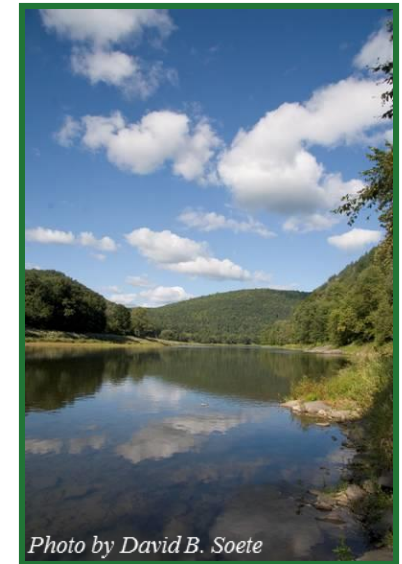


# An Overview of the Delaware River

## A Tour of the River from the Mountains to the Sea

Doane Academy  
Burlington, N.J.

Kate Schmidt, DRBC  
Communications Specialist  
January 16, 2019



*Photo by David B. Soete*



# Presentation Outline

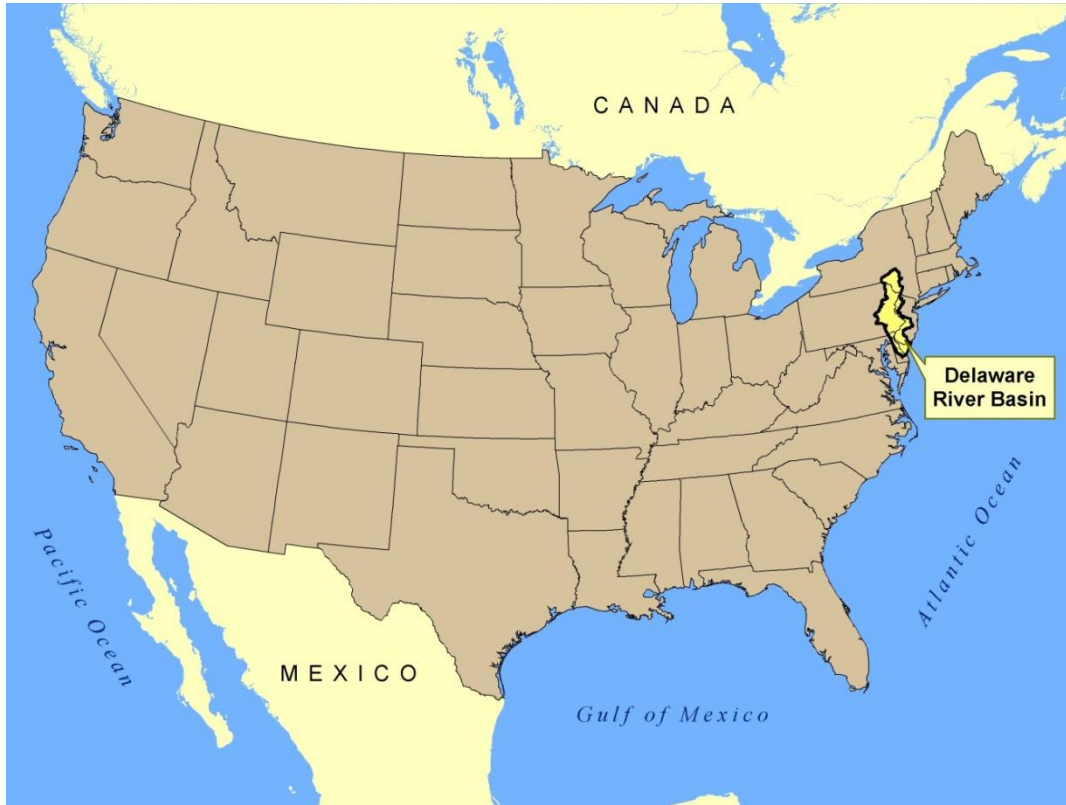
- \* Overview of the Delaware River
- \* The Delaware River Basin Commission
- \* 5 Takeaways
- \* Q and A



Delaware River Basin Commission

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# Delaware River Fast Facts



- Flows 330 miles from NYS to the Delaware Bay where it meets the Atlantic Ocean
  - Forms an interstate boundary its entire length; basin includes portions of NY, PA, NJ, and DE
  - 216 tributary streams
  - Longest undammed U.S. river east of the Mississippi (dams are located on tributaries, not on the main stem)
- 
- Drains 13, 539 mi<sup>2</sup> or 0.35% of the continental U.S. land area
  - Roughly 13.5 million people (~ 4% of the U.S. population) rely on the waters of the basin (8+ million live in the DRB)
  - National Wild and Scenic River: 6 sections

# What is a Watershed?



(Video courtesy of caringforourwatersheds.com:  
[https://www.youtube.com/embed/K\\_o-jK6vWIo](https://www.youtube.com/embed/K_o-jK6vWIo))

# Where does the Delaware River begin?



The Delaware River has an east branch and a west branch, both located in New York State.



# The East & West branches meet at Hancock, N.Y. to form the main stem Delaware River.



Photo: Dave Soete

# Upper Delaware River



- \* Begins at Hancock, N.Y. and flows 73 miles, forming the border between Pa. and N.Y.
- \* Known as the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, a unit of the National Park Service
- \* Designated part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Program.
- \* While a lot of this land is privately owned, this section of river is still heavily forested and not very developed.

# Upper Delaware River





# Narrowsburg, N.Y.



Photo: Dave Soete



Photo: Andy Smith

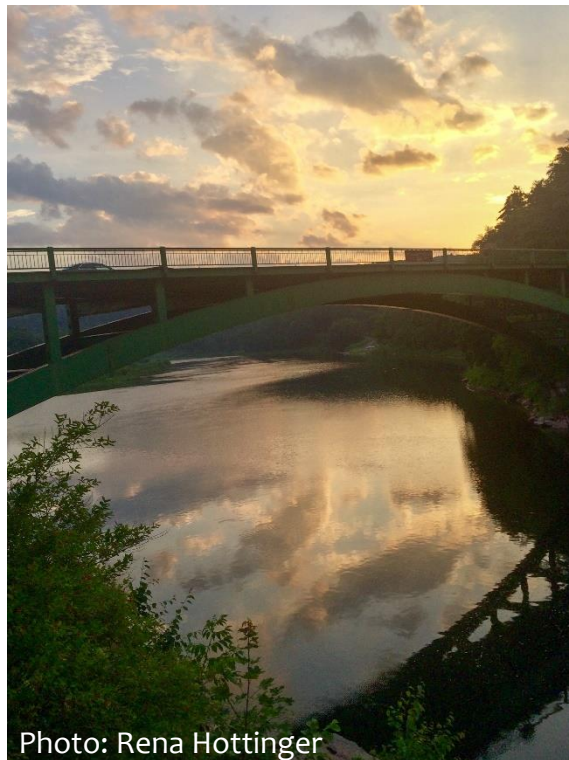


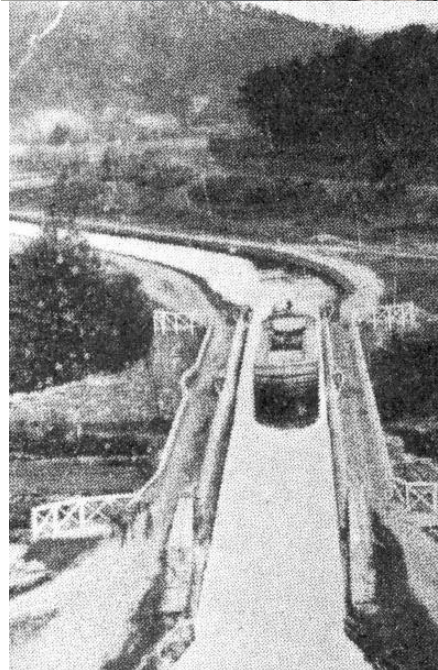
Photo: Rena Hottinger

*The “Big Eddy” at Narrowsburg, N.Y. -- The deepest (113 feet) spot on the main stem Delaware River.*

# Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct

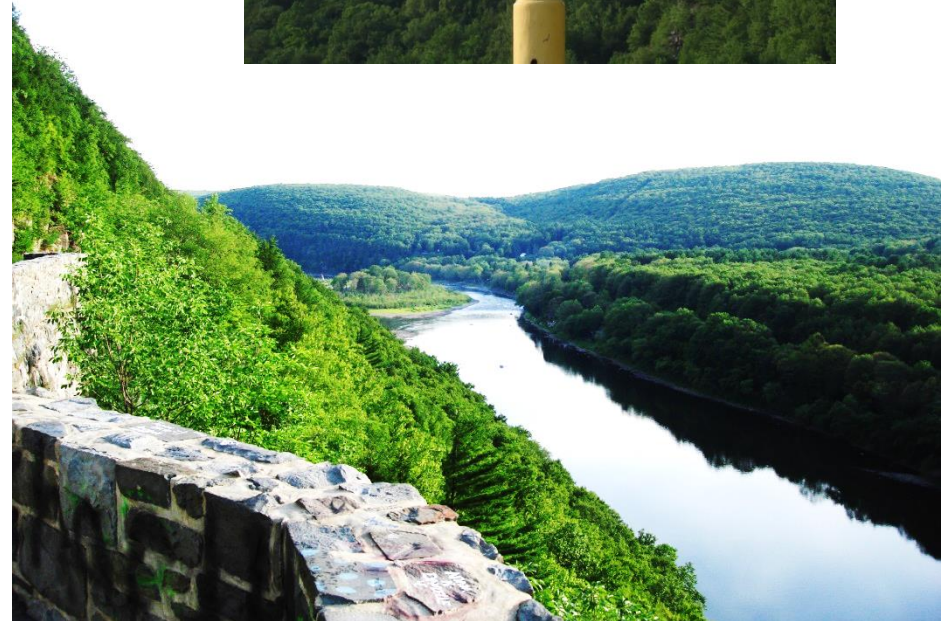


Photo: Laurie Lobbregt



*Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct -- oldest surviving wire suspension bridge in the U.S. Connects Minisink Ford, N.Y. & Lackawaxen, Pa.*

# Hawk's Nest Overlook – Upper Delaware Scenic Byway

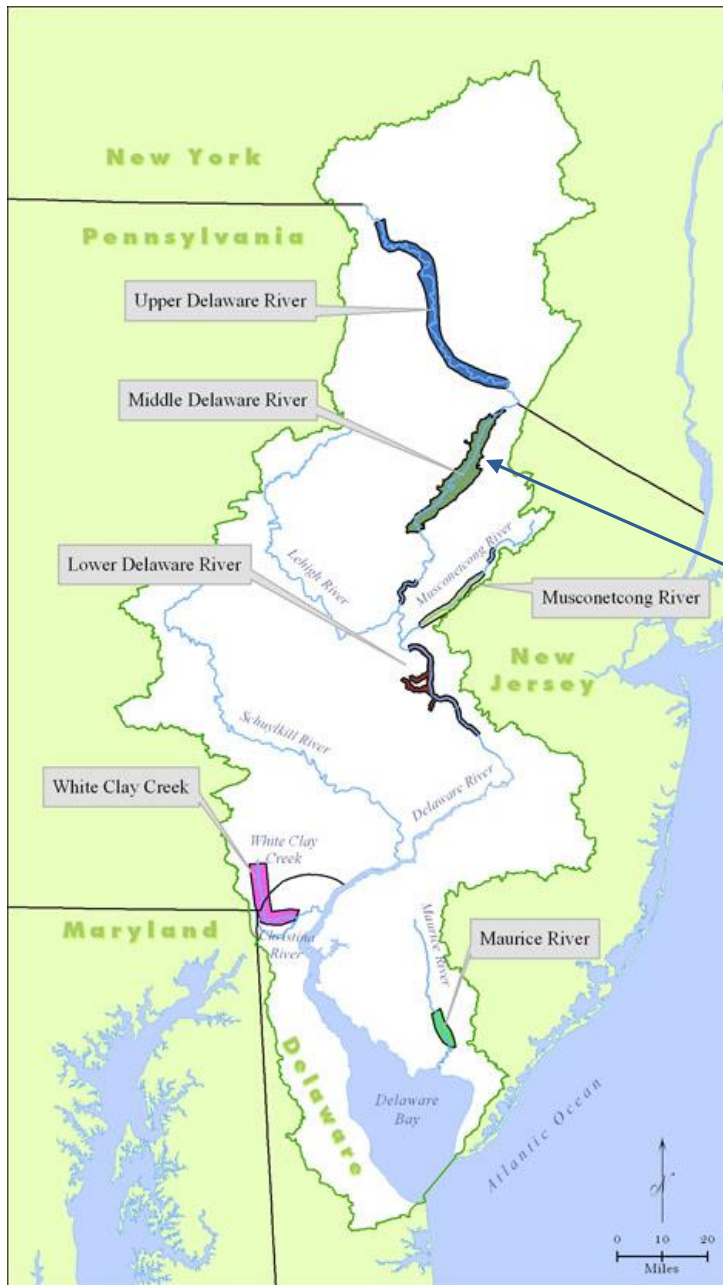


# Tri-State Rock

Marks where the three states meet:  
Near Port Jervis, N.Y.



# Middle Delaware River



- \* Begins just south of Port Jervis, N.Y. and flows ~40 miles downstream to Stroudsburg, Pa.
- \* Known as the Delaware Water Gap National Recreational Area, a unit of the National Park Service
- \* Designated part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Program.
- \* Most of the river corridor is federally owned and therefore not very developed.

# Delaware Water Gap



The Water Gap is where the Delaware River cuts through a large ridge of the Appalachian Mountains. It began to form over 400 million years ago.

# Scenes from the National Recreation Area

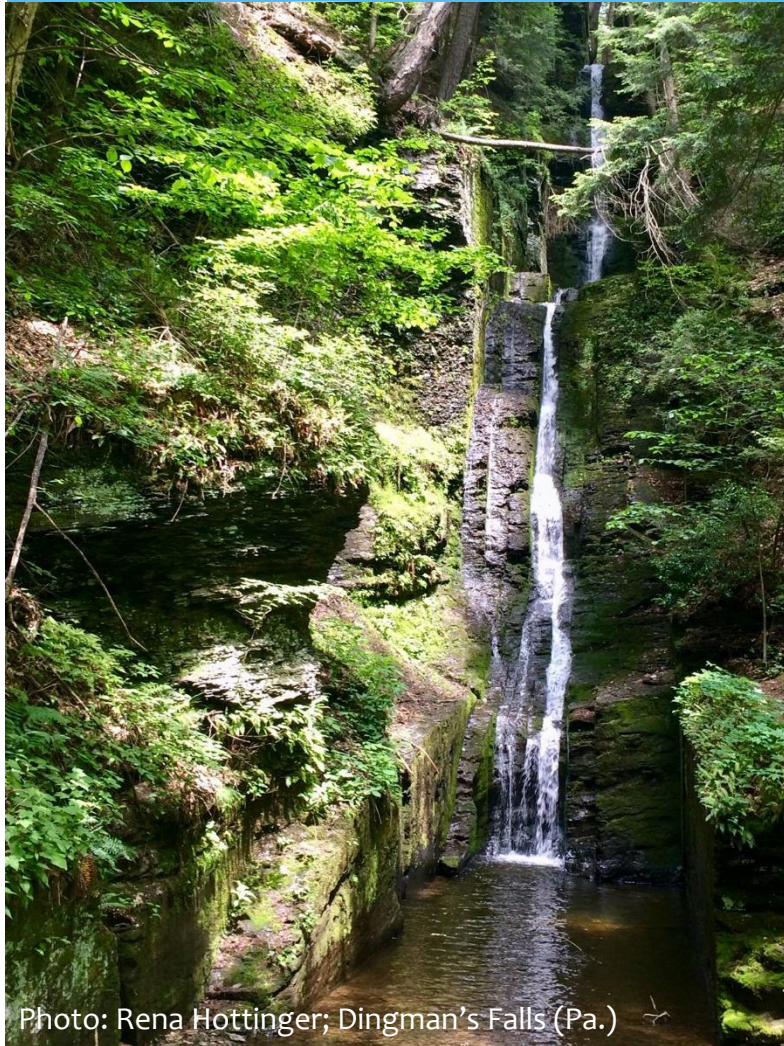
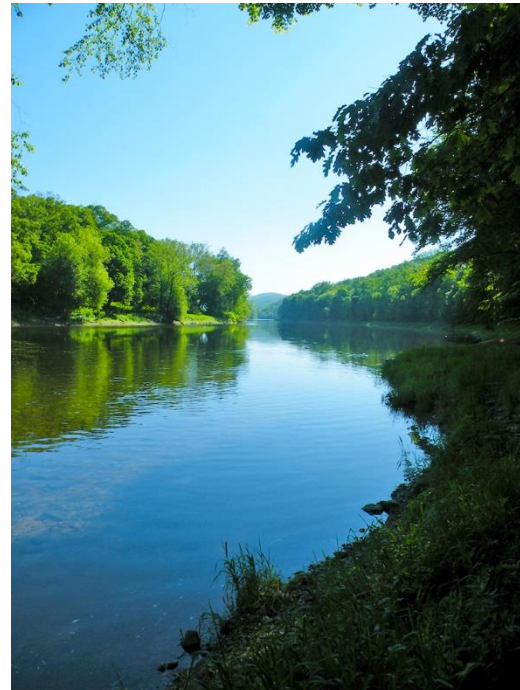


Photo: Rena Hottinger; Dingman's Falls (Pa.)



Photo: Kevin Haines



# Lower Delaware River



- \* The section of river south of the Water Gap to Washington Crossing, Pa.
- \* Parts included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System – stretch of the river & sections of several tributaries
- \* Southernmost section of the non-tidal river
- \* More suburban, developed – scenic/historic river towns of Easton, New Hope, Lambertville, Frenchtown, Stockton, Milford, and Riegelsville are located along this section of river.



# Delaware River at Easton, Pa.: confluence of the Lehigh River



# Delaware River at Washington Crossing



Graves of America's First Unknown Soldiers  
Along the Delaware



# Scenes from the Lower Delaware



Photo: Keith Balderston



# The Delaware Estuary: The Tidal Delaware River



- The Delaware River is tidal from Trenton south ~130 miles to the Atlantic Ocean.
- This section of the Delaware River is also known as the Delaware Estuary; it includes the Delaware Bay.
- An Estuary is where salt and fresh water mix.
- Tides can be anywhere up to 8 feet (change between low & high tide).

**The Delaware River Port Complex (including docking facilities in Pa., N.J., and Del.) is the largest freshwater port in the world.**



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# Philadelphia & Camden Waterfronts

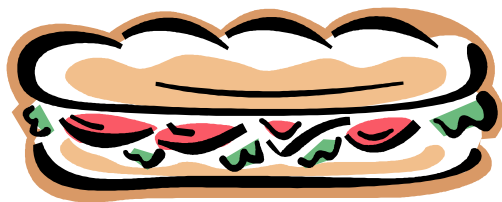


# The Schuylkill River: the Delaware's largest tributary





What is the Likely Origin of the  
Word “Hoagie” and What Does  
it Have to Do With the  
Delaware River?







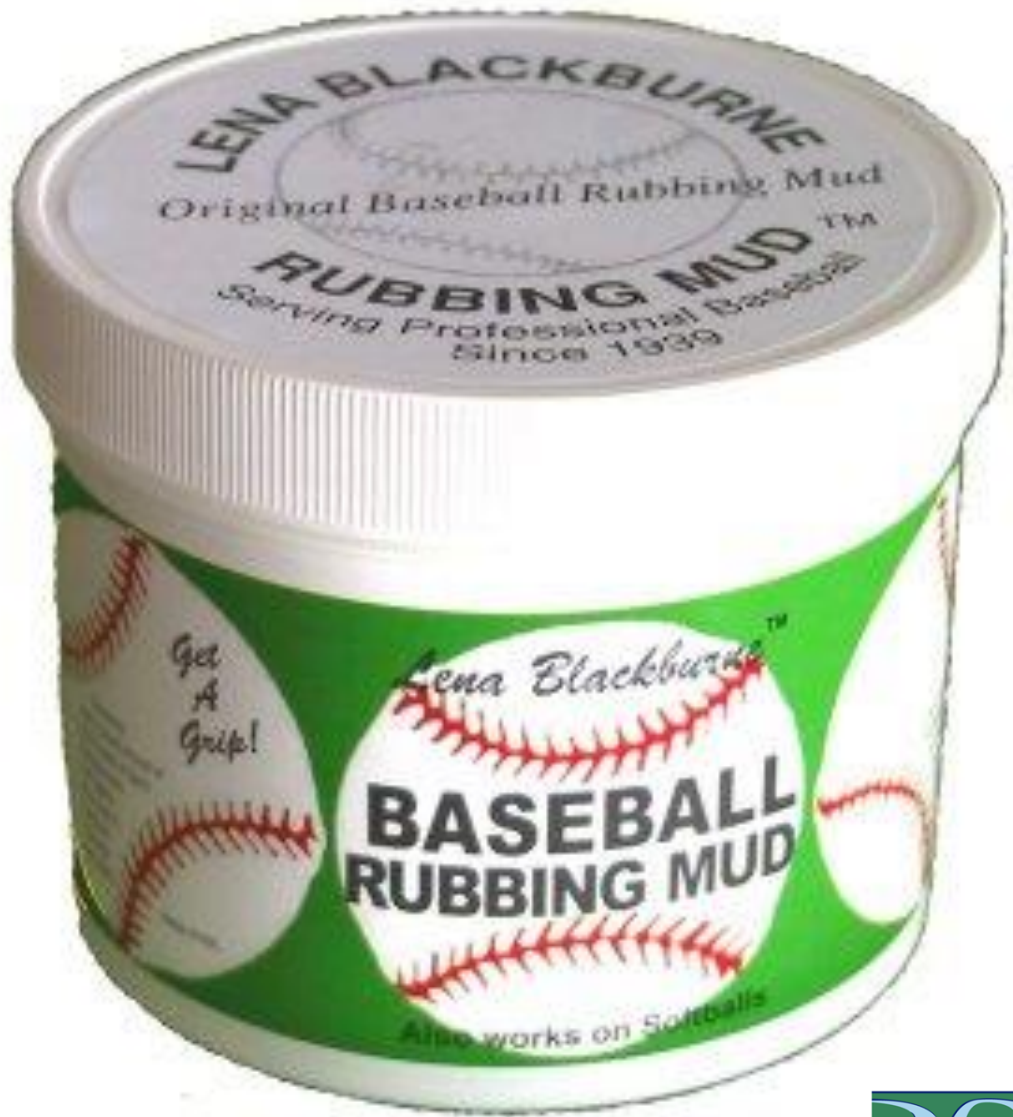
*Photo courtesy of WHYY*

## Hog Island Shipyard



# Why Does Major League Baseball Depend on the Delaware River Watershed?





# Delaware River Estuary



# The Maurice River: A Delaware Bay Tributary (Bivalve, N.J.)



# Horseshoe Crabs & Red Knots: Interconnected Species

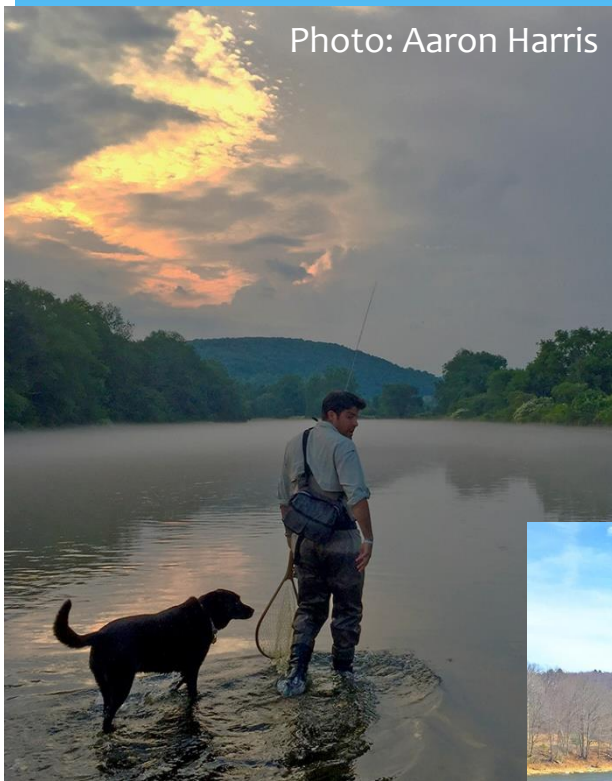


# The Delaware Bay at Lewes, Del.: Where the river finally meets the sea



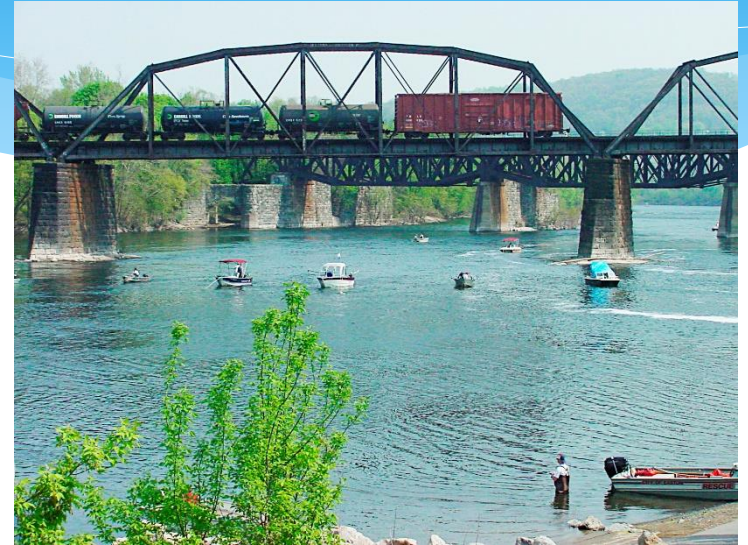
# Clean, cold water makes the upper Delaware River and its tributaries great places to fish for trout.

Photo: Aaron Harris





# In fact, you can fish all along the non-tidal Delaware & its tributaries



# You can even fish the tidal Delaware River, its tributaries, & the Delaware Bay



Photo: Delaware Waterfront Corporation



Photo: Phila. Water Dept.



# The Delaware River is also great for birding

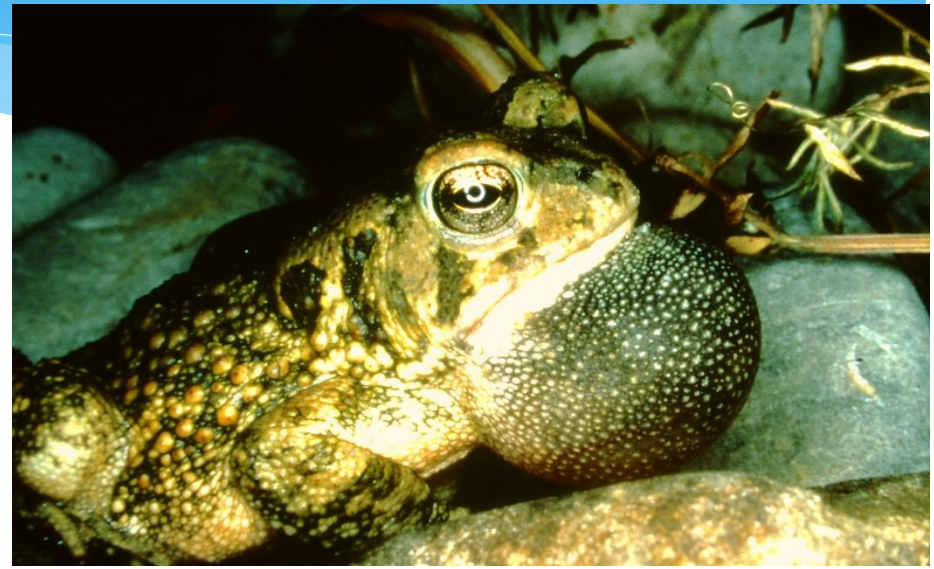


Photo: John Martin

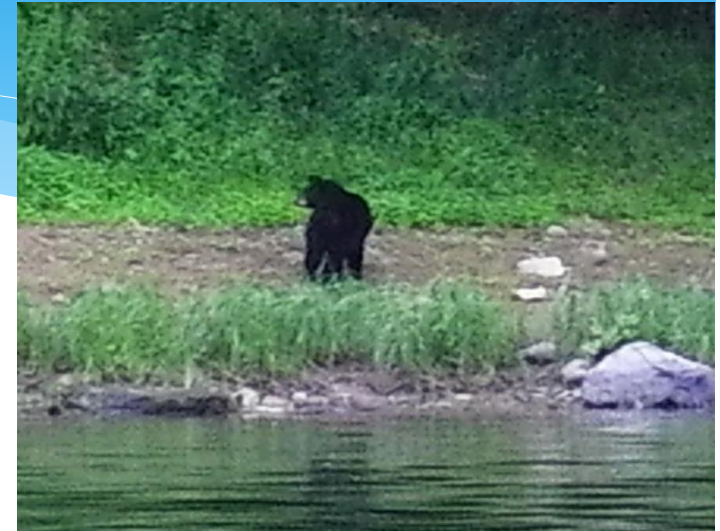


©Mike Slickster Photography

# And, you may see amphibians....



# Or even reptiles & mammals



# Camp, Hike, Bike – so many things to do!



Photo: Keith Balderston



# Paddle, Boat, Swim – so much FUN!



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# 2019 Delaware River Sojourn: Friday, June 14 – Saturday, June 22

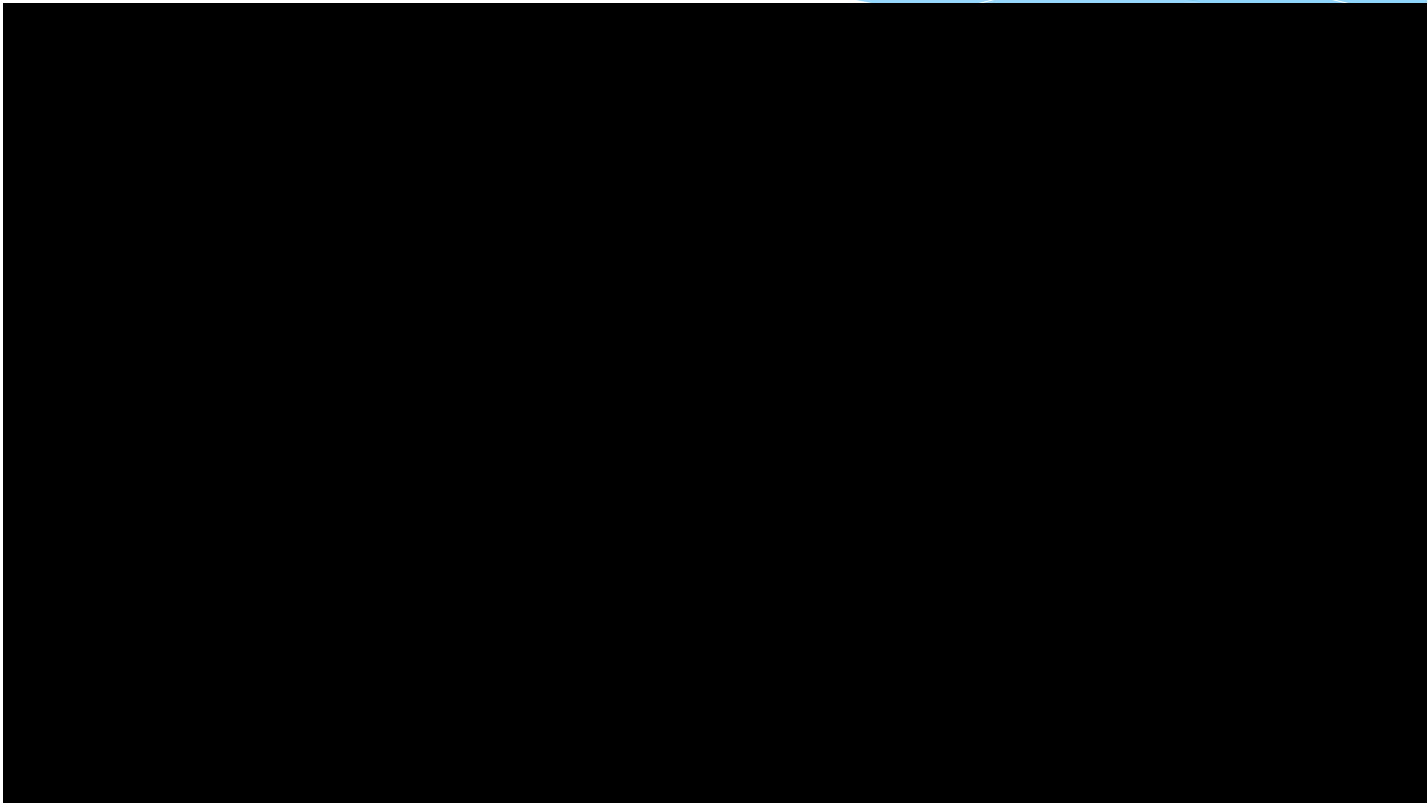
- **Guided river trip that combines paddling, camping, and educational programming**
- **2019 Theme: Celebrating 25 Years of Paddling Adventures**
- **For new to experienced paddlers**
- **Join for one or all eight days (June 14: volunteer river cleanup)**



DRBC participates on the steering committee that plans this not-for-profit event.



# Delaware River Sojourn



Video Link: <https://youtu.be/rDgQ71XbgP4>

# Delaware River Basin Commission

## Founded in 1961

### Five Equal Members:

- Delaware
- New Jersey
- Pennsylvania
- New York
- Federal Government



*Note: New York City and Philadelphia are “advisors”  
and not members*



# Why was the DRBC created?

- Water supply shortages and disputes over the apportionment of the basin's waters;
- Severe pollution in the Delaware River and its major tributaries;
- Serious flooding



The 1937 *Philadelphia Record* editorial page cartoon depicts the time when the tidal Delaware was an open sewer, where pollution in some stretches robbed the river of all its oxygen needed to support fish and other aquatic life.



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# DRBC Functional Responsibilities

- Water Supply
- Drought Management
- Flood Loss Reduction
- Water Quality
- Watershed Planning
- Regulatory Review (Permitting)
- Outreach/Education
- Recreation



# 5 Takeaways



1. The Delaware River is a **LIVING & WORKING RIVER**
  - Its habitat supports fish, birds, and other wildlife
  - Its freshwater port is the largest in the world
2. The Delaware River is **CLEANER** than its been in decades
  - Water Quality improvements & protections
3. The Delaware River is **FUN**
  - So many opportunities to get outdoors and enjoy the river: boating, fishing, camping, hiking, biking
4. The Delaware River **CONNECTS ALL OF US**
  - Nearly 14 million people depend on the Delaware for drinking, agriculture, and other needs.
5. The Delaware River **NEEDS US**
  - We must all do our part to help keep the river clean

# Connect with DRBC on Social Media



@DRBC1961



/DelRivBasinComm



/drbc1961



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# Kate Schmidt, Communications Specialist

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*www.drbc.gov*



Photo: David B. Soete

## *Thank you!*

