



[Great Allegheny Passage \(GAP\) Ride](#)

Day 4:

Little Orleans, MD to Williamsport, MD (41 miles)

This morning, we had a superb breakfast at the [Town Hill B & B](#) before getting back on the C&O Canal towpath at the Little Orleans trailhead at 9:00 a.m.

Our first leg was 16 miles via the C&O and [Western Maryland Rail Trail \(WMRT\)](#) which is paved. It parallels the C&O Canal for 22.5 miles and passes through Hancock.

The canal runs along the Potomac River for much of the day. While there's not much water in the canal, and some of it belongs to the forest, it's still a beautiful ride. The towpath isn't paved – it's clay and crushed stone – and is a little rough. The entire path is in the [C&O Canal National Historic Park](#). An interesting note: hikers and bikers on the route must yield the right of way to horses and mules.

We reached Hancock, MD at 11:00 a.m., about a half hour ahead of schedule, where we stopped to eat at [Buddy Lou's](#) and were back on the trail by 11:30 a.m. Hancock was an important transportation hub, which is why [Stonewall Jackson](#) attacked the town in 1862 so that he could control major transportation routes in the area. While he wasn't successful, it underscores the importance of the area to the war effort.

Shortly after getting back on the trail, we also passed [Fort Frederick State Park](#) which was the site of Maryland's defense during the French & Indian War. It was also used during the Civil War to provide protection to the C&O Canal.

The trail takes us through beautiful landscapes. We also biked past the [Lockhouse](#) which is no longer in use, but where you can stay overnight. The trail also passed the Dams trailhead where the [dam](#) that provided water for 22 miles of the canal is located. There's also a Spillway that had plenty of people fishing, and a short time later, the [Conococheague Aqueduct](#). It was the location of the Confederate efforts to disrupt canal operations.

At 3:15 p.m. we had reached the Williamsport marker on the C&O, and got off to head to our lodging, showers, dinner, and some down time for our fourth day. Williamsport sits on the banks of the Conococheague River where it joins the Potomac. We're about 100 miles outside of Washington, D.C., which also means that we have biked about 230 miles so far. This has been a great experience and we're all doing well on the trip – and Ed Quigley, our guide, has been absolutely amazing in pacing us, making sure we get where we need to go, and also serving as an unofficial tour guide providing lots of information on the history of the locations that we're biking through.

Signing off from Williamsport

