

Upper Delaware

Scenic and Recreational River
New York/Pennsylvania

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

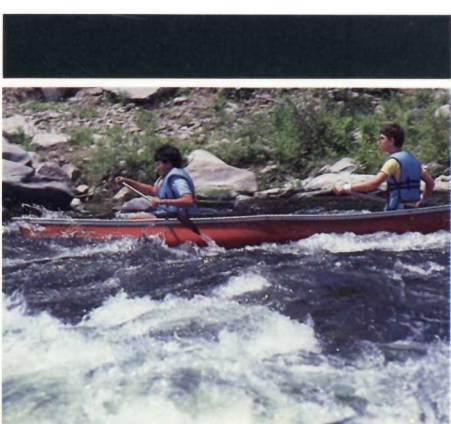
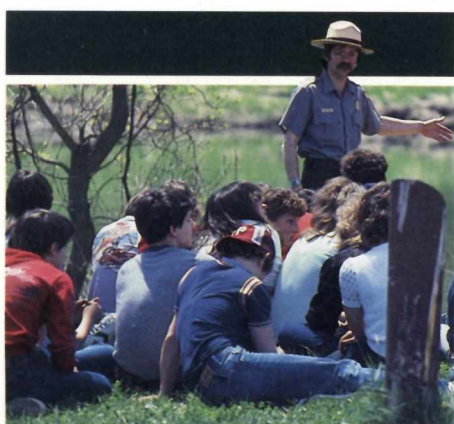
Official Map and Guide



The Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River is 73 miles of a clear, free-flowing stream winding its way through a valley of swiftly changing scenery. Old buildings, remains of a once busy canal, and the oldest existing wire suspension bridge in the United States are just some of the sights that you will find in the river valley. Throughout the year canoeists, rafters, fishermen,

and other outdoors lovers take advantage of all the recreation opportunities on the river. The Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River is a working partnership of private individuals and local, state, and federal governments. These groups are working together with the National Park Service toward the goal of preserving the river, its environment, and the communities in the valley. National

Park Service rangers provide information to the public at kiosks located at the public boat launching sites on both the Pennsylvania and New York shores along the river. They also enforce applicable regulations on the river. This is the Upper Delaware: a cooperative venture in preserving the scenic, historic, and recreational features of one of this country's free-flowing rivers.



On the River

Boating Whether it's a canoe, a raft, a kayak, or an inner tube, the best way to see the Upper Delaware and to get to know it is to be on the river. Most of the river along its 73 miles is a Class I stream in terms of difficulty, which means "moving water with a few riffles and small waves; few or no obstructions." One of the more difficult spots along the river is Skinner's Falls. You should scout this rapids from shore before attempting passage. The National Park Service River Safety Maps diagram two possible courses through the many chutes at Skinner's Falls. The maps are available at information kiosks along the river. The most important thing to remember about canoeing is to *always wear a life jacket*. During the cold weather months—November through May—when the river water is coldest, wear a wet suit or at least woolen clothing to guard against hypothermia. If you plan to camp overnight, get permission from the property owner first or make reservations at an established commercial campground; almost all land along the river is privately owned and trespass laws are enforced by local authorities.

Swimming Many people enjoy swimming or wading in the river. All swimmers must be aware of the river's swift currents and sudden drop-offs. The Delaware's bottom can be

rocky or muddy, shallow or deep. Never swim alone. And wear proper footgear, such as sneakers, to protect your feet.

Fishing The Upper Delaware has long been a popular stream for casual and serious fishermen alike. Brown and rainbow trout, smallmouth bass, walleye, whitesuckers, fallfish, and American eels are abundant. During late spring, American shad spawn in the Upper Delaware. A New York or Pennsylvania fishing license is required.

Eel Weirs If you think that you've seen a ski jump in the middle of the Delaware, take another look. What you are actually seeing is an eel weir, a device for trapping eels. Eels are born in the Sargasso Sea, far out in the Atlantic. After their first year they head for the rivers flowing into the ocean. The males remain at the river mouths while the females swim up the stream to mature. After about seven years they return to the ocean where they spawn and die. It is at this downstream migration, usually in the late summer and fall, that the weirs come into play. They are made of two stone walls that form a downstream vee. At the point of the vee is a wooden trap that catches the eels, and they remain there until removed by the fisherman who owns the weir.

Birds If you keep a sharp lookout, you

may see some rare birds, such as the bald eagle, osprey, great egret, or great blue heron. More common are turkey vultures, hawks, and owls ranging in size from the great horned owl to the tiny screech owl. The river itself does not provide much nesting cover for waterfowl, but you may see mergansers as well as the occasional black, teal, mallard, goldeneye, bufflehead, and wood ducks. Migrating Canada geese are also occasionally spotted. The most common local game bird, however, is the wild turkey, occasionally seen feeding in the fields.

Wildlife The river and its banks are the feeding grounds for many animals. Muskrat, mink, raccoon, beaver, and snapping turtle are the most common. Be especially alert for the raccoon who likes to scavenge food from unwary travelers. At dawn and dusk watch carefully for whitetail deer crossing the area's roadways. Be wary of the striped skunk and porcupine; an encounter with either one can make you wish you had stayed home. A variety of snakes is found in the river valley, though all but the timber rattlesnake and copperhead are non-poisonous. A special treat is sighting one of the region's black bears. Enjoy them from a safe distance.



Roebling's Aqueduct

Two important local industries with conflicting needs brought about the construction of the Roebling Aqueduct. Coal from Pennsylvania's northeastern mountains went to New York City via the Delaware & Hudson Canal, built in the 1820s. Timber from throughout the valley was floated down the river to the shipyards and industries of Philadelphia and Trenton.

Where the canal boats crossed the Delaware River from Lackawaxen, Pa., to Minisink Ford, N.Y., they often ran into rafts of timber coming downriver. Inevitably there were collisions, fistfights, claims, and counterclaims. Finally, in 1847, the canal directors hired John Augustus Roebling to build an aqueduct that would



carry their canal over the river. Roebling had built two suspension spans in western Pennsylvania, and the chief engineer of the canal was impressed with them. Such a scheme meant that fewer piers would be needed, thus presenting fewer impediments to the log rafts. The aqueduct over the Delaware—shown above in a drawing from the

Library of Congress—was the first and largest of four aqueducts. It was ready when the canal opened in April for the 1848 season and remained in use until 1898, when the canal closed. The aqueducts over the Lackawaxen, Neversink, and Rondout Creek were abandoned and later demolished.

The Delaware Aqueduct, however, was purchased and turned into a highway toll bridge. Today it is the oldest extant wire suspension bridge in the United States, a forerunner of the Brooklyn Bridge that Roebling and his son were to build in the 1880s.

About Your Visit

To ensure a safe and enjoyable trip on the Upper Delaware, the National Park Service strongly recommends that all river users observe these rules and regulations:

River Safety Always wear a properly fitted Coast Guard approved life preserver. There is never a time on the river when it is advisable to be without one; it will do you no good unless you are wearing it. Guard against hypothermia by wearing protective clothing when the water is cold. Even when the air temperature is warm in late spring, the water is still frigid. Loss of body heat is 25 times greater in cold water than in air of the same temperature, so wear a wet suit or clothing made of wool or polypropylene. If you go on the river, you should know how to swim. Never canoe alone. A minimum of 3 canoes is recommended with one serving as the lead canoe and another as the sweep or drag canoe. Keep the canoe behind you in view and do not ride the tail of the canoe in

front of you. If you capsize while canoeing, keep upstream from the craft. A swamped canoe in a current of 3 mph is held against a rock by a force of more than a ton. This is like putting the paddler in a vise between the rocks and the canoe. Stay with your canoe unless common sense shows that conditions are worsening. Keep your feet pointed downstream and near the surface to cushion yourself against large rocks and to prevent a foot or leg from getting caught on a submerged branch or caught between two rocks. A throw line and a first aid kit are recommended. Avoid drinking alcoholic beverages before and during boating. Alcohol consumption and drug abuse have contributed to many drownings. Bring a plastic bag with you to carry out your trash and tie it into the boat. Guard against sunburn by using sunscreen lotions and appropriate clothing.

River Conditions Information Before you go out onto the river, find out what to expect

by calling the River Conditions Information Line: 914-252-7100. This recorded message is updated daily with reports of air and water temperatures, the height of the river, and local weather conditions. The extended forecast and advice on appropriate clothing and safety conditions are also given.

Outfitters Along the Upper Delaware are a number of canoe liveries, boat rentals, and campgrounds that are privately owned. Almost all of them are open from May through October, but the times vary greatly.

National Park Service For more information write or contact: Superintendent, Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, P.O. Box C, Narrowsburg, NY 12764.

Travelers Information Motorists traveling on N.Y. 97 near Sparrowbush, N.Y., can get general park information about the Upper Delaware by tuning their radios at AM 1610.

The Zane Grey Museum

The one-time residence of Zane Grey, novelist of the American West, is located on the banks of the Upper Delaware River in Lackawaxen, Pa. As a young, aspiring writer, Grey left a dental practice in New York City and moved to Lackawaxen in 1905. That same year he married, and, encouraged by his wife, devoted all his time to writing. He struggled through some lean years until finally achieving success and fame with the publication of *Riders of the Purple Sage* in 1912, one of the most widely-sold novels about the American West.

In 1914, Grey bought his brother Romer's home in Lackawaxen. Twice in four years Grey built additions to the house to provide private space away from his family where he could do research and write. Today, three of these rooms house the museum that is a collection of Zane Grey memorabilia, including the Morris chair in which he sat and wrote many of his novels.

Grey relocated his family to California in 1918. He subsequently became the most successful

novelist of his time and is considered by some to be the father of the western novel. Grey was also world-renowned for his skill as a fisherman and as an outdoorsman. He held several saltwater fishing records.

For information about the days and hours that the museum is open, call 717-685-4871.



Zane Grey



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Access This unit of the Wild and Scenic River System is accessible from both the New York and Philadelphia metropolitan areas on good highways. To get to the southern reaches of the Scenic and Recreational River N.Y. 17 and I-84 provide ready access. For the northern portion, N.Y. 17 and I-81 are the standard routes. N.Y. 97 closely follows the New York shore of the river.

Facilities and Accommodations Most of the towns along the river are small, with a limited variety of basic services. Port Jervis, Honesdale, Milford, and Monticello are the major population centers near the river with the greatest variety of services to choose from. Local chambers of commerce can provide more detailed information.

All land along the river is privately owned. Respect the owners' rights. Do not trespass. National Park Service jurisdiction is confined to the river itself, information stations, the headquarters area, district offices, the Zane Grey Museum, and the Roebling Bridge.

- Rapids
 - State Forest or Game Land
 - River mileage
- Mile zero is at the river's mouth.

- Campground (All are privately owned.)
- Boat launch
- Canoe launch

- Ranger station
- Picnic area
- Public telephone
- Public restrooms

