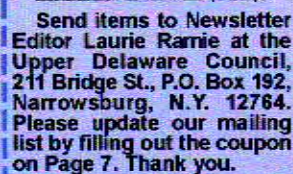
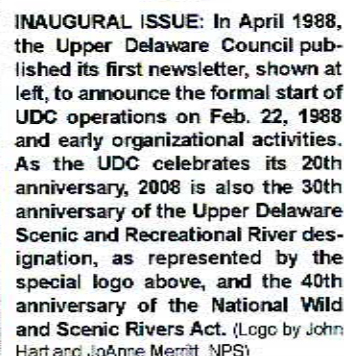


***The quarterly newsletter about the environment and people of the Upper Delaware River***

Spring 2008



## 4950



Articles outlining the UDC's creation out of controversy and accomplishments over two decades will follow in future issues. ❖

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



## Upper Delaware Profile: Vidal Martinez

Returning to work in his home state after 33 years of federal government service up and down the East Coast, National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Superintendent Vidal Martinez says, "My intent is to be an agent of positive change and to be here to stay."

His first day on the job was Feb. 4, 2008, taking over one month after the retirement of former Superintendent Dave Forney and with virtually no transition time from his last, seven-year assignment.

Martinez had served as superintendent of both the George Washington Birthplace National Monument in Colonial Beach, VA and the Thomas Stone National Historic Site in Port Tobacco, MD since Aug. 2000.

His attraction to the Upper Delaware had multiple motivations.

On a professional level, Martinez says, "The desire for me was to be more involved with natural resource issues. My background is in maintenance, interpretation, law enforcement, and environmental compliance, with a particular focus on cultural resources most recently. This is an opportunity to broaden my experience."

On a personal level, Martinez looks forward to introducing his young children to a more rural, river-oriented lifestyle and to having closer proximity to family members in New York City and the Hudson Valley.

Martinez's 84-year-old mother, Maria, lives in Peekskill with one of his three older sisters, and his one younger brother lives in Florida, NY.

The 55-year-old, bilingual Bronx native is a second-generation Park Service employee. His father, Vidal Sr., began working in maintenance positions at sites such as the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and Grant's Tomb just as Martinez was born.

"I ended up following his path and carrying on a bit of his legacy, although I didn't set out to do that," Martinez says.

"After high school, I drove a cab in New York then took liberal arts courses before I decided to pursue recreation as a career. I had developed an appreciation of the outdoors, even if it was just through visits to Central Park back then," he recalls.

Martinez earned a Bachelor's degree in Recreation from the City University of New York and, in 1989, a Masters degree in Recreation Planning and Education from Virginia Commonwealth University.

His NPS career began as a seasonal laborer and led to a 1975 position offering tours at many of the New York City national parks where his father had worked.

Martinez was impressed by the NPS philosophy of preserving public treasures.

Assignments of increasing responsibility followed at Gateway National Recreation



Vidal Martinez, National Park Service

Area in Highlands, NJ, Petersburg National Battlefield in Virginia, and the Sagamore Hill National Historic Site in Oyster Bay, NY, which he managed from 1990-2000.

From 1981-1987, Martinez branched out from NPS to join the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as an Outdoor Recreation Planner, working at a national fish hatchery in VA and a wildlife refuge in MD.

Martinez's "on-the-job orientation" at UDS&RR has included studying the River Management Plan, receiving briefings from his "passionate and committed team" of staff, attending many meetings, consulting with partner groups and constituents, and exploring assistance opportunities.

"This has been quite a learning curve for me to get knowledgeable about the complexity of issues and concerns in this park unit. As an outsider coming into this beautiful area, I want to instill an ethic of helping people to understand the value of these resources so that they don't take them for granted. We have to work in collaboration to protect this river corridor," he says.

Martinez looks forward to having his wife, Zoraida, and their children, Vidal William, 10, and Lily Aurora, 4, join him after completing the move from Spotsylvania, VA at the end of the school year. They're currently searching for a house in the Honesdale area of Wayne County, PA.

Martinez also has two adult daughters, Deanna Martinez, 24, of Orlando, FL, and Marlene Perez, 23, who resides in Spotsylvania with her two children, Aiden Ross and Lorelei. The temporary separation from his family has been difficult.

But Martinez welcomes the idea of planting new roots and joining the ranks of UDS&RR recreationists for boating, fishing, swimming, hiking, bicycling, and communing with nature. ♦

### Upper Delaware Council, Inc.

P.O. Box 192, 211 Bridge St.  
Narrowsburg, NY 12764-0192  
Telephone: (845) 252-3022  
FAX: (845) 252-3359

**The Upper Delaware** is a free quarterly publication of the Upper Delaware Council, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization comprised of member governments from New York and Pennsylvania directly affected by the River Management Plan for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River.

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Del. River Basin Commission..... Carol R. Collier

### Partner

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### Staff

Executive Director..... William E. Douglass  
[udcdouglass@hvc.rr.com](mailto:udcdouglass@hvc.rr.com)  
Senior Resource Specialist..... David B. Soete  
[udcsoete@hvc.rr.com](mailto:udcsoete@hvc.rr.com)  
Public Relations/Newsletter..... Laurie Ramie  
[udcramie@hvc.rr.com](mailto:udcramie@hvc.rr.com)  
Office Manager..... Carol Coney  
[udcconey@hvc.rr.com](mailto:udcconey@hvc.rr.com)

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**CHANGING THE GUARD:** Participating in the Upper Delaware Council's (UDC) Annual Meeting on Jan. 3, 2008 were newly-inducted officers, seated left to right: Vice-Chairperson Charles Wieland, Town of Tusten; Chairperson Alan Bowers, Westfall Township; and Secretary-Treasurer John B. Niflot, Town of Fremont. Standing, from left to right, were David C. Forney, National Park Service (NPS) Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River; UDC Executive Director William E. Douglass; Jay Shafer, Town of Lumberland; Sandra Schultz, NPS; William J. Rudge, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; George J. Fluhr, Shohola Township; Carol R. Collier, Delaware River Basin Commission; Harold G. Roeder, Jr., Town of Delaware; Larry H. Richardson, Town of Cochection; John S. McKay, Lackawaxen Township; Jim Rodgers, Town of Fremont; and Melvin Decker, Town of Deepark. Absent were representatives from the Towns of Hancock and Highland, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. (UDC Photo by David B. Scete)

## UDC Reorganizes for New Year

Westfall Township, PA Representative Alan Bowers was sworn in to preside over the Upper Delaware Council, Inc.'s 20th year of operations during the Annual Meeting held Jan. 3 in Narrowsburg, NY.

Tusten Town Justice Alfred Smith III administered the oaths of office to Bowers, who succeeds 2007 Chairperson F. Gerald Mackin; Vice-Chairperson Charles Wieland of the Town of Tusten, NY; and Secretary-Treasurer John B. Niflot of the Town of Fremont, NY.

A reception with cake and coffee was held to honor the newly-elected officers.

This is Bowers' second time as chairperson, having served 10 years ago in 1998. He was first appointed to the UDC board as an alternate representative in 1992 and is a member/past chair of all three of the Council's standing committees.

A graduate of Delaware Valley High School and Penn State University, Bowers has been employed for 37 years as a Senior Research Technician at New York University Medical Center's Nelson Institute of Environmental Medicine in Sterling Forest. He is certified by the American Association of Laboratory Animal Science.

After reorganizational meetings of its municipal members, 2008 UDC appointees are:

Town of Hancock - Jim Serio, representative; Fred Peckham, alternate (both new)

Town of Fremont - John B. Niflot, rep.; Jim Rodgers, alt.

Town of Delaware - Harold G. Roeder, Jr., rep.; Eric J. Nystrom, alt.

Town of Cochection - Larry H. Richardson, rep.; John A. Reggero, alt.

Town of Tusten - Charles Wieland, rep.; Ben Johnson, alt.

Town of Highland - John Sundholm, rep.; Tina Palecek, alt. (both new)

Town of Lumberland - Jay Shafer, rep. (new); Joseph Carr, alt.

Town of Deepark - Philip D. Chase, rep.; Melvin Decker, alt.

Lackawaxen Township - John S. McKay, rep.; Brian Stuart, alt.

Shohola Township - George J. Fluhr, rep.; Nelia Wall, alt. (switched positions)

Westfall Township - Alan Bowers, rep.; George R. Jerus, alt.

State of New York - William J. Rudge, rep.; Michael J. Flaherty, alt.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Dennis DeMara, rep.; alternate position vacant

Delaware River Basin Commission (non-voting member) - DRBC Executive Director Carol R. Collier, rep.

National Park Service (partner) - NPS Northeast Regional Director Dennis Reidenbach, rep.; Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River Superintendent Vidal Martinez (new).

The UDC appreciates the service of former board members F. Gerald Mackin, Town of Hancock (2002-2007); Nadia Rajs, Town of Lumberland (2000-2007); Robert Burrow, Town of Highland (2005-2007); Steve Barnes, Town of Highland (2006-2007); and NPS partner, Dave Forney (July 1, 2002-Jan. 3, 2008). ♦

## Assemblyman Crouch Keynote Speaker at UDC Awards April 27

New York State Assemblyman Clifford W. Crouch (R-107th District) will deliver the keynote address at the Upper Delaware Council's 20th Annual Awards Ceremony on April 27 at LaSalette Restaurant in Hancock, NY.



**NYS Assembly Member  
Clifford W. Crouch**

Crouch was first elected to the Assembly in November 1995 to represent a district that includes parts of Chenango, Delaware, Ulster, and Broome Counties.

After graduating from Unadilla High School in 1963, Crouch earned an AAS Degree in Dairy Science from Cornell University in 1965.

He was the owner and operator of a 350-acre, 180-head dairy farm from 1967-1989.

Crouch was Supervisor of the Town of Bainbridge from 1986-1995 after serving on the Town Council from 1982-1986.

Within the Assembly, Crouch is an advocate for common sense in government.

Current committee assignments include: Agriculture; Economic Development, Job Creation, Commerce and Industry; Labor; Rules; and Ways and Means.

The UDC's ceremony on Sunday, April 27, gets underway at 3 p.m. with an hors d'oeuvres and cash bar reception.

A buffet dinner featuring roast beef, chicken, and ham, with accompaniments and a special 20th anniversary cake for dessert, will be served at 4 p.m.

Dinner will be followed by Assemblyman Crouch's keynote address and the presentation of awards to individuals, organizations, and government agencies that have acted to enhance the quality of life and protect the resources of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Valley.

LaSalette Restaurant is located atop Golf Course Road in Hancock and offers a sweeping view of the Upper Delaware's northern gateway.

Tickets are \$25 per person, with advance reservations required by April 18. Please contact Laurie Ramie at the UDC, P.O. Box 192, 211 Bridge St., Narrowsburg, NY 12764; phone (845) 252-3022; fax (845) 252-3359; e-mail [udcramie@hvc.rr.com](mailto:udcramie@hvc.rr.com). ♦



# NYRI Files Alternate Routes for Power Line

New York Regional Interconnect, Inc. (NYRI) is taking another shot at seeking the New York State Public Service Commission's (PSC) approval for what it now says is a \$2.1 billion project to build a 190-mile, 1200-megawatt electrical transmission line from upstate New York to eastern Orange County.

The PSC found NYRI's May 31, 2006 Article VII application to be deficient on July 26, 2006 and requested the filing of additional information.

On Feb. 21, 2008, NYRI submitted a Supplemental Filing that the private investment company says addresses PSC's request for additional studies and public feedback on the controversial project.

Their studies tout environmental and economic benefits, such as improving system reliability and ultimately lowering New York State's wholesale electricity costs, at no cost to taxpayers and through the use of state-of-the-art Direct Current technology.

They claim the project will create 400 jobs during the three-year construction phase, generate local sales tax and \$12 million in property taxes, and that rights-of-way will be purchased at full market value.

In an interview with the *Times Herald-Record* published Feb. 4, NYRI President Chris Thompson said that NYRI is "absolutely leaving it up to the PSC" to determine the power line's final route.

When asked about crossing the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River corridor, Thompson replied, "That's not a viable plan. Here's this pristine area where everyone goes hiking and camping. We're not going through there."

While the newly-proposed route from the

Town of Marcy in Oneida County to New Windsor in Orange County does veer away from the river, it still runs through the UDC member towns of Hancock, Fremont, Delaware, Cohecton, Tusten, Highland, Lumberland, and Deepark.

Ten-story-tall overhead towers are planned in the region, with the exception of an underground section through the Mongaup Valley Wildlife Management Area. The West Branch of the Delaware River would be crossed near Stilesville.

Among the 16 alternative route segments that were studied is an entirely separate, 184-mile route that would run parallel to New York Power Authority's (NYPA) Marcy South transmission line.

While some have suggested that utilizing an already-developed route would be more palatable, a NYPA spokesperson protested that the Marcy South rights-of-way are not large enough to allow the co-occupancy.

NYRI rejected the notion of placing its power line along the New York State Thru-

way as "not a feasible alternative."

Visit [www.nyri.us](http://www.nyri.us) to view the application.

If the PSC does not make a decision on the NYRI proposal within one year of receiving what it deems to be a complete application, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission could take over the review and grant a permit under the provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Opponents feared that the inclusion of the proposed NYRI route in the 100,000-square-mile Mid-Atlantic National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC), as designated by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) on Oct. 5, 2007, could preempt the state's transmission siting authority and provide federal eminent domain powers for NYRI to seize private property.

In response to 71 requests filed on deadline for a re-hearing on the NIETC designation, however, the DOE issued an order on Mar. 6, 2008 dismissing the challenges as "being without merit."

*Please see NYRI on Page 7*

## Upper Delaware Visitor Guide Available

The Upper Delaware Council announces the release of an updated free brochure, the "Visitor Information Map and Guide for Touring the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River: New York and Pennsylvania."

The guide features: a 17 x 22-inch map of the designated river corridor; a listing of all public river accesses and lands in the 73.4-mile span between Hancock, NY and Mill Rift, PA; 12 informational panels on river safety, sightseeing, boating, camping, fishing, hunting, emergency and agency

contacts, traveling directions, and the UDC's services; and a directory of river corridor businesses in the river recreation-related categories of Accommodations, Restaurants, Liveries and Campgrounds, and Bait & Tackle.

The UDC has published the brochure as a public service since 1988. Updates are now made every two years.

This year, 20 businesses offered a total of \$875 in voluntary donations to help offset the printing costs. Contributors were:

River Partners (\$100) - Sylvania Tree Farm Country Lodging and Camping, Lackawaxen, PA; Silver Canoe & Raft Rentals, Pond Eddy, NY; and Indian Head Canoes & Campground, Barryville, NY.

River Sponsors (\$50) - Matthew's on Main, Callicoon, NY; The Inn at Lackawaxen, Lackawaxen; Peck's Markets, Inc., Narrowsburg and Callicoon; The 1906 Restaurant, Callicoon; Lander's River Trips, Narrowsburg; and River Market, Barryville.

River Boosters (\$25) - ECCE B&B, Barryville; Lou's Tubes, Skinners Falls, NY; Narrowsburg Inn, Narrowsburg; Smith's Colonial Motel, Hancock, NY; Catskill Delaware Outdoor, Callicoon; Delaware Dips 'n Dogs, Pond Eddy; Callicoon Creamery, Callicoon; Sandercock House, Equinunk, PA; Roebing Inn on the Delaware, Lackawaxen; Hagemann's Tackle & Variety Store, Shohola, PA; and Town Diner, Barryville.

To request a brochure, contact (845) 252-3022 or [udcramie@hvc.rr.com](mailto:udcramie@hvc.rr.com).



**LAST DAY:** On his final day as Superintendent of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, Dave Forney, left, represented the National Park Service at the Upper Delaware Council's Jan. 3 meeting. His five-year tenure of dedicated service to the river valley was extolled in a plaque presented by UDC Executive Director William E. Douglass, at right. Forney retired after 33 years with NPS. His Upper Delaware tour of duty, as the park unit's only third superintendent since 1978, began July 1, 2002. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)



# Natural Gas Drilling a Hot Topic

Two camps are forming in reaction to the emerging interest by natural gas drilling speculators in what lurks beneath the Upper Delaware River Valley region.

What some see as an unexpected economic windfall for lucky landowners, others see as a profound environmental danger to our communities.

At issue is the lure of 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas estimated to be contained in a geological formation known as Marcellus Shale that extends from Ohio to West Virginia, and across parts of Pennsylvania and New York.

Although the practice of extracting natural gas dates back to the 1800's, new technology to seismically locate and recover deep deposits has increased its feasibility.

A demand for natural gas as a cheaper, cleaner fuel source, and the area's proximity to the Millennium Pipeline that is scheduled to become operational later this year also contribute to the sudden popularity.

Local residents began receiving private overtures from "landmen" seeking to negotiate mineral rights by acquiring leases to properties with potential gas reserves.

The legally-binding contracts allow gas exploration companies to drill wells after obtaining state permits.

Drilling can last from a couple weeks to a couple months, and involves the construction of an access road and drilling pad for the heavy equipment, removal of trees and vegetation, generation of a certain amount of noise, exhaust fumes and lighting, use of millions of gallons of water for the hydraulic fracturing process of the rock, and the permanent fixtures of wellhead assemblies, meters, and various tanks for the life of the well. Site reclamation is a requirement of the lease and permit.

In response, some local landowners have banded together to essentially form a collective bargaining unit to maximize their compensation and protect their interests.

The Northern Wayne Property Owners Alliance (NWPOA), which purports to represent 50,000-plus acres of land in Wayne and Susquehanna Counties, PA, hired a legal team to develop a bid package that will be issued this month to select energy companies with an invitation to submit their qualifications for consideration.

NWPOA plans to draft its own leases, oversee the bid process, and monitor gas drillers' compliance with environmental covenants on behalf of its members, all to be financed by successful bidders.

Following the NWPOA model, a Sullivan-Delaware Property Owners Association formed on the New York side of the river and includes approximately 17,000 acres



**WELLHEAD SIZE:** Long Eddy (Town of Fremont) resident Noel van Swol, who is 6'3", demonstrates the dimensions of a typical, natural gas wellhead during a field trip to Susquehanna County, PA that members of the Sullivan-Delaware (NY) Property Owners Association and Northern Wayne (PA) Property Owners Alliance took in early February to tour operational gas mining facilities. (Photo by Dan Hust, courtesy of the Sullivan County Democrat)

in northwest Sullivan County and southwest Delaware County.

The grassroots activity by these groups has spiked the competitive lease offers to \$1,500 per acre and 15% royalties of annual profits in some reported cases.

Not everyone is happy to see the landmen come to town however.

Critics are concerned over the impacts of the geologic disturbances on water and air quality, noise pollution, and viewsheds.

The adequacy of regulatory controls, effect on property values, and long-term environmental impacts have been questioned.

The U.S. House of Representatives' Oversight and Government Reform Committee has been investigating the hydraulic fracturing process and chemicals usage in a series of hearings since Oct. 31, 2007. "Fracking" is exempt from the Safe Water Drinking Act as part of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

The newly-formed Damascus Citizens for Self-Government has retained environmental attorney Richard Lippes to explore litigation options, and is among the numer-

ous organizations and agencies to host informational forums on gas drilling.

"It's a big experiment with no supervision," said Ramona Jan of Damascus to the Upper Delaware Council's Water Use/Resource Management Committee on Mar. 18. "Who's going to want to come to the Delaware River Valley and look at a bunch of well rigs?"

The UDC continues its research.

Some educational resources include:

Penn State Cooperative Extension (PA) -

[www.naturalgaslease.pbwiki.com](http://www.naturalgaslease.pbwiki.com)

Cornell Cooperative Extension (NY) -

[www.cce.cornell.edu](http://www.cce.cornell.edu)

NYS DEC Division of Mineral Resources

- [www.dec.ny.gov/energy/205.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/205.html)

PA Department of Environmental

Protection - [www.dep.state.pa.us](http://www.dep.state.pa.us)

Northern Wayne Property Owners

Alliance - Marian Schweighofer at [sprign-twin@ezaccess.com](mailto:sprign-twin@ezaccess.com) or [www.nwpoa.info](http://www.nwpoa.info)

Sullivan-Delaware Property Owners

Association - Noel van Swol at (845) 887-

4782

Damascus Citizens for Self-Government

- [www.DamascusCitizens.org](http://www.DamascusCitizens.org) ♦



# UDC Highlights Quarterly Activities

Highlights of Upper Delaware Council (UDC) activities from mid-December 2007 to mid-March 2008, include:

## POWER LINE

PPL Electric Utilities is seeking public input on a proposal to build a new 500kV transmission line to upgrade the capacity of existing towers between their Susquehanna nuclear plant in Berwick, PA and a Roseland, NJ substation, along a route that could run through Wayne and Pike Counties in this region.

The proposed construction of the 60 to 100-mile-long line comes at the direction of PJM Interconnection, an independent non-profit company that operates the power grid in a 13-state region, to prevent potential system overloads in the next decade.

Visit [www.pplreliablepower.com](http://www.pplreliablepower.com) to obtain details on this \$300-\$500 million project.

## QUARRY, CONCERT

A proposed, 40-acre expansion of a blue-stone quarry in Lackawaxen Township by Holbert Brothers Co., Inc. prompted a Feb. 7 UDC letter recommending denial of the conditional use application for a major mining permit.

The entire 269-acre property, including two five-acre areas currently approved for minor mining, is located within the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River corridor boundaries.

While the letter recognized the historical significance and importance of bluestone mining to the local economy, UDC Chairperson Alan Bowers wrote to the Lackawaxen Township Supervisors, "We question how a conditional use can be granted for a use that is specifically prohibited by the Lackawaxen Township Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, any mining operation over 5 acres in size is not in substantial conformance with the River Management Plan." In addition to major surface mining operations, the Plan's Land and Water Use Guidelines list "heavy industrial uses" as incompatible anywhere in the river corridor.

The UDC is also monitoring a proposal before the Town of Delaware Zoning Board of Appeals to hold one or more music festivals for 500-1,000 people on a portion of a 120-acre Upper Delaware River property south of Callicoon known as Big Island.

A mass gathering permit is sought by the property's owner, attorney Scott Ugell, who would like to stage multi-day concerts with camping and vendors this summer.

Concerns include the need to access the property across railroad tracks, the adequacy of parking and sanitation facilities, and the environmental impact of that use.

## FLEXIBLE FLOWS

The UDC on Mar. 3 added new clauses



**HAWK TALK:** Giselle Chazotte Smisko of the Avian Wildlife Center in Wantage, NJ, presented a live birds demonstration at the 2008 Narrowsburg EagleFest on Jan. 19. The seventh annual event organized by the Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance (DVEA) featured educational programs, guest lectures, facilitated eagle observation, a poster auction, art gallery displays, children's activities, exhibits, documentary films, and ice sculpture carvings. DVEA is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of the river valley's wildlife and natural environment. Visit [www.dveaglealliance.org](http://www.dveaglealliance.org) for information. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

to its previously-filed Sept. 6, 2007 letter to the Delaware River Basin Commission commenting on the Flexible Flow Management Program (FFMP).

The UDC believes that the proposed FFMP "is the next important step in an adaptive process for protecting and enhancing the Delaware River in terms of river health, increased recreational opportunities, and a means to increase protection against uncontrolled spills from the New York City Delaware Basin Reservoirs" and that the "FFMP operation since its temporary adoption in October has yielded promising results."

The Council continues to have concerns with spring and summer releases, particularly whether there will be sufficient cold water available. A reduction in the "yo-yo effect" of releases is encouraged.

## DELAWARE GREENWAY

The New York State Assembly approved legislation on Feb. 12 to create an Upper Delaware River Greenway.

The bill's sponsor, Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, said, "The Delaware is one of the nation's great rivers, originating in New York. The Greenway will help our communities maximize their potential to draw in tourism and share all it has to offer - just as the other major river communities

in our state do. This piece of legislation will help provide local communities with the resources necessary to protect this local, state and national treasure."

While the NYS Senate previously passed a Greenway bill on Oct. 22, 2007, it must now receive approval in the 2008 legislative term, as well as to be signed into law by Governor David A. Paterson.

## RIVER SOJOURN

The Upper Delaware will host the first two days of the 2008 Delaware River Sojourn: "Conserving Our Wild and Scenic River." The annual event began in 1995.

Participants will paddle from Narrowsburg to Ten Mile River on the kick-off afternoon of June 22, and go from Callicoon to Narrowsburg on June 23.

See [www.delawareriversojourn.org](http://www.delawareriversojourn.org) for complete itineraries of the June 22-28 day plans that offer programs, meals, camping, safety guidance, and a souvenir T-shirt.

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

At reorganizational meetings held in January, the UDC's three standing committees elected their leaders.

Serving as 2008 committee chairpersons are: Operations, Alan Bowers (Westfall); Project Review, Harold Roeder, Jr. (Delaware); and Water Use/Resource Management, Charles Wieland (Tusten). ♦



#### NYRI, continued from Page 4

The DOE cited "extensive data analysis" of critical energy constraints and an "ample opportunity for public review and comment" among its reasons.

Prior to unveiling its revised application, NYRI filed a petition on Dec. 10, 2007 seeking a declaratory ruling from the PSC on the constitutionality and applicability of the Oct. 3, 2006 New York Transportation Corporations Law (TCL) amendment that prohibited NYRI from exercising eminent domain authority for its power line.

NYRI got its answer on Feb. 13 when PSC issued an order dismissing the petition on the basis of lacking authority to make such a determination. The ruling cited the U.S. District Court's Oct. 26, 2007 dismissal of a discrimination-based lawsuit that NYRI filed against the PSC, New York State officials, and TCL bill's sponsors.

In other recent developments:

- Numerous regional and national environmental organizations have filed lawsuits arguing that DOE violated laws by designating the Mid-Atlantic NIETC without completing an Environmental Impact Statement study, among other procedural flaws.

- The State of New York on Mar. 18 filed a legal challenge against the DOE's NIETC ruling and the re-hearing denial. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania had already filed suit over this states' rights issue. U.S. Sen. Bob Casey (PA) launched a national petition at <http://casey.senate.gov/actions>.

- The Government Accountability Office released a report to the U.S. Congress on Feb. 1 concluding that power lines like NYRI could make the electric grid more efficient by reducing congestion, but run the risk of decreasing property and aesthetic values along the route, creating security issues, raising electricity prices in upstate counties, and reducing incentives to seek alternative energy solutions.

- In early January, Communities Against Regional Interconnect (CARI) was able to draw down its first \$400,000 installment of the approximately \$1 million allocation that the NYS Senate's Republican Majority had secured to help finance the coalition's NYRI research and opposition efforts. ♦



**MAPPING THE FUTURE:** Dennis DeMara, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Region 2 Recreation and Park Supervisor and Upper Delaware Council representative, collaborates with cross-border partners at a Dec. 6, 2007 meeting at which a river corridor map of developed and open spaces was reviewed. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

## Networking Across the Borders

Grassroots organizations and agencies working in various jurisdictions on both sides of the Upper Delaware River are coming together to discuss opportunities for collaborative ventures under the working title of the Upper Delaware River Roundtable.

Participants in the regional consortium are interested in sharing information and technical assistance, as well as developing joint initiatives, for the river valley's collective good.

At roundtable meetings that evolved last fall from the work of the Upper Delaware Visioning Committee, attendees have described their organizations' missions and activities; brainstormed over potential cross-border projects to pursue; heard presentations from county planners on their programs; discussed educational opportunities; and organized subcommittees.

One product of the group's collaboration is the development of a Geographic Information Systems (GIS)-based river corridor map by the National Park Service that documents currently developed land, protected properties, and large subdivision proposals in a six-county area including Delaware, Sullivan, and Orange (NY); Wayne and Pike (PA), and Sussex (NJ). The map provides a comprehensive illustration of existing land use that could inform planning decisions and raise conservation awareness.

The roundtable network has also discussed creating mechanisms to share calendars of events, co-apply for grant funding, sponsor educational initiatives, and offer advocacy.

For more information, contact Laurie Stuart of the Upper Delaware Visioning Committee at (845) 252-7414, e-mail [publisher@riverreporter.com](mailto:publisher@riverreporter.com), Sue Currier of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy at (570) 226-3164, e-mail [info@delawarehighlands.org](mailto:info@delawarehighlands.org), or visit the interactive website at <http://upperdelaware.wikispaces.com>. ♦

## New Subscribers and Address Changes Welcomed

If you have friends or colleagues who would be interested in receiving our free newsletter, we will be happy to add them to the mailing list. Please also advise us of any address changes to help update our records. Return this notice to the Upper Delaware Council, P.O. Box 192, Narrowsburg, NY 12764, call (845) 252-3022 or e-mail [udcramie@hvc.rr.com](mailto:udcramie@hvc.rr.com).

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City/State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check here to be removed from our mailing list.





Upper Delaware Council  
P.O. Box 192, 211 Bridge St.  
Narrowsburg, NY 12764-0192  
Phone: (845) 252-3022; Fax (845) 252-3359

*Working together to conserve the Upper  
Delaware Scenic and Recreational River*

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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 for specific meeting dates and agendas.

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

### NPS Seeks Interns

The National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River anticipates filling five intern positions during the 2008 summer season.

Park Ranger internships will run between May 12 and Sept. 1, and are designed for college students.

Interns are responsible for developing and presenting a variety of educational programs to youth and adults. They also staff river access kiosks, present river safety talks, and perform canoe patrols.

Send a resume and two letters of recommendation to: Internship Coordinator Ingrid Peterec, NPS Upper Delaware S&RR, 274 River Rd., Beach Lake, PA 18405. Call (570) 685-4871 for more information. ♦

### Buy Best, Zone Rest

The Pike County Office of Community Planning and Conservation Partnership Program will present "Buy the Best, Zone the Rest," a public program offering land protection techniques, on April 17 from 6-9 p.m. at the PPL Lake Wallenpaupack En-

vironmental Learning Center, Hawley, PA.

Ann Hutchinson (Natural Lands Trust) and Michael Frank (Heritage Conservancy) are the speakers.

To register, call (570) 226-6294 or e-mail [planning@pikepa.org](mailto:planning@pikepa.org). ♦

### Earth Day Festival Set

The 2008 Pike-Wayne Earth Day Festival to be held on April 19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at PPL's Lake Wallenpaupack Environmental Learning Center in Hawley, PA will feature hands-on activities, demonstrations, exhibits, bird walks, geocaching, a recycle relay, and more, appropriate for all ages and free of charge.

Visit [www.pikewayneearthday.org](http://www.pikewayneearthday.org) or call (570) 251-6196 for a complete schedule. ♦

### Eagle Count Increases

During the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Mid-winter Bald Eagle Aerial Survey conducted Jan. 10, census takers counted 30 eagles along the Delaware River vs. 20 in 2007.

The preliminary state-wide count nearly doubled from 97 in 2007 to 199 in 2008. ♦

### Post Route 97 Photos

The Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc. invites the public to contribute photos depicting New York State Route 97 scenes and surroundings for its website gallery at [www.upperdelawarescenicbyway.org](http://www.upperdelawarescenicbyway.org).

Contemporary digital images of the highway as well as scanned postcards or historical photographs are welcome. Photos may be uploaded through an easy, one-click method via the home page.

Other interactive features of the popular website include the ability to "Share the Byway" by sending a personalized e-Postcard and to request delivery of a free UDSB travelogue brochure. ♦

### NYS Tackles Invasives

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is establishing a new Office of Invasive Species that will bring biologists and foresters together to develop ways to combat the problem, work with partners on research, and raise public awareness. Steve Sanford, who previously served as the agency's Habitat Bureau director, will be the coordinator. ♦