

Upper Delaware

Scenic and Recreational River
New York/Pennsylvania

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Official Map and Guide



Hawks Nest Overlook

David Soete

The Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River is 73.4 miles of a freeflowing stream that winds 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 some of the sights that you will find in the river valley. Year round, canoeists, rafters, anglers, and

outdoor lovers take advantage of 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 and 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 cleanest freeflowing rivers.



Skinnerville Falls



Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct



Skinnerville Falls

On the River

Boating Whether it's a canoe, kayak, raft, or an inner tube, the best way to see and get to know the Upper Delaware is to be on the river. Most of the Upper Delaware River 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 Falls. You should scout these rapids from shore before attempting passage. The most important thing to remember about boating is to *always wear a life jacket*. In cold weather months—November through May—when the river water is coldest, you should 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 campground. Almost all land along the river is privately owned, and trespass laws are enforced by local authorities. A valid registration is required for all motorized vessels.

Swimming/Wading The river has swift currents and sudden drop-offs. The Delaware's bottom can be rocky or muddy, shallow or deep. Wear footgear, such as sneakers, to protect your feet. There are no life-guarded beaches. Never swim alone.

Fishing The Upper Delaware is a popular stream for both casual and serious anglers. Brown and rainbow trout, smallmouth bass, walleye, white suckers, fallfish, and American eels are abundant. The American shad spawn here in late spring. 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 river, take another look. What you see 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 rivers that flow into the ocean. Males remain at the mouth of the river, while females swim upstream to mature. After about seven years the females return to the ocean, where they spawn and die. During this downstream migration in late summer and fall, 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 owner of the weir.

Birds Keep a sharp lookout and you may see some rare birds, such as bald eagle, osprey, great egret, or great blue heron. More common are turkey vultures, hawks,

and owls ranging in size from great horned owls to tiny screech owls. The river does not provide much nesting cover for waterfowl, but you may see mergansers as well as occasional black, teal, mallard, goldeneye, bufflehead, and wood ducks. Migrating Canada geese are also seen. Wild turkeys, the most common game bird, are occasionally seen feeding in the fields.

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

Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct

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

and the industries of Philadelphia and Trenton. Where the canal boats crossed the river from Lackawaxen, Pa., to Minisink Ford, N.Y., they often ran into rafts of timber coming downriver. There were collisions, fistfights, claims, and counterclaims. In 1847, the canal directors hired John Aug-

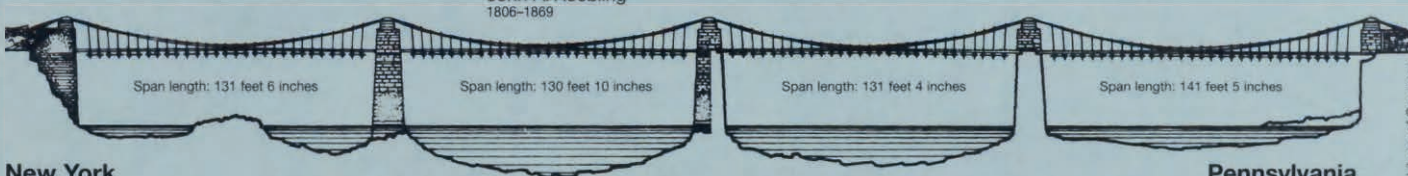


John A. Roebling
1806-1869

ustus Roebling to build an aqueduct to carry their canal over the river. Roebling had built two suspension spans in western Pennsylvania that had impressed the canal's chief engineer. Such a scheme meant that fewer piers would be needed, thus preventing more impediments to the log rafts.

The aqueduct over the Delaware (below) was the first and largest of four aqueducts. It was ready when the canal opened for the 1848 season and was used until 1898, when the canal closed. The aqueducts over Lackawaxen and Neversink rivers and Rondout Creek were abandoned and

later were demolished. Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct was turned into a highway toll bridge. Today it is the oldest surviving wire suspension bridge in the United States—a forerunner of New York's Brooklyn Bridge that Roebling began in 1867 and his son completed in 1883.



About Your Visit

To help 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 jacket while boating, swimming, wading, or tubing on the river. A life preserver is useless unless you wear it.

Guard against hypothermia by wearing protective clothing when the water is cold. Even in late spring when the air temperature is warm, the water is still frigid. Loss of body heat is 25 times greater in cold water than in air of the same temperature. Wear a wetsuit 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 two canoes is recommended, with one as lead canoe and another as sweep or drag canoe. Stay in view, but keep a safe distance between canoes. If you capsize, keep upstream from the craft. A current of 3 mph can hold a swamped canoe against a rock with a force of more than a

ton—the same effect as squeezing a canoe or paddler in a vise. If conditions worsen and you must leave your canoe, float with 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 submerged branches or caught between rocks.

Carry a throw line and first aid kit with you. Do not drink alcoholic beverages before and during boating. Alcohol consumption and drug abuse have contributed to many drownings. Tie a plastic bag into the boat, and carry out your trash. Guard against sunburn with sunscreens and appropriate clothing.

River Conditions Information Before starting on your river trip, find out what to expect by calling the River Conditions Information Line: 845-252-7100. This recorded message is updated daily (in season) with reports of air and water temperatures, river height, and the weather conditions. The message includes safety conditions, advice on clothing, and an extended forecast.

Traveler's Information Motorists traveling on N.Y. 97 near Sparrowbush, N.Y., can get information about Upper Delaware park by tuning to AM 1610.

Outfitters Many privately owned liveries rent canoes, rafts, tubes, and watercraft. Licensed fishing guides are available.

Campgrounds All campgrounds along the Upper Delaware are privately owned, except for a Pennsylvania State Forest primitive camping area near Stairway Rapids. Permits for this camping area are available from the National Park Service, Barryville Office, 845-557-0222.

More Information Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River RR 2, Box 2428
Beach Lake, PA 18405-9737
570-685-4871
www.nps.gov/upde

The Zane Grey Museum

The one-time home of Zane Grey, novelist of the American west, is located on the banks of the Upper Delaware River in Lackawaxen, Pennsylvania. As a young, aspiring writer, Grey left a dental practice in New York City and moved to Lackawaxen in 1905. He married the same year and, encouraged by his wife, devoted all his time to writing. He struggled through lean years until 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 his research and writing. Today, three rooms make up the museum that is a collection of Zane Grey memorabilia, including the Morris chair in which he wrote many novels.

Grey and his family moved to California in 1918. His popularity grew, and his influence expanded into the west-

ern movie industry. He became the most successful novelist of his time and is considered by some to be the father of the western novel.

Grey enjoyed the outdoors and was world-renowned for his fishing skills. He held several saltwater fishing records.

For information about museum hours, call 570-685-4871.

© GPO:2001-472-470/40049 Reprint 2000
Printed on recycled paper.



Zane Grey
1872-1939



The Zane Grey Museum

Upper Delaware

Scenic and Recreational River
New York/Pennsylvania

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Getting to the Park You can reach this unit of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System on highways from the New York and Philadelphia metropolitan areas. For the southern portion of the Upper Delaware River, the standard routes are N.Y.17, I-84, or U.S. Route 6. For the northern portion, the standard routes are N.Y.17 and I-81. To follow the New York shore of the river use N.Y.97.

Facilities and Accommodations Most towns along the river are small, with limited services. Port Jervis, Honesdale, Milford, and Monticello are the major centers with the most services. For information contact local chambers of commerce or other organizations. For a list of addresses, write to the park or check its web site: www.nps.gov/upde.

Most land along the river is privately owned. Respect the owner's rights; do not trespass. National Park Service jurisdiction is confined to the river itself, information stations, headquarters area, the Zane Grey Museum, Roebling Bridge, and some public river accesses.

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

- Campground (all privately owned)
- Boat launch
- Canoe/fishing access (parking may be limited)
- Ranger station
- Picnic area
- Restrooms (seasonal)
- Telephone
- Hiking/walking trail (within river corridor)

