

# The Upper Delaware

A newsletter about the environment and people of the Upper Delaware River Valley in NY & PA

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**The Upper Delaware available on-line or by mail!**

This newsletter may now be accessed on-line, in full color, at the UDC's website, [www.upperdelawarecouncil.org](http://www.upperdelawarecouncil.org). Please indicate via the return coupon on Page 7 whether you'd like us to discontinue sending your copy by mail. Thank you.



**EXPRESS YOURSELF:** More than 600 people attended the Delaware River Basin Commission's July 14 meeting, resulting in the fire marshal's order to expel approximately 200 individuals from the West Trenton Volunteer Fire Company hall. Both critics and supporters of natural gas drilling organized bus-loads and outdoor rallies. The Commissioners heard from 82 speakers in three hours during their public comment session. (UDC Photo by Laurie Rame)

## Natural Gas Drilling Debate Intensifies in Delaware Basin

As the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) prepares to release its draft natural gas regulations by the end of this summer, public debate has intensified over the impact that the projected tens of thousands of hydraulically-fractured, horizontally-drilled wells will have on the Upper Delaware River Valley region.

DRBC Executive Director Carol Collier told members of the Upper Delaware Council (UDC) on August 5 that the commissioners who represent the federal government and the four basin states of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, received the draft regulations in mid-July for their review.

Prior to a DRBC vote, the rulemaking process will provide a 45-day written comment period and likely two public hearings.

Collier noted that the agency has a dual

responsibility to protect the Delaware River basin's resources and to provide a "level playing field" for the applicants seeking timely approval of their dockets.

"We're looking at the development of regulations to set the bounds on what can and can't happen and where it can and can't happen," she said.

Applicants will be required to detail their plans for water withdrawal, well and pad construction, and wastewater disposal.

Possible ideas put forth by DRBC staff to streamline the review process include adopting an approval-by-rule policy that would allow a bypass of the regular Commission meeting schedule, accepting electronic submission of applications, and providing for site plan-level approval if the requirements of a comprehensive drilling

**Please see GAS on Page 4**

Most land along the Upper Delaware River is privately owned. Please be considerate and don't litter or trespass. Thanks!



## Upper Delaware Profile: Scott Rando

Through the lens of his camera, Scott Rando captures images that reinforce his appreciation of the Upper Delaware River Valley's natural resources on an almost daily basis.

"I try to be opportunistic about it. I always have a camera with me because I never know what I'll see," he says.

Rando contributes the "River Talk" outdoors column in *The River Reporter* newspaper every other week, photographing and writing about the interesting flora and fauna that he spies during his travels.

The Upper Delaware Council's Shohola Township, PA representative comes by his photography talent the way he has acquired most of his skills - self-taught.

Rando was born in Garland, TX and spent his childhood in Staten Island, NY before moving with his mother and siblings to Delaware Township at the age of 12.

Rando graduated from Pike County's Delaware Valley High School in 1973 and joined the U.S. Army.

During his three-year stint, the specialist worked primarily as an aviation and aircraft mechanic in Germany.

Electronics were a keen interest for Rando. After working for several retailers in that field, Rando joined the British company Kratos.

For 15 years, Rando traveled around the U.S., Canada, and England from his home base of Westwood, NJ, installing, repairing, operating, and training in the use of mass spectrometers.

These instruments were used for chemical analysis applications by the pharmaceutical industry, research and development firms, and crime labs, among others.

When Kratos was bought out by a Japanese firm, Rando's department was discontinued.

He provided independent service contracts for mass spectrometer maintenance for another 10 years, narrowing his territory to the tri-state region.

During that time, Rando segued into the Information Technology field, doing computer programming and website design work which he continues to offer today to select clients.

His telecommunications-based occupation gives Rando the freedom to set his own schedule and enjoy the "peace and quiet" that initially attracted him to buy his house in Shohola's woodsy Walker Lake community in 1981.

Fascinated by the species' resurgence, eagles are a particular interest for Rando's time and as photography subjects.

"As a kid, I never saw eagles. In 1980, there were no breeding eagles in the Upper Delaware River corridor. Now there



Scott Rando, Shohola Township, PA

are approximately 18 nests," he says.

Rando volunteers for The Eagle Institute and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Endangered Species Unit, with a special interest in radio telemetry tracking.

He contributed to the DEC's and National Park Service's three-year Bald Eagles Status Assessment and Delineation Study for the Upper Delaware River, the results of which have not yet been published pending analysis of data.

In January of 2010, Rando was appointed by the Shohola Township Board of Supervisors to serve on the UDC.

Having witnessed the turmoil that ensued when the federal government took ownership of the land in the Middle Delaware for what became the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Rando feels that the right balance has been struck locally.

"This organization can act as an interface between the federal government and the people of the river valley. We're appointed to represent the people of our towns when it comes to issues in the corridor and its drainages," he says, citing development threats, water quality protection, habitat preservation and natural gas drilling as the most critical concerns presently.

Rando is a member of the Walker Lake Committee, which primarily monitors water quality issues affecting the lake, and has been an active firefighter with the Shohola Township Fire Department for 12 years, formerly serving as assistant chief.

The 56-year-old belongs to the Sussex County, NJ Bird Club and enjoys riding with the Red Knights Motorcycle Club based in Port Jervis, in addition to his other sporty pursuits that include bicycling, kayaking, hiking, hunting, and fishing. ♦

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# Definitive History Written on Battle of Minisink

One of the most lethal battles of the American Revolution, in terms of the ratio of participants to numbers killed, took place in the Upper Delaware River Valley on July 22, 1779.

The Battle at Minisink Ford was a disaster for the American militia units in their bloody skirmish against the British Tories and Mohawks led by Colonel Joseph Brant. More than one-third of the militia perished on top of the hill.

A new book entitled, "So Many Brave Men: A History of the Battle at Minisink Ford", offers 828 pages of meticulous accountings of the battle drawn from some primary sources that have not been seen in more than 150 years.

Released by The Pienpack Company on April 30, 2010, the book contains all of the known pension applications that survive of the men who fought at Minisink, which allow these veterans to tell their own stories, as well as a history of the battle and an analysis of research findings.

An extensive bibliography, index, five maps, and 15 illustrations are included.

Co-authors Mark Hendrickson, Jon Inners, and Peter Osborne got together for the first time to introduce their book at the Battle of Minisink 231st Commemoration held July 17 at Sullivan County's Minisink Battleground Park.

Hendrickson, a Livingston Manor, NY native residing in Wake Forest, NC, has been an avid researcher of the battle for 20 years. Inners, of Camp Hill, PA, retired from the PA Geological Survey after 31 years and is currently an adjunct geologic field-camp instructor at SUNY Oswego. Osborne served as executive director of the Minisink Valley Historical Society in



**AUTHOR, AUTHOR, AUTHOR!** Gathering for the first time jointly to introduce their new book, "So Many Brave Men: A History of the Battle at Minisink Ford" at the Sullivan County Minisink Battleground Park on July 17 were authors, from the left, Peter Osborne, Mark Hendrickson, and Jon Inners. (UDC Photos by Laurie Ramie, this page)

Port Jervis from 1981-2009 and now lives in Easton, PA.

At the service marked by memorial tributes and a reading of the names of the battle dead, Pike County, PA Historian George J. Fluhr delivered the keynote address on "The Setting of the Battle of Minisink: The World of Its Participants." The Navasink Long Rifles and Third Ulster Militia camped out to re-enact 18th century lifestyles.

"So Many Brave Men" is available for \$42.99 by contacting [www.pienpack.com](http://www.pienpack.com) or (845) 551-0417. ♦



**UNKNOWN SOLDIER:** Pike County Historian George J. Fluhr, left, has organized an annual ceremony since 1975 to honor the Unknown Soldier from the July 22, 1779 Battle of Minisink who lies in a grave in Lackawaxen, PA. The militia man's remains were discovered under a rock ledge in Minisink Ford, NY in 1847 and brought across the river for burial. The Ecker-Haupt Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars maintains the historic site. Above right, PA Representative Mike Peifer (139th District) addressed the July 22 gathering that also featured National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Superintendent Sean McGuinness, Lackawaxen Township Supervisor Richard Krochta, and members of the VFW Ecker-Haupt and Mountain Laurel Posts with tributes.



**MILITARY SALUTE:** Members of the Navasink Long Rifles offered a volley in memory of the fallen at the 231st Anniversary of the Battle of Minisink during the July 17 commemoration.



plan are met.

In May 2009, Collier issued an Executive Director Determination requiring any natural gas company seeking to extract from shale formations within the drainage area of the basin's Special Protection Waters to obtain DRBC approval, eliminating the usual review thresholds for the 197 miles between Hancock, NY and Trenton, NJ.

Collier extended that determination on June 14, 2010 to include exploratory wells, with the exception of six test wells in Wayne County that had been approved by Pennsylvania regulators prior to that date.

The action recognizes that companies typically develop test wells for later production and that their limited operation still poses potential risks to water resources.

At the DRBC's July 14 meeting, Collier announced that she was amending the supplemental determination to allow two more exploratory wells to proceed in Wayne County since Hess Corp. had received their PA Erosion and Sediment Control general permits by June 14.

The commissioners granted hearing petitions from five entities including the Northern Wayne Property Owners Alliance and the Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, Inc. requesting various modifications of recent DRBC decisions.

A consolidated adjudicatory hearing is being planned for September at a north-

eastern PA location to be determined.

A third action at the July 14 meeting was a 3-1 vote (with Delaware opposed and New York absent due to travel restrictions) approving Stone Energy Corp.'s water withdrawal proposal from the West Branch Lackawaxen River in Mount Pleasant Township, Wayne County, PA.

The docket stipulates, however, that Stone Energy can't withdraw any water until it receives separate DRBC approval for the well pad at an associated site.

The approval followed a Feb. 24 public hearing in Matamoras, PA and review of 1,700-plus written comments received by an April 12 deadline.

At the DRBC's July business meeting, more than 600 people exceeded the capacity of the meeting space, with one third of them being ordered to wait outside.

Eighty-two speakers gave two-minute statements expressing their views on natural gas exploration during three hours of public comment.

Some urged the DRBC to expedite its regulations, while others implored the agency to wait for the outcome of several federal and state studies.

Collier told the UDC board that "this will be an adaptive process" in which the DRBC incorporates existing and pending state regulations and new technologies.

Gas drilling has been on hold in New York State since October 2008, when the Department of Environmental Conserva-

tion (DEC) began updating its Supplemental Generic Impact Statement.

DEC staffers are still reviewing and responding to the approximately 14,000 public comments received, with a tentative goal of finalizing the document this fall.

In the interim, the NYS Assembly is expected to vote when it returns from its summer break on Sept. 15 on a bill that would impose a temporary moratorium on granting permits for hydraulic fracturing in Marcellus Shale horizontal wells.

The Senate approved its version of the legislation on Aug. 4, with a moratorium expiration date of May 15, 2011. It wouldn't become law until the governor signs it.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has continued to process Marcellus Shale-related applications while also updating its existing rules for drilling, casing, cementing, testing, and monitoring gas wells, and for protecting public and private water supplies from treatment of the chemical wastewater.

Beyond assuring that technical criteria in the DRBC regulations are solidly in place to evaluate permit applications, Collier said that thought needs to be given to a more holistic consideration: "Are we prepared?"

Most natural gas-related mishaps have involved human error, she suggested.

"To protect the Delaware, we want to be sure we go through those 'what ifs,'" Collier said in urging a proactive stance.

The DRBC's next meeting is Sept. 15. ♦

## Round-up of Natural Gas Developments

Regional natural gas developments since *"The Upper Delaware"* Spring-Summer 2010 issue went to press include:

March - The Sullivan County, NY Legislature bans natural gas drilling on any county-owned property until its impact on the environment, safety, and public roads and bridges is identified and addressed.

March - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announces its reallocation of \$1.9 million to conduct a peer-reviewed study to research the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water and public health. The study is targeted for completion by late 2012.

April - "Thumper trucks" arrive in the Upper Delaware area to begin seismic testing. Some of the crews are met with No Trespassing signs seeking to prohibit the activity from occurring on private property along the roadways.

April - The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announces that any applications for natural gas drilling permits in the unfiltered watersheds that supply drinking water to New York City and Syracuse will be excluded from the Sup-

plemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement process, requiring separate reviews with higher standards.

May - The DRBC officially directs Commission staff to draft regulations for natural gas well pad projects in shale formations in the Delaware River Basin.

June - American Rivers declares the Upper Delaware as the #1 Most Endangered River due to risks posed by natural gas drilling (see Page 5 article).

June - DRBC Executive Director Carol Collier supplements her May 19, 2009 determination to include exploratory (non-fracked) natural gas wells as requiring DRBC approval before commencing.

June - The National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ask the DRBC to include all natural gas and exploratory well projects in its review scope and to study cumulative impacts.

July - The DRBC approves Stone Energy Corp.'s proposed water withdrawal from the West Branch Lackawaxen River. Administrative hearings for all appeals to the June 14 determination are granted and Hess Corp. will be allowed to proceed with

two exploratory wells in Wayne County.

July - Cabot Oil and Gas puts its entire leased acreage in Sullivan (4,707) and Wayne (11,797) Counties up for sale, opting to focus the company's operations in Susquehanna County, PA instead.

July - The U.S. House Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies approves \$1 million for the U.S. Geological Survey to conduct a cumulative impact study on water withdrawals for hydraulic fracturing of Marcellus Shale natural gas wells in the Delaware River Basin. Full Congressional approval will be needed.

August - Damascus Township, PA signs a consent order with Newfield Appalachia LLC to settle a federal lawsuit after the township attempted to require the company to obtain a special use zoning permit before constructing a well pad.

August - The New York State Senate votes 48-9 in favor of a moratorium suspending any hydraulic fracturing of natural gas within the state until May 15, 2011. The legislation must next be passed by the Assembly and signed by the governor. ♦



# American Rivers Lists Upper Delaware As #1 Most Endangered River in Nation

Cheers and jeers repeatedly interrupted a June 2 announcement that the Upper Delaware River has topped the list of the country's Most Endangered Rivers as compiled by the national watchdog organization, American Rivers (AR).

"The Upper Delaware River provides drinking water for 17 million people across Pennsylvania and New York. However, this clean water source is threatened by natural gas extraction activities in the Marcellus Shale, where chemicals injected into the ground create untreatable toxic wastewater," quoted Damascus Citizens for Sustainability member Marcia Nehemiah from an AR news release.

The call-to-action continued, "Until a thorough study of these critical impacts is completed, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) must not issue permits that will allow gas drilling in this watershed. In addition, Congress must pass the Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals (FRAC) Act of 2009 to help protect all rivers within the Marcellus Shale region."

"We need to protect the source of life for future generations," Nehemiah added. "This is truly a watershed moment."

A close crowd of gas drilling proponents and opponents heckled the speakers and each other to either discredit the assertions or shout down disparate viewpoints.

U.S. Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey,



**DRILLING THREAT:** U.S. Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey, Jr. (NY) speaks at the "Most Endangered River" press conference held June 2 at Tusten Veterans Memorial Park in Narrowsburg. Pictured at right are Marcia Nehemiah of Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, whose group submitted the nomination; National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Superintendent Sean McGuinness; and Catskill Mountainkeeper Program Director Wes Gillingham. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

Jr. (NY-22nd District) expressed surprise over the nearly 200-strong turnout.

After dryly addressing catcalls with, "There may be some differences of opinion here," Hinchey explained why he continues to push for cumulative impacts studies and passage of the FRAC Act, which would repeal the current exemption for hydraulic fracturing in the Safe Drinking Water Act and require energy companies to disclose the chemicals used in "frack" fluids.

"Why would anyone not want the truth about drilling so that safety and security can be enhanced? Let's not have secrecy about what's being put in the ground," he urged, citing a lack of oversight as responsible for the "environmental catastrophe" oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Catskill Mountainkeeper Executive Director Ramsay Adams decried how the natural gas drilling controversy has pitted river valley neighbors against each other.

"We can either come together and protect, nurture and care for this irreplaceable resource or we can let the blind pursuit of profits turn the Delaware into our Gulf," he said. "The destiny of a great river hangs in the balance."

Sean McGuinness, superintendent of the National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, noted that his "authority here under the law is limited" but that he and the NPS "will work with everyone to do what's right for the river."

On the heels of the American Rivers announcements made in Narrowsburg, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., the DRBC issued a statement, clarifying, "Being named to a 'most endangered list' can lead uninformed people to draw incorrect conclusions that the quality of the Upper Delaware River is deteriorating. This is far from the truth..."

In 2007, the Upper Delaware River made #4 on the AR Most Endangered Rivers list due to the threat from the proposed New York Regional Interconnect high-voltage power line that was ultimately defeated. ♦



**LACKAWAXEN TOPS:** Frederica Leighton of the Lackawaxen River Conservancy, who wrote the successful application nominating the Lackawaxen River as Pennsylvania's 2010 River of the Year, accepts a souvenir paddle June 14 during the first-ever Lackawaxen River Sojourn from Nick Spinelli, left, and Dick Rhodes. Celebratory activities continue through December. Visit [www.lackawaxenriver.org](http://www.lackawaxenriver.org) for details. (UDC Photo by Laurie Ramie)



# Upper Delaware Council Activity Highlights

Highlights of Upper Delaware Council activities and river valley issues from mid-March to early August 2010, not mentioned elsewhere in this issue, include:

## UDC TAGS

Six member municipalities' applications requesting \$20,750 in funding through the UDC's Technical Assistance Grants (TAG) program were received by the July 13 deadline. A total of \$16,700 is budgeted for the Fiscal Year 2011 program.

A special meeting of the Project Review Committee to evaluate the proposals took place on Aug. 10. The full Council was expected to vote on the slate of recommended awards on Oct. 7.

## FLEXIBLE FLOWS

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management (WU/RM) Committee has been devoting a portion of every monthly meeting since March to gathering information in order to prepare UDC recommendations for improving the Flexible Flow Management Program.

The FFMP, which manages releases from New York City's Delaware River Basin reservoirs, went into effect on Sept. 30, 2007 and will expire on Sept. 30, 2011.

The program's goals are to reserve an appropriate volume and condition of water in the reservoirs to meet the optimum needs of all basin-wide uses.

These diverse uses include a drinking water supply, aquatic habitat, recreation, and flood mitigation.

The WU/RM Committee has been studying a white paper released jointly by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission titled, "Recommended Improvements to the Flexible Flow Management Program for Coldwater Ecosystem Protection in the Delaware River Tailwaters", as well as hearing presentations from experts and scientists.

Discussions have centered on evaluating conservation releases, thermal stresses, New York City's current diversion of only about 550 millions of gallons a day out of its 800 mgd entitlement, water-wasting leaks in the system, and applications of the Operational Analysis and Simulation of Integrated Systems (OASIS) model to test varying impacts of release changes.

The ultimate decision for renewing or revising the FFMP will rest with the parties to the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court Decree, which are New York City and the four basin states of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.

## BLUESTONE MINING

Bluestone mining regulation changes proposed by the PA Department of Envi-



**RAFT TRIP:** The Upper Delaware Council sponsored its 22nd Annual Family Raft Trip on August 1. A total of 87 participants, including 10 children ages 6-12, paddled the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River on a 10-mile section from Skinner's Falls to the Ten Mile River Landing. Lander's River Trips was the host livery. Above, Jacqui Sturgis of Honesdale, PA was a newcomer to the UDC event. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

ronmental Protection (DEP) prompted the UDC to issue a July 1 comment letter.

The rulemaking pertains to general permits issued by the state for the extraction of non-coal minerals in mining areas of five acres or less.

After expressing support for the economic and historic importance of the bluestone industry in the river valley, the letter points out that the River Management Plan prohibits "major" surface mining operations exceeding two acres in size anywhere in the designated river corridor boundaries.

"We request that any applications for mining operations located within the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River corridor undergo a full review process and that they substantially conform with the Land and Water Use Guidelines in the River Management Plan by keeping them Minor Surface Mining Operations. We also request that the requirements ... (relating to public notices of filing permit applications) NOT be waived for sites operating under this general permit," the letter states.

## PROJECT REVIEWS

The UDC issued favorable comment letters on these proposed developments:

- a 150-foot monopole telecommunications tower at Ski Big Bear Resort on Masthope Mountain in Lackawaxen Township to expand cell phone service (April 1);
- Rebuilding of the Hawk's Nest Cafe at 601 Rt. 97 in the Town of Deerpark, pro-

posed to re-open on the existing footprint of the popular tourist attraction that was destroyed by fire in 2002 (May 6).

## HYDROELECTRIC LICENSES

AER NY-Gen, LLC (Alliance Energy) petitioned the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on April 30 to transfer its licenses for the Swinging Bridge, Mongaup Falls, and Rio hydroelectric projects located along the Mongaup River in the Towns of Lumberland and Deerpark.

If approved, the new owners would be Eagle Creek, organized under Hydro Power, Water Resources and Land Resources LLCs as a subsidiary of Hudson Clean Energy Partners of Teaneck, NJ.

Reinforcing a May 21 position expressed by Congressman Maurice Hinchey, the UDC wrote to FERC on June 3 opposing AER's request for an expedited review of its application and asking for an extension of the public comment period.

"It is our understanding that the applicant is not currently in full compliance with the requirements of its existing license, and its recent application raises a host of concerns that require further scrutiny, including environmental, recreational, safety, historical, community impact, local tax, and property value issues," the letter states.

A subsequent July 1 UDC letter to NYS DEC urged continuation of the 100 cubic feet per second (cfs) conservation releases-

**Please see HIGHLIGHTS on Page 7**

**The Upper Delaware**



#### HIGHLIGHTS, continued from Page 6

es made year-round at the Rio Reservoir under the utility's potential new ownership for habitat protection of this tributary river.

#### NY TOWN GRANTS

The UDC on May 6 approved the eight projects submitted by its New York State town members for their \$3,125 shares of a \$25,000 Aid to Localities grant secured by Senator John J. Bonacic.

The targeted completion date for the FY 2009-10 program administered by the UDC and the NYS DEC is Aug. 15, 2011.

Sen. Bonacic has secured \$415,000 for the UDC's NY towns over six grant rounds.

#### VISITOR CENTER

The National Park Service (NPS) has pulled the plug on the proposal to open a Mongaup Visitor Center at the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Mongaup Access site along NYS Rt. 97 in the Town of Lumberland.

In a March 23 letter to the DEC, Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Superintendent Sean McGuinness noted that six different sites in the Mongaup vicinity, near the corridor's southern terminus, had been explored since 1980.

"Though the National Park Service has invested significant time, money and resources in studying these sites, we have been unable to reach an agreement that can meet both the needs of the National Park Service and the State of New York at this time," McGuinness wrote.

The two mobile trailer units that had been fabricated for temporary visitor center use were transferred to the Paterson Great Falls NPS site in New Jersey. ♦



**FLY FREE:** The Delaware Valley Raptor Center of Milford, PA rehabilitated this two-year-old juvenile bald eagle after the female had bounced off of several trucks near an auto dealership in Hortonville, NY, suffering shock and trauma injuries. Bill Streeter and his crew nursed the raptor back to health less than a week later. After a few enclosed target test runs, Streeter released the eagle back into the wild on April 8 at the Callicoon Creek Park in Callicoon. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)



#### Water Snapshot Brings 400+ Kids to the River

Students from Damascus Elementary School took water quality readings at the Damascus, PA Access as part of the National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River's 2010 Water Snapshot program held from April 19-30 surrounding Earth Day.

Over 400 fourth through eighth grade students in 20 classrooms of six New York and Pennsylvania schools were visited by Park Rangers to learn about watershed principles before the kids had a chance to go outside for hands-on water quality sampling.

The data they collect on dissolved oxygen, nitrates, phosphates, temperature, and pH parameters helps provide a "snapshot" of the river's ecological health and promotes stewardship.

For information on this project, visit [www.nps.gov/upde/forteachers/water-snapshot.htm](http://www.nps.gov/upde/forteachers/water-snapshot.htm) or call (570) 729-7842.

(Contributed Photo by NPS Biologist Jamie Myers)



# UDC Recognizes River Valley Contributors

The Upper Delaware Council (UDC) honored individuals, organizations, and projects that have enhanced the quality of life or protected the resources of the Upper Delaware River Valley at its 22nd Annual Awards Ceremony on April 25.

One hundred guests enjoyed a reception and buffet dinner at The Eldred Preserve in Eldred, NY.

2010 UDC Chairman Harold G. Roeder, Jr. of Town of Delaware, assisted in the presentation of 10 awards.

Alan Bowers and Charles Wieland shared the Distinguished Service Award for their combined 35 years of service to the UDC representing Westfall Township, PA and the Town of Tusten, NY, respectively, and their long-term tenures as chairmen of the UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee.

Both multi-year UDC officers left the board at the end of 2009, but their leadership contributions will have a lasting impact on the organization's effectiveness.

The Robin M. Daniels Memorial Lifesaving Award went to Town of Highland Constable Marc H. Anthony for his August 19, 2009 off-duty river rescue that prevented the drowning of a 16-year-old honors student who was participating in a Columbia University Outdoor Orientation Program canoeing trip near Barryville.

The Multi-Municipal Gas Drilling Task Force earned the Partnership Award for collaborating with the Sullivan County Division of Planning & Environmental Management on the September 2009 study, "Managing Natural Gas Development Impacts: Strategies to Protect Town Infrastructure



**HIGHEST HONOR:** Two former Upper Delaware Council representatives jointly received the Distinguished Service Award for their combined 35 years of organizational support. Pictured with 2010 UDC Chairperson Harold G. Roeder, Jr., center, are Charles Wieland, Town of Tusten, NY, left, and Alan Bowers, Westfall Township, PA, right. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

and Land Use."

Participating river valley towns in that study were Tusten, Cohecton, Delaware, Highland, Lumberland, and Fremont.

The award was accepted by former Sullivan County Planning Commissioner Dr. William J. Pammer and former project lead agency representative Ben Johnson from the Town of Tusten.

Ed Jackson of Narrowsburg won the Volunteer Award for his service to the Town of Tusten in the areas of planning, zoning, and community improvements.

Carla Hauser Hahn of Callicoon received

the Cultural Achievement Award for her project management of flood-damage repairs to the National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River's Roebling Bridge and Towpath Trail.

Cliff Robinson, Jr. of Westtown, NY received the Recreation Achievement Award for his trail-blazing and canal towpath restoration efforts through the Delaware & Hudson Canal & Gravity Railroad Conservancy.

Dorene Warner of Barryville received the Community Service Award for her organization of river shoreline litter clean-ups and her W Design company's website initiatives for Upper Delaware organizations.

Two Special Recognition Awards were given.

Barb St. John White of the U.S. Geological Survey in Wellsboro, PA was cited for her Master's Thesis study of fish host suitability for endangered dwarf wedgemussels in the Upper Delaware River.

Bob Hare of Delray Beach, FL was recognized for donating 1,128 hours as a NPS Upper Delaware summer volunteer in 2008 and 2009, and for his bravery in attempting an Aug. 23 river rescue at Pond Eddy that renewed his zeal for river safety education.

The Oaken Gavel Award went to George J. Fluhr of Shohola Township, PA, for his leadership as the UDC's chairperson in 2009.

Fluhr is the only member of the UDC's inaugural board from its 1988 inception who continues his tenure.

He took the occasion to thank his fellow

**Please see AWARDS on Page 9**



**SEASONAL VOLUNTEER:** The UDC presented Bob Hare with his Special Recognition Award after he and his wife, Barbara, pictured above, returned from their Delray Beach, FL home at the start of summer to begin their third season as volunteers at the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River unit of the National Parks System. (UDC Photo by Laurie Rame)





**AWARD WINNERS:** Accepting honors at the UDC's 22nd Annual Awards Ceremony held on April 25 at The Eldred Preserve were, seated from the left: Dorene Warner; Carla Hauser Hahn; Barb St. John White; George J. Fluhr; and Charles Wieland. Standing from the left: Officer Marc H. Anthony; Ben Johnson; Dr. William J. Pammer; Ed Jackson; Cliff Robinson, Jr.; and Alan Bowers. (UDC Photos this page by David B. Soete)

#### **AWARDS, continued from Page 8**

UDC delegates, the "outstanding staff", the participating municipalities and agencies, and the river valley's property owners "who have protected the corridor, keeping faith with their predecessors who believed that they could protect it better than the government."

Rather than a massive condemnation of land to protect the river, the successful compromise to achieve the same result with voluntary compliance was the UDC's home-rule structure, Fluhr concluded.

New York State Assemblywoman Aileen M. Gunther, who has represented the 98th

District that includes all of Sullivan County and most of Orange County since January 2004, delivered the keynote address at the awards banquet.

"This is a wonderful organization," she said, "a partnership with one mission: to manage and preserve the Delaware River for generations to follow."

Gunther discussed her support for smart growth, alternative energy, flood mitigation, and state recreation funding.

On the subject of natural gas exploration, Gunther said, "I'm interested in one thing only: safety. We must find a balance that maintains the environment while growing the economy. Property rights must be considered. Projects must be beneficial for everyone, not just a segment," she said. ♦



**RIGHT PATH:** Delaware & Hudson Canal & Gravity Railroad Conservancy President Cliff Robinson displays a D&H trail marker that he hopes to one day find blazing a hiking/biking trail along as much of the 1828-1898 historic canal route between Carbondale, PA and Eddyville, NY as possible.



**NYS Assemblywoman Aileen M. Gunther, UDC Awards Keynote Speaker**

## **Fiscal Crises Affect NY-PA Joint Bridges**

The fiscal crises being experienced in New York State and Pennsylvania are forcing their Departments of Transportation (DOT) to analyze the highest priority needs to assure safe travel on the Upper Delaware River's bridges.

At the annual NY-PA Joint Interstate Bridge Commission meeting on May 12 in Binghamton, the DOT regional directors painted a dire picture of money woes that are having a drastic impact on their operations.

For the first time, the commission added a new column to its Schedule of Proposed and Let Projects: "unfunded", where red-lined expenditures total \$28,846,000.

"I've been with DOT for 27 years and I've never seen it like it is currently," said Jack Williams, NYS DOT Region 9 director. "Our funding is at 61% of where we were in the past. The types of projects on our program amount to maintenance so we can spread our money where we can."

George J. Roberts, district executive with PennDOT District 4-0 based in Dunmore, agreed from his perspective as a 26-year DOT employee.

"We have a major shortfall in dollars. We're basically trying to figure out how to provide the same level of service with less funding," Roberts said. "We're putting 90% of our funds into asset management and preservation."

While a recent nation-wide study ignominiously ranked PA and NY as having among the highest percentages of bridges which are structurally deficient (39% in PA and 37% in NY), the DOT regional directors pledged their commitment to take care of the Upper Delaware's special crossings.

"We have a huge, unfunded amount of money involved in how we're going to address these structures, but safety will always come first," Roberts said.

"These bridges are a treasure and we'll do everything we can to manage them. Our primary mission is to keep everything safe," Williams said.

The 1904 Pond Eddy Bridge has been under design for 15 years, with \$3 million already spent on preliminary engineering.

Continuous repairs have been necessary at the historic bridge with a 7-ton weight limit. Only PA has its half of the estimated \$9.5 million construction cost in hand, as the environmental compliance phase trudges on.

Deck replacements and other improvements at the 1954 Narrowsburg-Darbytown, 1961 Callicoon-Damascus, and 1952 Cochection-Damascus Bridges fell into the unfunded column. ♦



# Sojourn Bridges the Delaware Valley

The Upper Delaware region hosted the first three days of the 16th Annual Delaware River Sojourn under the 2010 theme of "Bridging the Delaware Valley - Connecting Communities."

Twenty-four "thru-trippers" signed up to paddle all 60-plus non-contiguous miles of the Delaware River Sojourn sections in New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey from June 20-26.

Other Sojourners enjoyed guided paddling, educational programs, camping, and meals for one or more days.

The Day 1 trip from Ten Mile River to Barryville attracted 78 paddlers. There were 80 on Day 2 from Barryville to Staircase Rapids. On the third day, 74 paddlers went from Staircase Rapids to Matamoras.

Local presentations took place on Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct, Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Exploration, the new exhibits at the Zane Grey Museum, and the Water Snapshot sampling program.

Participants valued their time on the river and the camaraderie.

Second-time Sojourner Cheryl Redding of Denville, NJ, said, "I brought my daughter and her boyfriend this time. Now they want to buy boats!"

Langhorne, PA Mayor Chris Blaydon was one of six in his Sojourn family crew that included four grandsons ages 11-16.

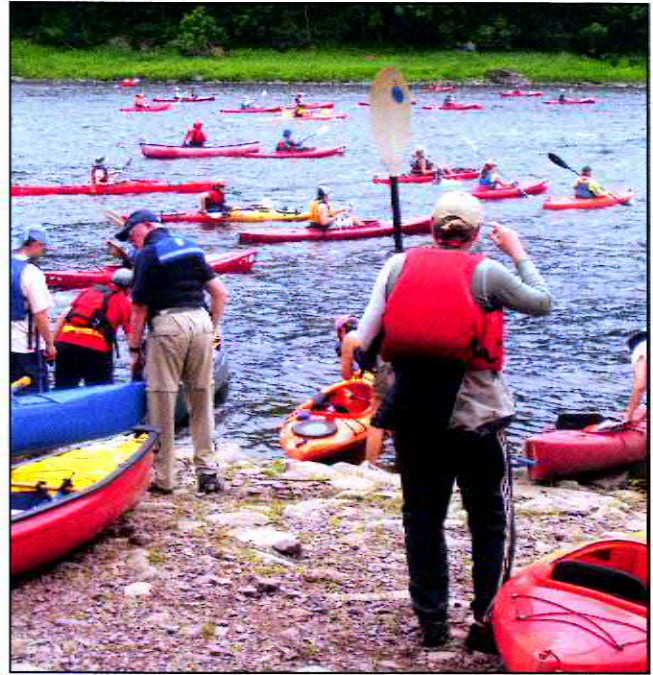
"The water temperature was great for swimming and the water quality was outstanding," said Blaydon, while his son Scott lauded the "great fishing; I caught four bass and a shad."

Charlie Day of Philadelphia marveled over looking up from his kayak to spy a bald eagle with a fish in its claws flying overhead.

Each year, the Delaware River Sojourn pays tribute to individuals and organization that have promoted stewardship of the river and its natural, cultural, recreational, and scenic resources, typically with a "Lord/Lady High Admiral" title that harkens back to the spirit of 1767 pioneer Delaware River raftsman Daniel Skinner.

Sullivan County, NY Commissioner of Planning and Environmental Management Luiz C. Aragon and Catskill Mountainkeeper Program Director Wes Gillingham were saluted as 2010 Admirals.

Aragon, of Barryville, was cited for his county office's focus on the needs of the river valley communities. Livingston Manor, NY organic



**OFF AGAIN:** Delaware River Sojourners return to the river near the Mongaup Access following a lunch and program stop during their Staircase Rapids, NY to Matamoras, PA stretch on June 22. (UDC Photos this page by Laurie Ramie)

farmer Gillingham was recognized for the environmental advocacy efforts of his non-profit citizens' group since 2007.

The Sojourn surprised Sandy Schultz, former NPS Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Assistant Superintendent and dedicated Sojourn Committee co-founder, by dubbing her "The Duchess of the Delaware" for the entire week-long event.

Schultz moved to Accomac, VA after retiring from NPS on March 31, 2010.

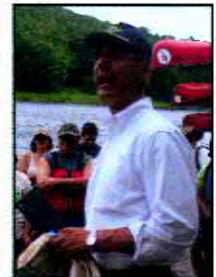
Day planners for the Upper Delaware section were Laurie Ramie from the Upper Delaware Council, Dick Rhodes from the National Canoe Safety Patrol, and Rich Egan from the National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River's Volunteers-in-Parks Program.

The Sojourn is organized by a consortium of agencies, non-profit organizations, and volunteers working and/or residing in the Delaware River Watershed.

Visit [www.delawareriversojourn.org](http://www.delawareriversojourn.org) for a 2010 photo gallery and information on next year's event. ❖



**SOJOURN ROYALTY:** In the Upper Delaware, honors were given to "Duchess of the Delaware" Sandy Schultz, pictured above center with Delaware River Sojourn Steering Committee Co-chairs Kate O'Hara, left, and Sarah Berg, right; and to "Lord High Admirals" Wes Gillingham, at near right, and Luiz C. Aragon, at far right.







## Zane Grey's Diversity Explored at Festival

Known most famously as a prolific writer of Western novels, Zane Grey's legacy also includes record sports fishing, professional baseball, and an early career in dentistry.

The National Park Service celebrated the many facets of Zane Grey's life and times at a July 17 festival held on the grounds of the Lackawaxen, PA home where Grey and his family lived from 1905 to 1918.

A highlight was an appearance by Eric Grey (pictured at right), Zane's great-great grandson, discussing the East-West influences in his literary work.

Ethan Kuhn (above, right) of Lackawaxen showed Mike Marsh (left) of Pine Bush, NY, how his great-great-grandfather, Gottlieb Kuhn, built the house that now serves as the remodeled Zane Grey Museum.

Exhibits, demonstrations, puppet shows, children's games, music, and refreshments proceeded throughout the day. ❖



(UDC Photos by Laurie Ramlie)

## Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Expands Views

The Upper Delaware Scenic Byway (UDSB), Inc. was working at press time to open up vistas to the Upper Delaware River from New York State Route 97.

Selective clearing work was proceeding at five demonstration sites as part of a NYS Rt. 97 Landscape Enhancement Project funded by a \$50,000 state grant.

Community Planning Consultant Fred F. Suljic of Lackawaxen, PA was retained by UDSB, Inc. to conduct a visual survey of the designated byway corridor between Hancock and Port Jervis; identify and research parcels that would benefit from improved vistas; prepare an action plan report; and engage a landscape contractor to do understory clearing and pruning in agreement with property owners under the guidance of a certified arborist.

Jesse G's Nursery Sunspot Landscape of Glen Spey won the bid for the work at the five sites in the Towns of Deerpark, Lumberland, and Highland.

### Visitor Center

UDSB, Inc. and Sullivan County received 19 proposals from professional firms interested in developing a Concept Design and Feasibility Study for an Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Visitors Center at the Fort Delaware Museum of Colonial History in Narrowsburg.

At press time, six firms had been interviewed and a final selection was underway.

UDSB, Inc. has a \$25,000 state grant available for the study, which will explore benefits, challenges, and potential layouts to locating a visitor's center at the county-owned site.

Serving as UDSB officers for the April 2010-2011 year are Chairperson Nadia Rajsz, Town of Lumberland; Vice-Chairperson Rosie DeCristofaro, Town of Delaware; and Secretary-Treasurer Larry H. Richardson, Town of Cochetcon. ❖

## Please Help the UDC to Update Our Mailing List

The Upper Delaware Council offers its free newsletter on-line at [www.upperdelawarecouncil.org](http://www.upperdelawarecouncil.org) or via postal mail. Please advise us if you wish to discontinue your mail copy, would like to sign up as a new mail subscriber, or if there are any changes to your name or address for our records. Return this notice to: Upper Delaware Council, P.O. Box 192, Narrowsburg, NY 12764; or call (845) 252-3022 or e-mail [laurie@upperdelawarecouncil.org](mailto:laurie@upperdelawarecouncil.org).

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*Working together to conserve the Upper  
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The Upper Delaware Council, Inc. meets on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. Three standing committees, Water Use/Resource Management, Operations, and Project Review, meet on the third and fourth Tuesdays of every month at the UDC office, 211 Bridge St., Narrowsburg, NY. All meetings are open to the public. Call (845) 252-3022 or visit [www.upperdelawarecouncil.org](http://www.upperdelawarecouncil.org) for specific meeting dates.

## Upper Delaware News, Views and 'To Do's'

### Water Trail Signs Planned

Preliminary concepts for a comprehensive, unified sign system for the Delaware River Water Trail between Hancock, NY and Trenton, NJ were introduced at a July 19 open house in Narrowsburg sponsored by the Delaware River Greenway Partnership and National Park Service.

Designed by Simone Collins Landscape Architecture of Berwyn, PA, the sign system aims to provide information regarding river access, mapping of hazards, recreational resources, points of interest, and related natural and cultural resources.

Visit [www.delrivgreenway.org](http://www.delrivgreenway.org) for further details on this project. ♦

### Basin Plan Wins Grant

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has awarded The Nature Conservancy a \$450,000 grant to fund a comprehensive conservation plan for the Delaware River Basin. Fellow project partners include the Natural Lands Trust and the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary.

The Delaware Basin Restoration Initiative will identify opportunities to protect and

improve water quality and habitat, as well as provide a blueprint for the region's conservation organizations and agencies to implement components of the plan. ♦

### EagleFest Set for Jan. 15

The Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance will hold the 10th Annual EagleFest on Jan. 15, 2011 with an expanded program of presentations and new speakers.

The festival takes place at locations throughout Narrowsburg, NY from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., snow or shine.

In addition to live birds of prey and other species, there will be children's activities, ice sculptures, wood carving, photography exhibits, environmental documentaries, an art show, and eagle viewing.

Consult [www.dveaglealliance.org](http://www.dveaglealliance.org). ♦

### Shad Ages Under Study

Formulating an age range of the spawning population of American shad in the Upper Delaware River is the objective of a National Park Service-funded study.

From May 1-June 19, the NPS contacted anglers at 12 access points to complete a

creel survey developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Scale samples were aged by the PA Fish & Boat Commission.

Data is being extrapolated into an annual rate of survival, since the spawning stock of American shad is at historic lows.

Call (570) 729-7842 to request results. ♦

### Hamlets Vie for Grants

The river valley hamlets of Callicoon, Narrowsburg, and Barryville would receive a \$500,000 matching funds program through the New York Main Street Program and \$750,000 for property improvements through the NYS Community Development Block Grant Program if applications submitted in April by Sullivan County are successful. The UDC sent support letters. ♦

### Get Real-time Water Data

The U.S. Geological Survey offers a new service that allows subscribers to receive daily or hourly updates about current conditions in rivers, lakes, and groundwater.

Sign up at <http://water.usgs.gov/wat-eralert> for customized, real-time e-mail or text alerts. ♦