

Delaware Water Gap

National Recreation Area

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Guide to the Gap

Park Information

WELCOME TO THE DELAWARE WATER GAP

The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is a unit of the National Park Service that spans 70,000 acres in northeastern Pennsylvania and north-western New Jersey. Over 150 miles of hiking trails lead to diverse ecosystems and stunning views, including 38 miles of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. The Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River bisects the park for 40 miles, providing recreation activities like paddling, fishing, swimming, and boating.

Over 12,000 years ago, small family bands of Lenape moved across the landscape and lived by hunting game, fishing, and gathering food. About 8,000 years ago, groups began to travel less and relied on foods found locally. Families began farming about 2,000 years ago, leading to a

more settled lifestyle. Due to colonization, illness, conflict, and the Walking Purchase, the Lenape were forcibly pushed west out of their ancestral homeland.

Settlers farmed the area, benefitting from its fertile soil and access to fresh water. Communities popped up throughout the Delaware River Valley, some still intact to this day.

In 1955, two major hurricanes, Connie and Diane, battered the eastern seaboard causing widespread flooding and devastation, especially near rivers and streams. In response, the government commissioned the US Army Corps of Engineers to create an earthen dam at the southern tip of Tocks Island, flooding the river valley. This project was meant to create a large recreational

reservoir along the Delaware River for flood mitigation, energy production, and to provide drinking water to the nearby metropolitan areas.

In preparation for the dam project, eminent domain was used to acquire properties, displacing more than 4,000 families. The local public upheaval, economic strain from the Vietnam War, and the beginnings of the environmental movement shelved the dam project in 1975, and the acquired land was handed over to the National Park Service for stewardship.

Despite the painful history of displacement, the park's ecosystems, recreational opportunities, and human stories are preserved and protected for future generations by the National Park Service mission.

The Lenape (len-AH-pay) or Delaware lived in an area called "Lenapehoking," which means "Land of the Lenape."

Lenapehoking included eastern Pennsylvania, all of New Jersey, southeastern New York, northern Delaware, and a small section of southeastern Connecticut.

This park is on the ancestral homeland of the Lenape.

CONTACT US

Visitor Information:

(570) 426 - 2452
www.nps.gov/dewa
dewa_interpretation@nps.gov

Emergency? Call:

(800) 543 - 4295



SOCIAL MEDIA



Delaware Water Gap
National Recreation Area



@DelWaterGapNPS



@DelawareWaterGapNPS



@DelWaterGapNPS



GET INVOLVED IN THE PARK

VOLUNTEERS-IN-PARKS

National Park Service sites around the country thrive because of volunteer support in visitor services, trail maintenance, custodial duties, historical preservation, and more!

Volunteers engage with the public every day through visitor centers, programs, or organic interaction.

Are you interested in helping Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area or your nearby federal public lands as a volunteer? Visit Volunteer.gov or scan the QR code.



FRIENDS OF DELAWARE WATER GAP NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

The Friends of Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DEWA) is the park's primary philanthropic partner. This group raises money to support volunteer appreciation events, park projects, search and rescue supplies, and more. They also support the National Park Service mission by hosting and attending programs, raising funds, and providing information to help visitors have a great experience.

Without the Friends of DEWA, these needs could go unfulfilled.

Learn more about the mission-driven work the Friends do at FriendsOfDEWANPS.org by scanning the QR code.



PARK RULES & REGULATIONS

ALCOHOL & DRUGS

Consumption of alcohol is prohibited in posted areas. The possession or consumption of federally illegal drugs is prohibited in all areas of the park, regardless of state laws.

SWIMMING & WATERFALLS

Swimming and wading is prohibited in Van Campens Brook, Big Flatbrook Creek, Karamac area, Raymondskill Creek (from falls to river), Delaware River at Kittatinny Point, Dingmans Creek (upstream of the parking lot), Toms Creek, Adams Creek, within 50 feet of boat launches, and within 100 feet upstream of Dingmans Falls and 50 feet upstream of other waterfalls. Climbing, jumping, diving, and rappelling are prohibited at all waterfalls, waterfall pools, and bridge abutments.

DRONES

Launching, landing, or operating an unmanned aircraft from or on lands within the boundaries of Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is prohibited except as approved in writing by the Superintendent.

INFLATABLE POOL TOYS

Inflatable pool toys are not permitted at swim beaches. Pool toys can float or blow away, taking occupants into deeper water.

COLLECTING

Collection of plants, fungi, animals, rocks, mineral, and cultural objects is prohibited. Foraging regulations are explained in the Superintendent's Compendium.

CLOSED AREAS

Sites in the park may be closed to entry seasonally or due to construction or storm damage.



Entry into caves, mine shafts and unoccupied structures is always prohibited. Privately-owned property and residences exist within park boundaries. Please respect the rights and privacy of private property owners and other residents.

Learn about closures by visiting the Alerts and Current Conditions section of the park website.

PERMITS

Special Use Permits or Commercial Use Permits are required for certain types of activities, including weddings, baptisms, events and tours. Contact the permit coordinator at 570-426-2440 for more information.

BICYCLES

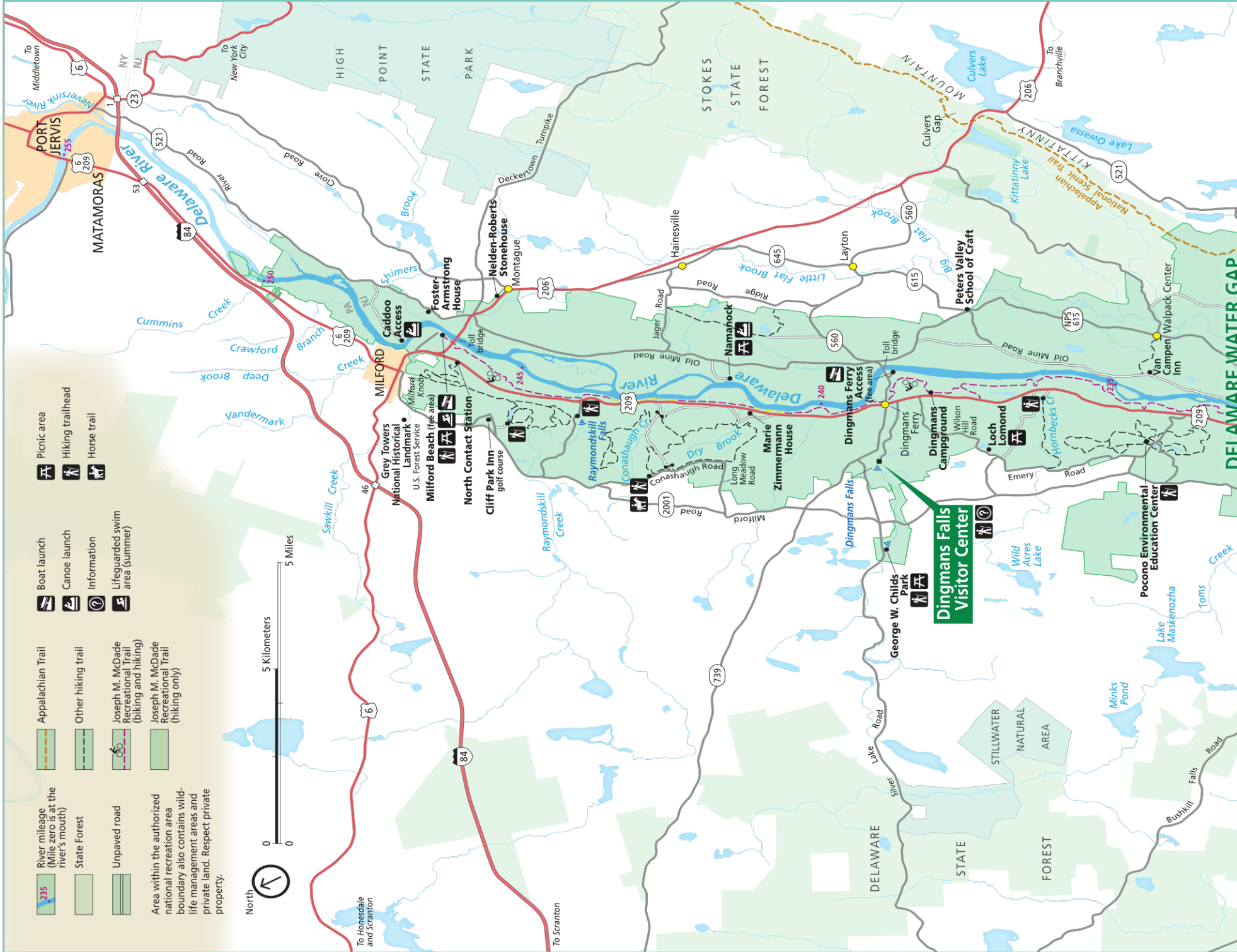
Bicycles and e-bikes are only permitted on the McDade Recreational Trail and on roadways within the park.

FISHING

A state fishing license is required for those 16 and older; regulations are enforced. Holders of either a New Jersey or Pennsylvania license may fish on the Delaware River and from either of its banks. This does not apply to the river's tributaries.

HUNTING & FIREARMS

Hunting is permitted in most areas of the park. The possession of firearms on federally-owned land within Delaware Water Gap National



Recreation Area is only permissible when consistent with state and federal laws, as outlined in the Digest of Pennsylvania Hunting Regulations, New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Digest, the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Compendium of Regulations, and Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Federal law prohibits firearms in park buildings and facilities. Those legally allowed to carry firearms must comply with all applicable state and federal firearm laws.

CAMPING

Camping is **NOT PERMITTED** except with reservations for designated campsites along the Delaware River (permits required) and Appalachian Trail.

The Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River campsites are by reservation only.

Dispersed camping is only permitted along the Appalachian Trail for thru-hikes with a minimum of 14 miles of one-way travel. Dispersed camping in the park is prohibited in all other cases.

CAMPFIRES

Campfires are only allowed at designated campsites within metal fire rings. Personally owned grills, stoves, or lanterns are permitted at designated picnic sites (excluding Kittatinny Point), campgrounds, or river campsites. Fires are prohibited in all other areas. Do not bring wood from outside the park. Firewood is available for purchase at Dingmans Campground.



PETS & SERVICE ANIMALS

While pets are permitted in most areas of the park, **they must be restrained on a leash (6 feet or less)**. Pets may not be tied to an object, left unattended, or left in a vehicle. Summer heat poses a serious threat to pets left in vehicles. Report lost pets to 570 426-2457.

Pets are **NOT PERMITTED** in any buildings or at the following sites (excludes working service animals):

In New Jersey:

- Turtle Beach
- Rivers Bend Group Campsites
- In Pennsylvania:**
 - Raymondskill Falls and Raymondskill Creek Trail
 - Dingmans Falls and Dingmans Creek Trail
 - George W. Childs Park
 - Valley View Group Campsites

Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day:

Pets are not permitted at Smithfield Beach, Milford Beach, or Turtle Beach.



CELL & NAVIGATION SERVICE

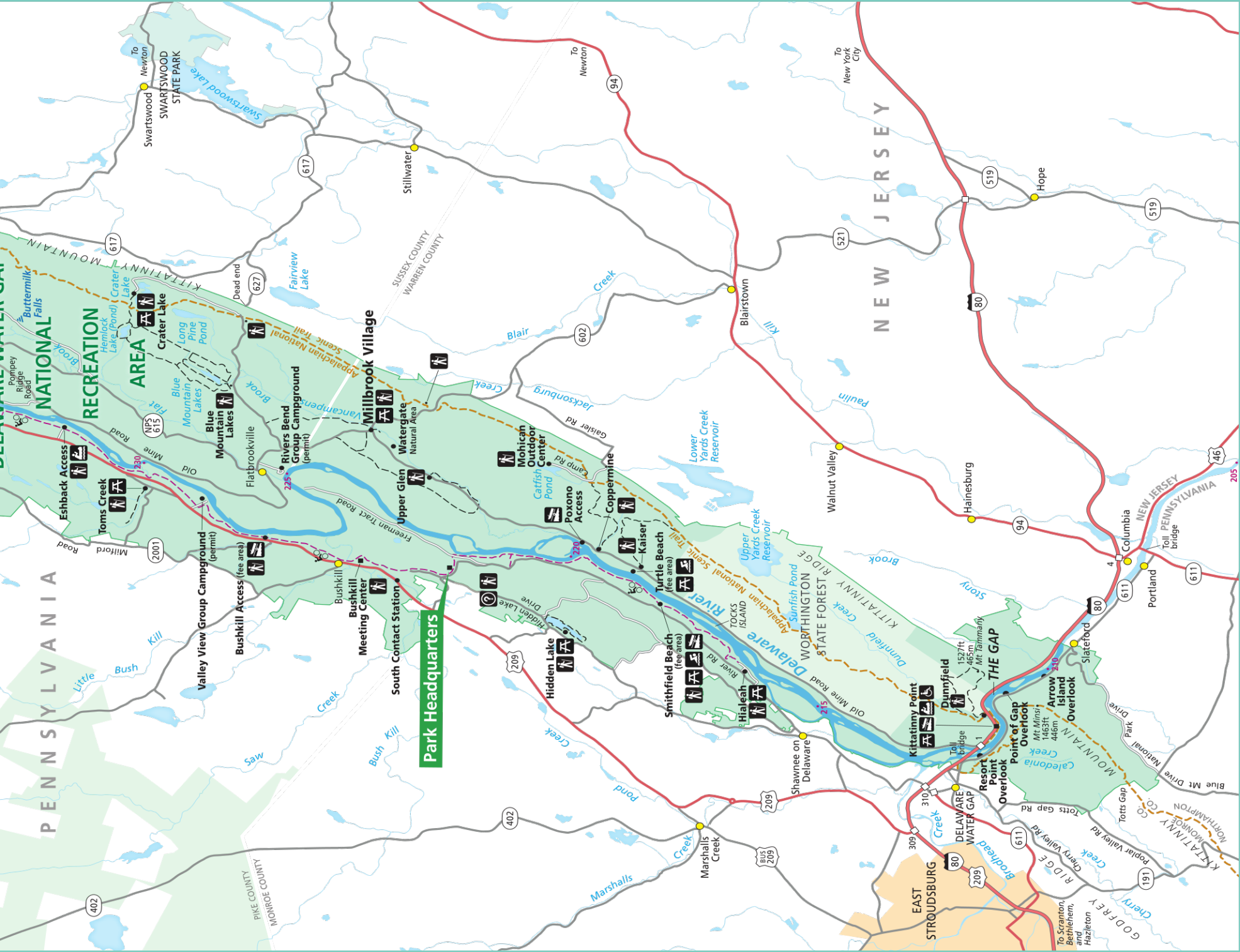
Cell service is unreliable in most areas of the park. Download all directions for offline use and have physical maps handy.

Emergency? Call (800) 543 - 4295 or 911.

Emergency calls to 911 can go through without cell service.



Find all park rules and regulations in the Superintendent's Compendium.



BECOME A JUNIOR RANGER

LEARN - PROTECT - EXPLORE

Junior Rangers help preserve National Park Service sites by learning, exploring, and protecting natural and cultural resources while teaching others to do the same.

To become a Junior Ranger, ask for an activity book! Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area has the *Kids Guide to the Gap* and *Junior Ranger River Safety* books available in person, digitally, and via mail.

Scan the QR code to learn more.



BECOME A BARK RANGER

Do you love recreating responsibly with your pet? Become a **BARK Ranger** at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area!

By following the rules of BARK and documenting your visit through photos, your pet can earn a BARK Ranger tag.

Follow the rules of **BARK** when visiting with your pet:

- B** - bag your pet's waste
- A** - always wear a leash
- R** - respect wildlife
- K** - know where you can go



Scan the QR code for more information.



SAFETY & RECREATION

A VACATION IS ONLY FUN IF EVERYONE MAKES IT HOME ALIVE.



RIVER SAFETY

LIFE JACKETS

Always wear a life jacket when swimming or boating.

Children aged 12 and under **MUST** wear Coast Guard-approved life jackets at all times when on the river.

Lifejackets must fit appropriately and be fully fastened to be effective.

Any person paddling or boating **MUST** have their own US Coast Guard approved life jacket on board and readily accessible in case of emergency.

All boaters must wear life jackets at all times between November 1 through April 30.

Over 100 people have drowned in the park since 1971.

None were wearing a properly fitted and fastened lifejacket.

WEAR A LIFEJACKET!



RIVER SAFETY



RIVER CONDITIONS



The Ten Essentials



HIKING SAFETY

Being prepared is the **only** way to have a safe adventure.

Packing the Ten Essentials, wearing the appropriate clothing, using the right gear, and planning thoroughly can keep your hike from turning into a disaster.

Ranger Tips for a Successful Hike:

Plan Ahead: Make sure you have maps, know where you are going, what you need, and whether pets are permitted.

Pack it In, Pack it Out: Whether it is trash, clothing, gear, waste, or anything else, if you brought it with you, take it with you. Do not leave anything in the park.

Know Where You Can Go: Check all current conditions and make sure you aren't heading somewhere that's closed.

Pack a Plan B: Don't be disappointed if the area you wanted to hike in is full. Have a backup plan and return to the original plan later.

When in Doubt, Ask!: If you are not sure of a regulation, site rule, or anything else, ask a ranger or volunteer! Call, email, message the park on social media, or find park staff or volunteers in the field.



WILDLIFE SAFETY

Feeding, harrassing, or approaching wildlife is unlawful on federal public lands.

Disturbing wildlife can cause them to abandon their young, nesting sites, and food sources, which often leads to their demise. Feeding animals can cause illness or dependency on humans, which disrupts their natural survival instincts.

Disturbed wildlife can also become aggressive and attack pets and people who get too close. Always keep pets on a 6ft leash.

So, let wildlife be wild and leave them be.

