

THE
FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: DEWA

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DEWA) exists to provide outdoor recreation opportunities while conserving the natural, cultural and scenic resources of the park. In so doing, we work cooperatively with surrounding communities and the public to achieve the conservation goals of the Delaware River region. The park is located within two states, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and falls within three separate Congressional districts, five counties and twenty-two townships.

Significant park resources include: Delaware River waters of exceptional quality, the largest free-flowing river on the Eastern Seaboard, and outstanding recreational and scenic opportunities; open spaces that, combined with other regional protection and preservation initiatives, create a multi-state greenway corridor preserving essential habitat for the sustained health of plant and animal communities; and the most significant concentration and diversity of known archeological resources, from prehistoric to historic, in the Northeastern United States as well as outstanding examples of Native American and European settlement manifested by diverse cultural landscapes.

The counties surrounding the park are high among the fastest-growing counties in their respective states. New residents to this area, as well as day users, are primarily from the New York - Philadelphia urban corridor and bring a diverse mix of cultural, socio-economic and lifestyle perspectives to what has long been a rural resort and small town resource based milieu. Welcoming over five million visitors annually, DEWA is favorably situated to provide a "stepping-stone" park experience. We will offer a broad spectrum of natural, cultural, recreational and educational opportunities in collaboration with numerous land management agencies abutting the park, and partners operating inside and outside the boundary.

We will provide sustainable climate- and user-friendly infrastructure, assuring minimal impact on the park's natural and cultural resources, and will eliminate facilities not complementary to the mission.

The park administers approximately 63,000 acres within the nearly 70,000 acre boundary. Undeveloped privately owned lands within the park boundary represent a large potential risk to our ability to effectively manage adjacent park lands and achieve park goals. We will acquire title or protective easements on such parcels as they become available.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

John J. Donahue

Site: DEWA

STEWARDSHIP

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

We will complete construction of the Joseph McDade Recreational Trail, a scenic bicycling and walking trail which runs alongside the Delaware River for 37 miles. A volunteer group will be established to assist park staff with trail maintenance, monitoring of visitor activities on the trail, and monitoring of associated impacts on natural resources.

A trails system will be completed near the recently-acquired Cliff Park Inn, with substantial cooperation from the Inn's operator.

Rehabilitation of the historic George Childs Park area will be completed, with significant improvements to visitor facilities. Visitors will be able to safely enjoy the scenic waterfalls, the historic mill scene, and a restored and thriving hemlock glen ecosystem.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DEWA

ENVIRONMENT

Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives, as measured by surveys.

The Park will take a leadership role in developing and implementing a multi-jurisdictional transportation system serving visitors to the park and adjacent communities. Ultimately, this system will form a loop on both the New Jersey and Pennsylvania sides of the river, and will link resorts to local communities and attractions as well as destinations and trailheads within the park.

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Site: DEWA

ENVIRONMENT

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Partners occupying park facilities and/or doing business within the park will expand their capacity to present programs and activities promoting environmental stewardship. Such partners include the Pocono Environmental Education Center, the YMCA's Camp Ken-Etiwa-Pec, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Peters Valley Craft Center, the Millbrook Village Society, the Student Conservation Association, Cliff Park Inn, the Dingman's Campground and many others.

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Site: DEWA

EDUCATION

Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

DEWA will follow up on the establishment of the first Junior Ranger program on the Appalachian Trail with similar efforts on the newly-established Delaware River National Recreational Trail.

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