

An aerial photograph of a wide river with numerous kayakers. The kayakers are scattered across the water, each in a brightly colored kayak (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple). The water is dark and reflects the sky. The kayakers are moving in various directions, some towards the camera and others away. The overall scene is a busy recreational activity on a scenic river.

# LOWER DELAWARE WILD & SCENIC RIVER RECREATION STUDY

Delaware River Greenway Partnership

Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River Management Council

June 24, 2021

The Shimoda Group, LLC

# Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River Management Council Steering Committee

*Richard Dodds - Chair, Kingwood Twp, NJ*

*Martie Kyde - Vice Chair, Tincum Twp, PA & Tincum Conservancy*

*Patti Ruby - Secretary, Hunterdon Land Trust*

*Bethany Hare - PA-DCNR*

*Evan Kwityn - Delaware River Basin Commission*

*Norman Torkelson - Delaware River Greenway*

*Partnership & Stockton, NJ*

*Kris Kern - Heritage Conservancy*

*Kate Raman - Natural Lands*

*Michael Tropiano - NJDEP*



# Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River User Capacity Study

Current character of use

Effectiveness of regulatory controls: permits, fees, selective closure

Suggestions to balance use and environmental concerns

Pilot programs: regulation, education, outreach

Photo: NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife Service /onthewater.com





## Who's responsible for Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers?

	Traditional WSR	Partnership WSR
Federal ownership	yes	no
NPS rangers on site?	yes	no
Management plan development	federal agency, public input	local
Plan implementation	federal responsibility, volunteer support & input	shared

# Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River Management Plan

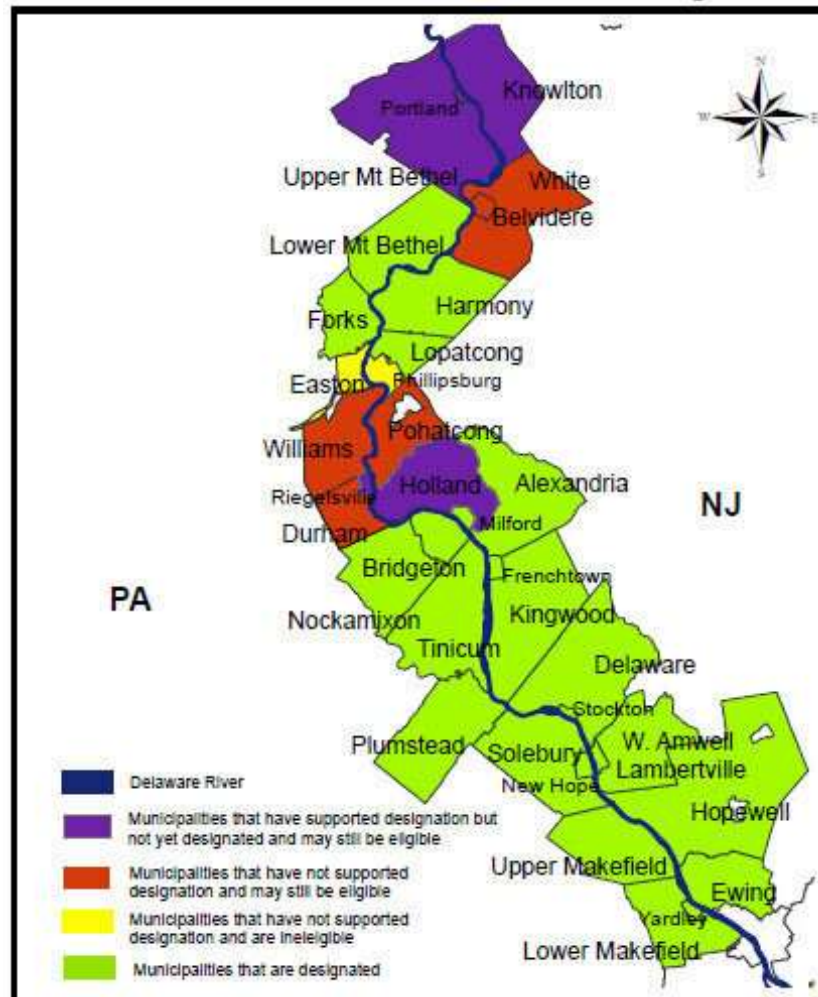
*~ maintain ~ improve ~ encourage ~ inform*

- Water quality
- Natural resources
- Historic & cultural resources
- **Recreational use**
- Economic development
- Open space

# Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River *Municipalities*

## *Pennsylvania*

*Bedminster Twp.  
Bridgeton Twp.  
Forks Twp.  
Lower Mt. Bethel  
New Hope Borough  
Nockamixon Twp.  
Plumstead Twp.  
Riegelsville Borough  
Solebury Twp.  
Springfield Twp.  
Tinicum Twp.  
Upper Makefield Twp.*



## *New Jersey*

*Alexandria Twp.  
City of Lambertville  
Delaware Twp.  
Frenchtown Borough  
Harmony Twp.  
Holland Twp.  
Hopewell Twp.  
Kingwood Twp.  
Knowlton Twp.  
Lopatcong Twp.  
Milford Borough  
Stockton Borough  
West Amwell Twp.*

# Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River



67.3 miles

Access points  
(Google Earth map)

# Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River



Photos: Delaware River Tubing Facebook, swancreekrowing.com, inquirer.com, theskimonster.com, delwarerivertubing.com



# Examples of Access Fee Inconsistency

Access	Responsibility	Fee?	Social / Interpretation	Parking Enforcement
Upper Black Eddy: PA Fish & Boat	PA Fish and Boat	Boat permit required	PA Fish and Boat	PA Fish and Boat
Kingwood: D&R Canal SP	D&R Canal State Park	D&R Canal State Seasonal fee \$15	D&R Canal State Park	State of NJ DEP, NJ State Police
Tinicum County Park	Bucks County	No Fee	Bucks County, PA State Police	Bucks County

[Table I of 30 Access Points](#) highlights opportunity to align guidance, rules and fees on both sides of the river.

## Survey Responses – Access Affiliation

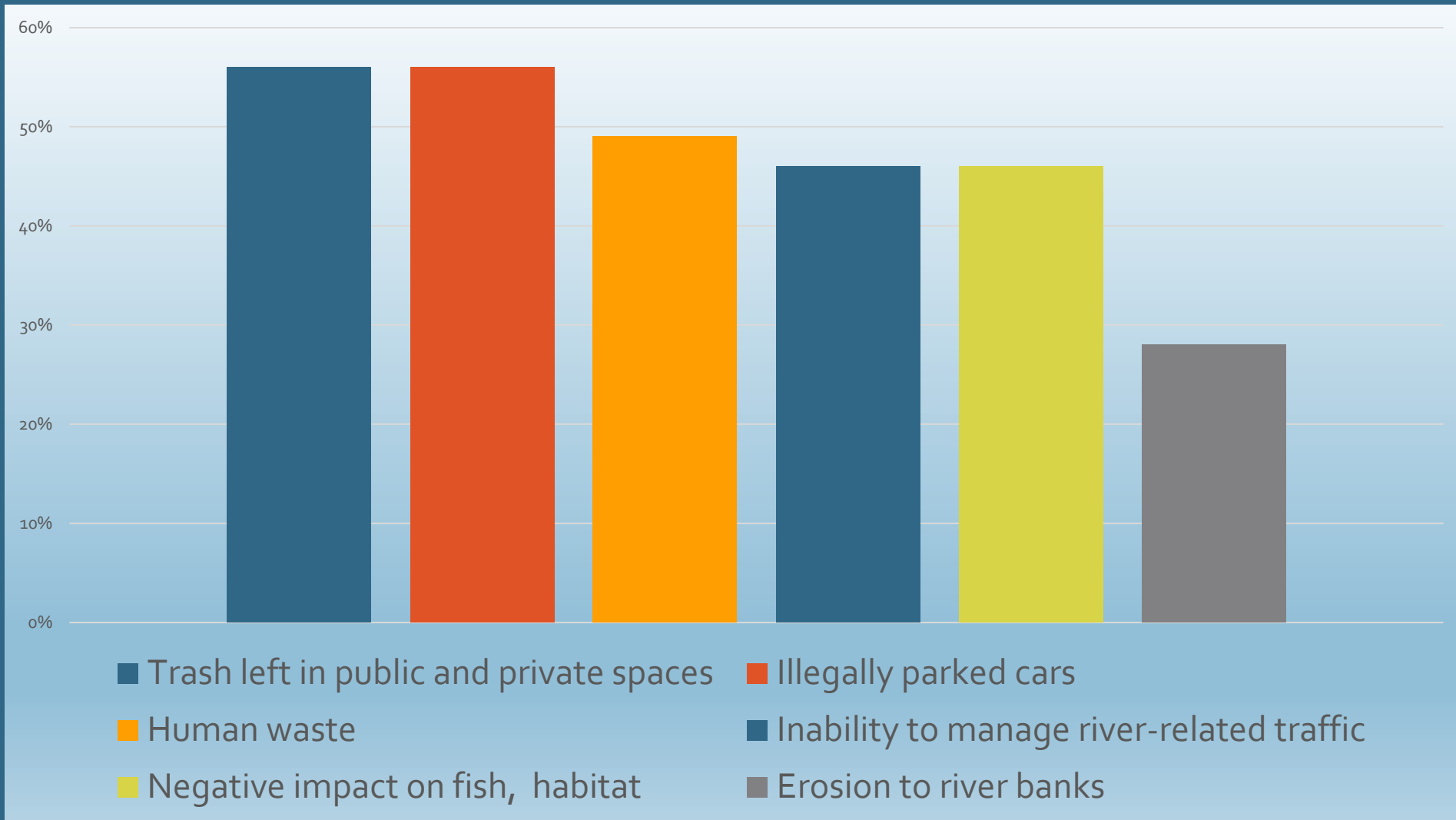
Kingwood DEP (NJ)	18 %
Scudders Falls - Yardley	14 %
Lambertville, Riegelsville (PA)	8 %
Portland Footbridge, (PA)	
Tinicum County Park (PA)	6 %
Upper Black Eddy (PA), Belvidere (NJ)	3
%	
D&L Canal (PA)	
D&R Canal State Park (NJ)	2 %

## Survey Responses – Access Affiliation

239 Total – several identified with multiple stakeholder categories

- 132 Residents
- 20 Landowners
- 11 Business owners
- 179 self-described river users

# Negative Impact of Popularity



# Town Hall Meeting – 11/30/2021

**Access** - Improve streambanks and develop more or better access points.

## **Education**

- A public education campaign encouraging people to be responsible for their own trash
- Conduct river bank cleanup days.

## **Engineering**

- Streambank protection and restoration
- Make it easier to put trash in the proper place.

## **Regulation, Enforcement**

## **Bi-State Alignment**

## **TRASH!**

## **Water Quality**

## **Municipalities not part of Partnership**

## Example of One-on-One Interviews

“Are jet skis appropriate to even be allowed to be put in at the Kingwood launch? I don’t mean to sound Draconian, but when you’re weighing public good, is this the right place for a jet ski? And I’m not sure that it is. Does trash come from the tubers? Sure, I’m absolutely positive there are beer bottles that show up on my yard but when the river floods, you know when it comes up high, I’ve had a port-a-potty come and land in my yard.”

*(Kingwood resident)*

## Another Example One-on-One Interviews

“The free resource is awesome for the underserved. Let’s encourage more respect for the river, education and promotion of pack-it-out practices. Let’s also encourage Spanish speaking state staff such as interpretive rangers and police.”

*(Scudder’s Falls boater)*

# One-on-One Interviews

## Agency Staff

(NJ, PA, Northampton County)

- Expand access
- Spread use among other access points
- Encourage bilingual staff
- Work with friends groups to get the word out



# Example of New Outreach - Frenchtown River Ambassadors

June 26, 2021 to Labor Day:

- *Building* community through providing helpful information
- *Outreaching environmental stewardship / education* for visitors, volunteers, residents
- *Promoting local businesses* by integrating visitors with local businesses' services.

River Ambassadors will

- Welcome visitors and share information on parking, public restrooms, river safety and stewardship, local businesses, etc.
- Lead a "youth hour" with an environmental education session for children.
- Lead a river "clean up hour" for visitors and community members.

See [Frenchtown River Ambassadors](#)

# Steps to Establish Use Capacity

- **Describe the baseline and current conditions**
- **Identify desired conditions for river values and classifications**
- Identify the kinds of use that the WSR corridor can accommodate
- Identify measurable indicators for the desired conditions
- Establish thresholds for each indicator
- Identify triggers that elicit management response
- Identify management action to take when triggers are reached
- Determine the WSR corridors user capacities
- Establish monitoring and adaptive management approach

# Steps to Establish Use Capacity

- I. Develop desired conditions for the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River
- I. Implement the remaining elements of the 2007-2011 Action Plan
- II. Explore activities to grow Partnership capacity.

# Action Plan 2007-2011 Items to Address

Establish publicly-owned land which provides appropriate river access and support facilities for people pursuing recreational opportunities.	Modest levels of improved access (e.g., Giving Pond, Riegelsville Boat Launch, Kingwood parking availability) have been implemented.
Establish strict rules on excessively noisy or intrusive activities or vehicles in the river corridor, and promote enforcement of those rules by both states.	This has not been fielded or enforced.
Promote appropriate public access points with maps, guidebooks, signs, etc. to reduce recreational trespassers on private property.	This has been developed and implemented thorough the NJ DEP Boat Launch resources and printed and online Delaware River Water Trail maps.
Lands with significant recreational value within the corridor should be publicly owned or protected by land trusts in order to facilitate public recreational use.	This remains as a significant area of opportunity.
Guidelines should be established and enforced for the use of public access sites by commercial operators for access.	This has not been implemented with consistency.
No wake zones should be enforced.	Enforcement is lacking.

## Grow Partnership Capacity

Develop a collaborative of river users, interpretive and program staff, “friends” groups and businesses.

- Permits, enforcement responsibility and use of the permit funds;
- Boating laws and enforcement responsibility;
- Jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction law enforcement capacity to address roadside and parking overflow situations;
- Jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction capacity to provide sanitation support for river users;
- Opportunities to fund river recreation-related public services such as river clean up tools or Leave No Trace training; and
- Process for monitoring recreational use as described and/or quantified by the desired condition

## Grow Partnership Capacity

- Include business owners, landowners, community members, agency staff and municipal leaders.
- Revise the River Management Plan

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Thank you.

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