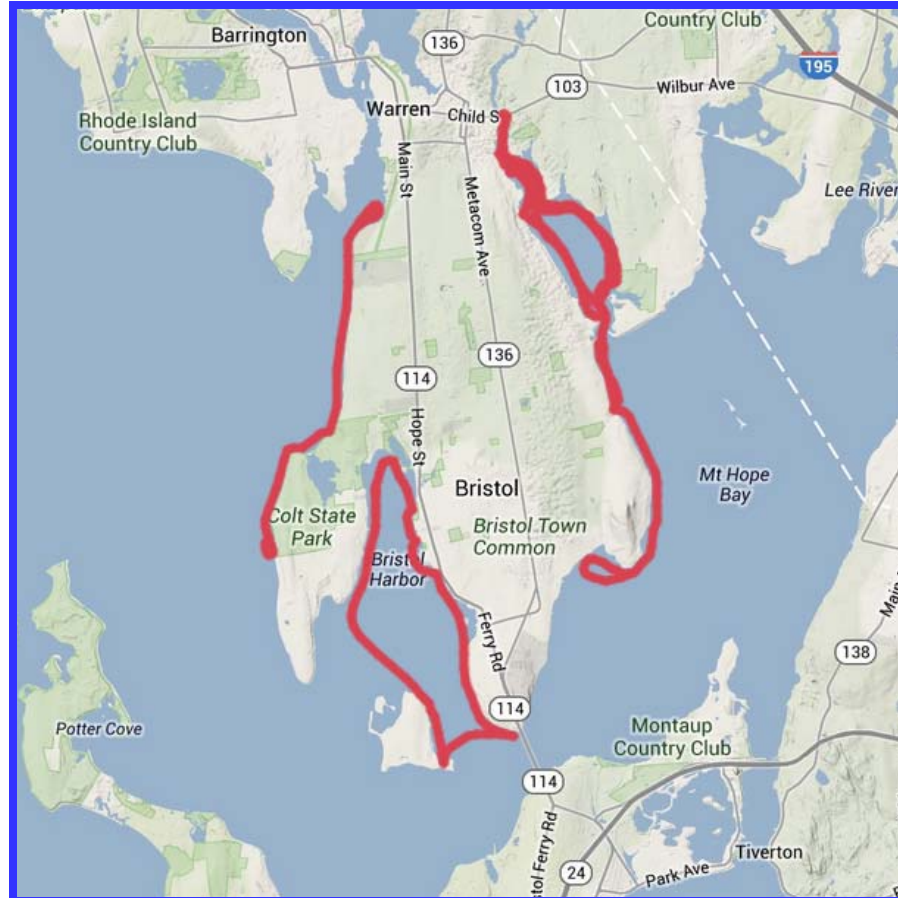
➤ *Bristol Harbor*



➤ *West (Narragansett Bay)*



# *Our Trails*



## *How'd we do it?*

- *Conservation Commission got buy-in from Town Planning Dept.*
- *We created a 3 person core group to write descriptions, create maps, take pics*
  - *Graphic designer*
  - *Town GIS Manager (not our town!)*
  - *Me*
- *Tight interlock/working relationship with the RI Blueways Alliance*

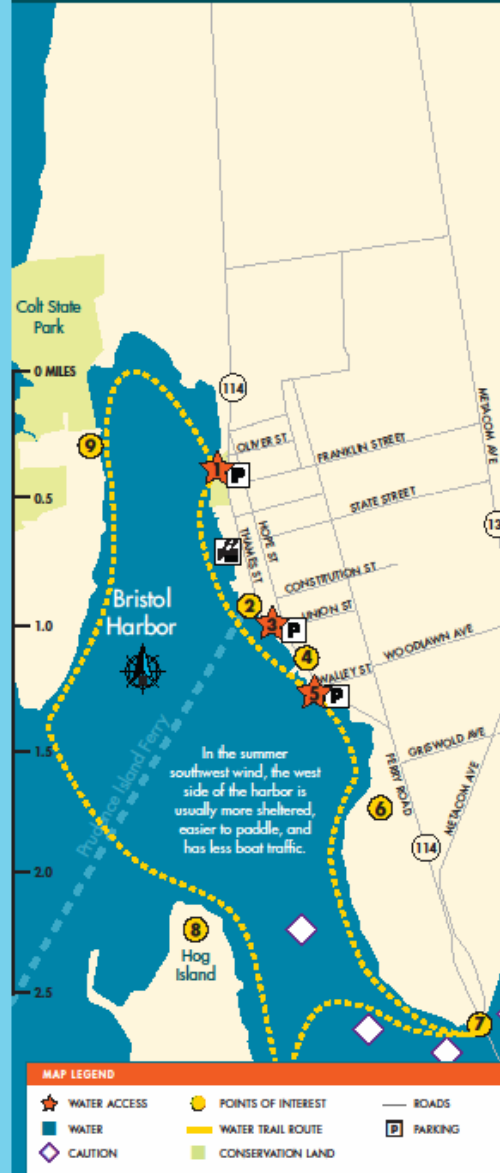
## *“How Else’d We Do It?”*

- *We looked for optimal put in spots and outlined suggested paddling routes*
  - *Good parking, launching and restroom facilities*
  - *Historical points of interest*
  - *Museums*
  - *Restaurants*
  - *Shopping*
  - *Natural habitats*



# F'rinstance: The Harbor Map

## BRISTOL, RHODE ISLAND: BRISTOL HARBOR TOURS



LEVEL	Beginning to experienced
HARBOR MILES	2-4 miles
TIME	1-4 hours
DESCRIPTION	Flat, occasionally choppy with white caps, tidal currents, weather dependent, southwesterly winds in the afternoons
SCENERY	Historic Downtown Bristol Harbor

### BRISTOL HARBOR TOURS

Independence Park ★ at the north end of Thames Street between Oliver and Franklin Streets, is a good starting point for kayakers going out into Bristol Harbor. There is parking for at least 15 cars. The boat ramp here is a launch site for large and small boats and the area can be very busy in the summer. This launching area is at the end of the Bristol Providence Bike Path and is near many excellent restaurants.

Paddling south from Independence Park will take you along the shoreline of Bristol's historic waterfront passing docks, restaurants, churches, mill buildings, condos, mansions and museums including the Herreshoff Marine Museum ● located a mile south of the park. You will also pass the Prudence Island Ferry Dock ●, the great lawn of Blithewold Mansion ● and eventually arrive under the Mount Hope Bridge ●. Warning: As you head south of Walley Street Beach ★ past Blithewold towards Mount Hope Bridge the winds often pick up, and this combined with stronger tidal currents can make for challenging paddling conditions, including steep, choppy waves.

Hog Island ● is a small island south of Independence Park with summer cottages owned by long time Rhode Island families. Hog Island has no electricity or ferry service. It is best to go to Hog and back in the morning, before the southwesterly winds pick up in the afternoon. Please be respectful of private property and be careful not to disturb migratory nesting birds in the salt marshes (and beaches) especially from May through July.

Traveling north from Independence Park will take you to the head of the harbor. If you follow the curve of the shoreline you will begin turning south and will pass Bristol Marine. The Bristol Yacht Club ● and many beautiful homes.

Union Street Beach ★ is located at the end of Union Street off Hope Street (Route 114) and has parking for four cars. There is a 40' right of way with a small grassy area, benches and dinghy racks that leads to a concrete walking ramp to the beach. The beach is sand and gravel. There is no boat ramp.

Walley Street Beach ★ is located at the extension of Walley Street, off Hope Street (Route 114) and has parking for four cars. The site is a thirty yard wide lawn contained by a seawall sloping down to a set of narrow stone steps that lead to the water. There is no boat ramp but plenty of places to picnic and sunbath with a fabulous view of the harbor. This is a windy site. Kite and wind surfers often launch from this area.

📍 Bristol Kayak Center, 251 Thames St, (401) 245-5100.

# So Far

- **Lots of “Buzz” around town**
  - **Front page article in “East Bay” section of the Bristol Phoenix**



- **Local paddlers talking about “new places” to kayak**
- **Town website has links to all of our maps (.pdf’s)**
- **Explore Bristol ([explorebristolri.com](http://explorebristolri.com)) focus**
  - **“Entry point” for folks looking to come to Bristol**
    - **Web site includes versions of each of our trail maps**
    - **Prominent presence in materials and presentations**
- **Find us!**
  - **[www.bristolri.us](http://www.bristolri.us)**
  - **[www.explorei.org](http://www.explorei.org)**



*Thank You!!*

