



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Making Connections: Roots of Prosperity in New York and Pennsylvania's Upper Delaware River Region

OCTOBER 2018

People who live in the Upper Delaware say this is a special place. Whether natives, long-time residents, newcomers or part-timers, what they mean by “special” is remarkably similar. Topping the list? Natural beauty, clean air and water, outdoor recreation, small, friendly communities—and the river.

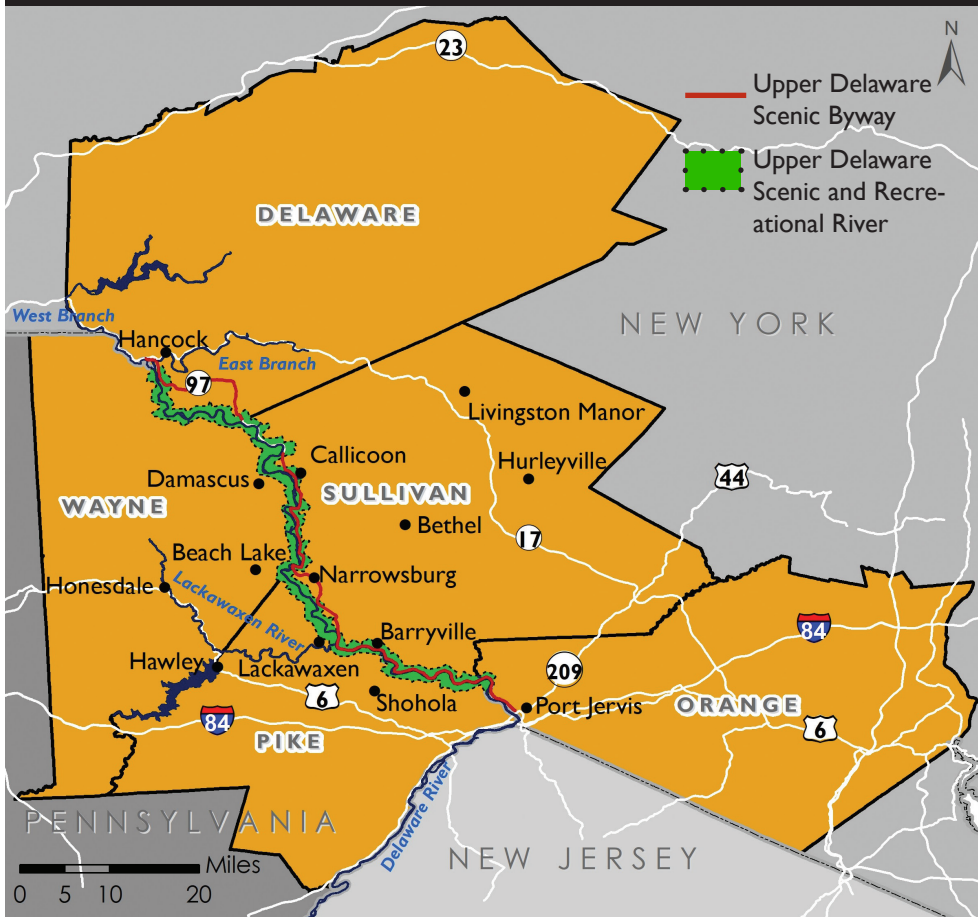
THE FREE-FLOWING RIVER

One of the last large, undammed rivers in the lower 48 states, the Delaware River flows freely 330 miles along its main stem from Hancock, New York, to the Atlantic Ocean at Delaware Bay.

Reservoirs impounding the river’s head-water streams provide about 60 percent of New York City-area residents’ water

supply. A robust watershed protection program avoids billions in filtration costs while releasing clean water into the river below. As it flows downstream, the Delaware remains among the cleanest rivers in the country, in no small part due to the Upper Delaware’s rural landscapes. The river is fed by tributary streams protected by forested lands and flows through a sparsely populated

Communities, Businesses and Organizations Featured in This Report
Five-County Upper Delaware River Region: Delaware, Sullivan and Orange (NY) and Wayne and Pike (PA)



IN THE REPORT — NY

Upper Delaware River Tailwaters Coalition
 Upper Delaware Scenic Byway

BARRYVILLE
 Barryville Farmers Market

CALLICOON
 Apple Pond Farm & Renewable Energy Education Center
 Callicoon Depot Committee
 Callicoon Farmers Market

HANCOCK
 Destination Hancock
 Friends of the Upper Delaware River
 Hancock Partners
 The Hancock Town Square

HURLEYVILLE
 Center for Discovery
 Hurleyville Makers Lab/Artisan Studios

LIVINGSTON MANOR
 Wild Roots Farm

NARROWSBURG
 Gorzynski Ornerly Farm
 Union Works

PORT JERVIS
 Port Jervis Watershed Trails

HAWLEY
 Downtown Hawley Partnership
 Settlers Hospitality Group
 Wayne-Pike Trails & Waterways Alliance

IN THE REPORT — NY & PA

Delaware Highlands Conservancy
 Delaware River Water Trail
 Scenic Wild Delaware River
 Upper Delaware Council
 Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

IN THE REPORT — PA

BEACH LAKE
 Green Leaf Consulting Services

BOYDS MILLS
 Highlights Foundation

DAMASCUS
 Willow Wisp Organic Farm

LACKAWAXEN
 NPS Upper Delaware Visitor Center

LAKE ARIEL
 Lacawac Sanctuary

HONESDALE
 The Anthill Farm
 Calkins Creamery/Highland Farm
 The Cooperage Project
 Fox Hill Farm
 Honesdale River Project
 Lackawaxen Food Hub
 Sawmill Cycles/NE Wilderness
 Stourbridge Project

SHOHOLA
 Robinson Saw Mill Works

region patchworked with farmlands, forests and small communities.

The Upper Delaware supports one of the country's best wild trout fisheries. A reservoir management plan updated in 2017¹ provides a strong framework for addressing competing water demands in the watershed, although unpredictable water releases and temperature spikes threatening the health of this cold water fishery are yet to be resolved.

The river is integral to the quality of life in this region—a place of recreation for locals and visitors, and a resource for businesses. Along 73 miles of the river's length, National Park Service staff at the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River and community partners work in a unique collaboration to manage the river corridor and provide recreational access to NPS-managed sites for a quarter million visitors annually.

Within an easy drive of New York City and Philadelphia, the Upper Delaware has long attracted summer visitors and seasonal residents. In four of the five counties in the region, seasonal and recreational homes account for about a third of all housing units.²

A REAL PLACE

Part of the Upper Delaware's appeal is that this is a real place where people live and work. The economy has changed, and is changing still. Long-term declines in manufacturing, agriculture, timber and mining mirror U.S. and global trends, as does the rise of sectors linked to provision of services. Today, government, retail trade, health care and social services account for more than 40 percent of the region's jobs.³

Traditional industries like timber and wood products manufacturing and agriculture play a small part in the area's economy, yet are essential to its character. They exert a powerful influence on the area's natural beauty and rural feel.

THE NEW RESOURCE ECONOMY

Most community and business leaders interviewed for this report believe these

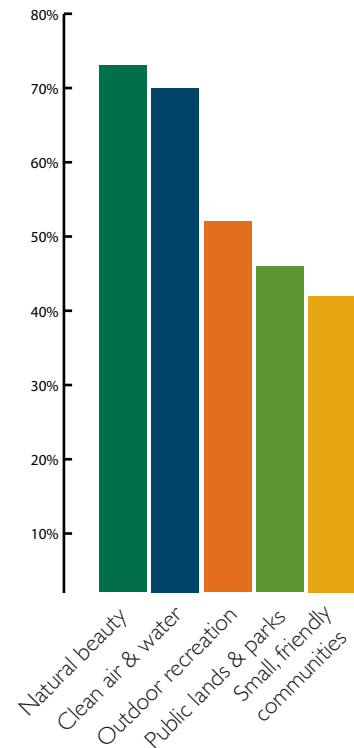
traditional backbones of the region's identity will be part of its future. The caveat? They must operate compatibly with an emerging economy that depends differently on the area's natural resources and rural landscapes. These interviewees identified communities, entrepreneurs, business owners, government and civic leaders, and youth who are building economic vitality on the shoulders of these unique assets.

This *Making Connections* report celebrates this emerging economy through stories from Upper Delaware river communities from Hancock to Port Jervis, and further away in the watershed where the river's influence is still felt. It introduces some of agriculture's new faces and explores how some propose to reinvigorate the region's forest products industry. And it gives voice to Upper Delaware residents as they ponder future challenges and opportunities.

These stories paint a picture of communities and businesses leading the way to a locally driven economy that is rooted in and sustains a remarkable, nationally significant river, working forests and farms, open spaces and genuine neighborliness. Together, they are giving rise to a new vision of long-term prosperity in the Upper Delaware River region.

Residents report natural assets are top attractors

190 Upper Delaware residents responded to our spring 2018 survey. Top "very important" factors in decisions to move to, do business in, or stay in this area.



Recommendations

Thinking Forward

1. Update the Upper Delaware River Land and Water Use Guidelines to meet new challenges.
2. Invest in the river's long-term ecological vitality and compatible economic activities including low-impact recreation.
3. Build and invest in local food systems.
4. Develop and market a regional brand.
5. Curate stories, experiences and destinations for visitors.
6. Support and use collaborative forums.
7. Pay attention to affordable, high-quality housing.

DOWNLOAD THE REPORT www.NPCA.org/upperdelaware