

Partnerships for Conservation, Recreation and Tourism

Goal: Provide responsible access to natural and historical spaces while conserving the environment and improving local economies.

Nearly three out of four Americans participate in active outdoor recreation each year. Getting outdoors means big business. Americans generate jobs, spend money, and support local communities when they get outside. Low impact activities like hiking, biking, and wildlife viewing generate an enormous economic impact. Outdoor recreation activities contribute more than \$700 billion to the U.S. economy, support more than 6 million jobs, and produces \$289 billion in retail sales and services, not to mention the billions of dollars generated in annual tax revenue.¹ Delaware is the tiny gem of the mid-Atlantic that hosts more than 7 million visitors per year. With each visitor spending more than \$545 per trip, Delaware's tourism industry is a key part of the economy. The tourism industry is the third largest private employer in the state supporting nearly 40,000 jobs in businesses like hotels, restaurants, retail outlets, bait and tackle shops, recreational equipment stores, boat sales and tour operators. Without tourism in Delaware, each Delaware household would pay more than \$100 in



additional taxes. Delaware has more than 160,000 acres of publicly-owned parks, wildlife areas, open spaces, and natural and historic resources worth exploring by the more than 30 million Americans living within a three-hour drive.

Delaware offers spectacular outdoor recreation and trail opportunities. Visitors flock to our Bayshore, Nanticoke River, Inland Bays, ocean beaches, state parks, wildlife areas, and farmland to experience that which they cannot enjoy at home: world-class birding, fishing, biking, hiking, canoeing, and kayaking. Six of the ten most popular visitor activities in Delaware relate to outdoor recreation.ⁱⁱ

Several recent outdoor resource-related economic studies demonstrate how investments are paying off. These studies demonstrate the economic impact of natural resource based opportunities and provide guidance for public and private decision makers considering future investments, and business market opportunities associated with the recreational, natural and cultural resources. A few salient findings are highlighted below.

Atlantic Coastal Economy

Cape Henlopen, Delaware Seashore and Fenwick Island State Parks, Inland Bays, and the lower Delaware Bay, and, the beach towns of Lewes, Rehoboth, Dewey, and Fenwick Island combined, are significant economic generators. Delaware's



stunning coastal resources attract full-time and seasonal residents and visitors. Coastal economic impacts originate from direct beach or water activities by coastal residents and visitors. Direct coastal economic activity generates 39,900 jobs – over \$1.5 billion in labor income.

<http://www.deseagrant.org/sites/deseagrant.org/files/product-docs/economicReport-2012lr.pdf>



Wilmington Parks

Although the city and state parks located in Wilmington were not created as economic generators, there is a growing realization that these parks provide the city with millions of dollars of value. Through an economic analysis of Wilmington city parks, the Trust for Public Land found the park system – comprised of both City and state managed sites - provided the city government with direct revenue of more than \$1.36 million and added to the general wealth of the citizenry by nearly \$11 million. Parks also provided residents with saving of over \$47 million through the direct park use value (\$41m), health value (\$4.3m), and community cohesion value (\$1m).

<http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/parks/Information/Documents/Wilmington%20Parks%20Economic%20Study.pdf>

Riverfront Wilmington

The Delaware Children's Museum, DuPont Environmental Education Center, its parks and Riverwalk generated \$308 million in public revenue exceeding the \$29 million in public investments that created the facilities.

<http://128.175.63.72/projects/DOCUMENTS/Final%20Report.pdf>

Junction & Breakwater Trail

Located between Lewes and Rehoboth, users of the Junction & Breakwater Trail were asked about their trail-related spending during the 2011 summer. Trail users reported that trail use influenced their purchases of both hard and soft goods. Trail users generated hard good purchases of \$209,000 - - 38% reported to have purchased a bike because of their trail use; 30% bought bike supplies; 14% purchased shoes; and 18% purchased clothing. And, soft goods purchased by trail users totaled \$409,000 - - 35%, 32% and 32% respectively for beverages, restaurant meals and snacks.

<http://trails.delaware.gov/JBEconomicStudy.pdf>



Delaware Tourism Study

An Economic Impact Study of Tourism was conducted in 2010 for Delaware.

<http://www.visitdelaware.com/about-us/tourism-statistics/>

Key findings are:

- Tourism's total contribution to Delaware's 2010 Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the total market value of goods and services produced by the State's economy, is \$2.1 billion.
- A total of 1.5 million people traveled to Delaware on business and 5.6 million traveled for leisure.
- On average, the typical 2010 visitor to Delaware was 47 years of age with a household income of \$94,322 which was higher than the national average.
- Tourism generated \$400 million in state and local government taxes/fees in 2010.

Though national data reveals the economic benefits of parks and outdoor recreation, in these budget-challenged times, it has become increasingly important to calculate the economic values parks add at state and local levels. Simple economic estimates can be calculated using park visitor statistics, while sophisticated economic models can produce robust information about the economic benefits of parks and the outdoor recreation economy to further demonstrate value to our state and communities.

Recommendations:

Foster public/private partnerships and tourism packaging that promote the ecological beauty and recreational opportunities in Delaware.

Conduct park and recreation economic studies to assess the benefits of parks, wildlife conservation areas and the outdoor recreation economy.

Preserve and enhance large scale land conservation to make Delaware a destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

Working together for the Great Outdoors

Protecting areas at a larger landscape scale will not only provide enhanced and continued stewardship for our natural, cultural and recreational resources but have enormous potential to attract visitors and boost local economies through tourism. Delaware's unique size yields close relationships with our regional neighbors, businesses, local governments, conservation organizations, tourism and recreational advocates. Together, these associations are working to enhance and improve the availability of cultural, natural and recreational resources for our residents and make Delaware a destination for outdoor enthusiasts. Several current Delaware initiatives have many overlapping goals with those identified within this Plan as well as those outlined in the Americas Great Outdoors Report. The following Initiatives and Programs are collaborative endeavors on-going in Delaware that have wide-ranging positive outcomes for outdoor recreation, conservation and tourism. It is important to support these efforts as they continue.

Delaware Bayshore

Extending from Pea Patch Island in New Castle County to the City of Lewes in Sussex, County, the Delaware Bay shoreline is widely recognized as an area of global ecological significance. Its expansive coastal marshes, shoreline, agricultural lands and forests provide diverse habitat to many species, including migratory shorebirds. Birders and conservationists from around the world come to the Delaware bayshore to witness the annual spring spectacle of more than a half million shorebirds taking a rest stop to dine on eggs laid by spawning horseshoe crabs.





Launched in 2012, the Delaware Bayshore Initiative will collaboratively build on the region's reputation as a unique and beautiful natural resource, and help improve the shoreline-based economy by encouraging more Delawareans and visitors to enjoy it through recreational activities like hunting, fishing, boating and other ecotourism activities. Due in large part to early private-public land conservation acquisitions and to the legacy of the Coastal Zone Act, nearly 60% of the 200,000 acre Delaware Bayshore Region remains undeveloped, and is today protected as publicly-owned state or federal wildlife lands. The balance is largely rural agricultural land.

The Delaware Bayshore Initiative stands to improve quality of life through enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities; to provide students with outdoor living classroom educational options; boost small town economies; and to help prepare Delaware for future climate changes and impacts.

<http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/Pages/Delaware-Bayshore.aspx>

Recommendations:

Build on public-private partnerships and leveraging state, federal and private resources for:

1. Conservation and ecological restoration - connect wildlife areas by acquisition or easement of unprotected lands; restore native habitat; and protect resources.
2. Recreation and connectivity - focus strategic investments to connect wildlife areas to urban centers; maximize enjoyment of the outdoors by providing safe, healthy recreational experiences; and enhance access to public lands along the Bayshore.
3. Engagement and marketing - engage, educate and inspire the next generation of environmental stewards; partner with local communities and organizations to promote the area regionally, nationally and internationally; and promote local volunteerism.

Route 9 Coastal Heritage Scenic Byway

Route 9 Coastal Heritage Scenic Byway – the Bayshore Byway - winds along the north and central coastline following Delaware Bay coastal waters. The 52-mile Byway threads its way through coastal towns and villages from the historic city of New Castle, past working landscapes, and astride rich natural resources, south to the historic John Dickinson Plantation. The Byway lies entirely within the Atlantic Flyway where each

spring hundreds of thousands of migrating shorebirds pass through the area. Among the best known is the Red Knot, which feeds on tiny horseshoe crab eggs along the Delaware Bayshore, which has one of the largest concentrations of spawning crabs in



the world and is one of the most critical stops on the east coast for migrating shorebirds. This important area is a treasure to natural resource and recreation enthusiasts. Designated under Delaware's Byway Program, the Route 9 Byway Working Group is developing a comprehensive management plan designed to meet federal standards qualifying the roadway as National Scenic Byway. <http://byways.org/explore/byways/2334>

Recommendations:

Develop the Route 9 Corridor Management Plan to meet Federal standards. The Corridor Management Plan would emphasize the place-based history, heritage and unique culture of the Byway's towns and villages.

Examine potential Byway-suitable corridors that would extend the existing Bayshore Byway south of the St. Jones River to Lewes connecting key natural and cultural resources within the Bayshore region.

Seek Federal designation for the Route 9 Coastal Heritage Scenic Byway.

Delaware's First National Park

Delaware is the only state in the union without a unit of the National Park System. National Parks offer the highest level of protection for large scale landscapes and promote a wide variety of outdoor recreation experiences. National Park units are important engines for local



jobs, income, and economic growth, as well as sources for educational and recreational pursuits. For every dollar spent on a National Park, four dollars are returned to the local economy. ⁱⁱⁱ

Delaware National Coastal Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment (2008), was conducted by NPS to determine whether specific natural and cultural resources or areas in Delaware are nationally significant, suitable, and feasible to qualify for potential congressional designation as a unit of the National Park Service. As a result of the Special Resource Study, the First State National Historical Park Act of 2011, Senate Bill 323, would create a park celebrating early American Dutch, Swedish and English Settlements located throughout Delaware, as well as Delaware's role in the events leading up to the signing of our Constitution. Once both the full Senate and House of Representatives approve the Senate Bill, it will be sent to the President for his signature. When established, the Delaware First State National Historic Park would stretch across the state link Old Sheriff's House; Fort Christina National Historic Landmark; Old Swedes Church National Historic Landmark; Old New Castle Courthouse; John Dickinson Plantation National Historic Landmark; Dover Green; and Ryves Holt House - sites that celebrate Delaware's colonial history in the founding of the nation.

In addition to the sites identified in the proposed Delaware First State National Historical Park Act, a new proposal recommends incorporating the 1,100 acre Woodlawn property into Delaware's first national park unit. This site adjoins Brandywine Creek State Park to the south and lies east of Brandywine Creek, in both New Castle County, Delaware and Delaware County, Pennsylvania. The site holds national, regional and local significance associated with industrialist William Poole Bancroft.

Recommendations:

Continue to support establishment of the Delaware National Historic Park.

Promote the management of these National Park-worthy areas to protect unique natural, historical and cultural resources while providing a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail

Four hundred years ago Englishman John Smith and a small crew of adventurers set out in an open boat to explore the Chesapeake Bay. Between 1607 and 1609 Smith mapped and documented over 3,000 miles of Bay and its rivers. Along the way they visited many thriving Native American communities and gathered information about this “fruitful and delightsome land”. In December 2006 the U.S. Congress designated the routes of Smith’s explorations of the Chesapeake as a national historic trail—the first national water trail. In 2012, Interior Secretary Salazar designated four connecting rivers – the Upper Nanticoke, Upper James, Susquehanna, and Chester Rivers – recognizing their close association with John Smith’s exploration of the Chesapeake Bay. These rivers and river segments, now part of the John Smith National Historic Trail (<http://www.nps.gov/cajo/index.htm>), include American Indian towns and cultures of the 17th-century Chesapeake that Smith encountered and are valuable for their unique history, heritage, cultural, recreational and natural resources. Today, 20.4 miles of the John Smith National Historic Trail traverse the Delaware portion of the Nanticoke River, Broad Creek and Deep Creek. This segment of the John Smith Trail comes to life through the locally designated Nanticoke River Water Trail.



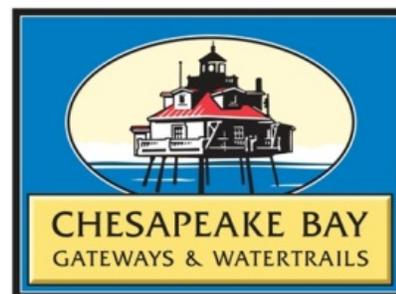
Recommendations:

Add place-based interpretive information at key sites celebrating the Nanticoke’s history, heritage and culture and that of Captain John Smith’s voyage along the water trail.

Within the Nanticoke watershed, conserve lands evocative of landscapes encountered by Captain John Smith and his crew.

Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Water Trails Network

The Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Water Trails Network is comprised of parks, refuges, museums, historic sites and water trails spanning the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed. Visitors to Gateway sites and water trail users will experience the region’s rich natural, cultural, and historic resources and access



recreational opportunities of the Bay and its tributaries. The western portion of Delaware's three counties - 34%- falls within the Chesapeake Bay watershed and contribute to the health and integrity of the Bay. Three Delaware sites are today partners in the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network. Explore these and other Gateway sites to experience the Bay's stories, spirit and mystery. www.baygateways.net

Trap Pond State Park, located on the upper reaches of the James Branch, protects upper Chesapeake headwaters and is home to the northernmost natural stand of bald cypress trees in the U.S. Interpretative exhibits on the area's rich natural resources are on display in the Bald Cypress Nature Center. Trap Pond became one of Delaware's first state parks in 1951.

www.destateparks.com/park/trap-pond/index.asp

Seaford Museum is dedicated to preserving and commemorating the history of the town of Seaford, located on the banks of the Nanticoke River. Exhibits portray the town's rich history and culture, Nanticoke Indian life, early agriculture, shipbuilding, the canning industry and Captain John Smith's Chesapeake voyage and much more.

www.seafordhistoricalsociety.com/index.cfm?ref=30029

The Nanticoke River Water Trail brings to life the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail tracing the historic routes taken by Captain John Smith and his crew from 1607 to 1608. The Nanticoke Water Trail traverses more than 60 miles of National Trail's 3,000 miles of waterways within Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and Washington, D.C. The trail commemorates Smith's extraordinary voyages and provides opportunities to learn about Native American societies and cultures and the unique natural history of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Visit this online resource.

www.paddletheNanticoke.com

Recommendations:

Increase access to the Nanticoke River Water Trail for kayaking and canoeing. Identify and create water access along the uppermost tidal reaches of the Nanticoke River; Deep Creek; and Broad Creek.

Protect sites identified in the National Park Service Access Plan that affords direct access to the water trail.

A National Wild and Scenic River

Covering 107 square miles, the White Clay Creek watershed falls in parts of Chester County, Pennsylvania and New Castle County, Delaware. Nearly 100,000 people call the White Clay Creek watershed home. After several years of citizen collaboration, U.S. Congress federally designated the White Clay Creek and its tributaries into the



National Wild and Scenic River System. That marked the first time an entire watershed - rather than just a section of river - had been designated into the national system. This approach takes into consideration the variety of influences outside the river corridor that affect river habitat and water quality. The federal designation helps preserve watershed features that enhance water quality and natural resources, guide appropriate development of land that can coexist with the waterway, and improve the overall quality of life. www.whiteclay.org and

www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/pwsr/whiteclaycreek_pwsr_sub.html

Recommendations:

Collaborate with the National Park Service, White Clay Creek Watershed Management Committee and other stakeholders to implement shared goals:

1. Improve water quality and conserve water quantity
2. Conserve open space, woodlands, wetlands & geologic features
3. Protect native plant and animal species
4. Preserve cultural, historical and archaeological sites
5. Enhance outdoor recreation opportunities
6. Encourage environmental education and watershed awareness

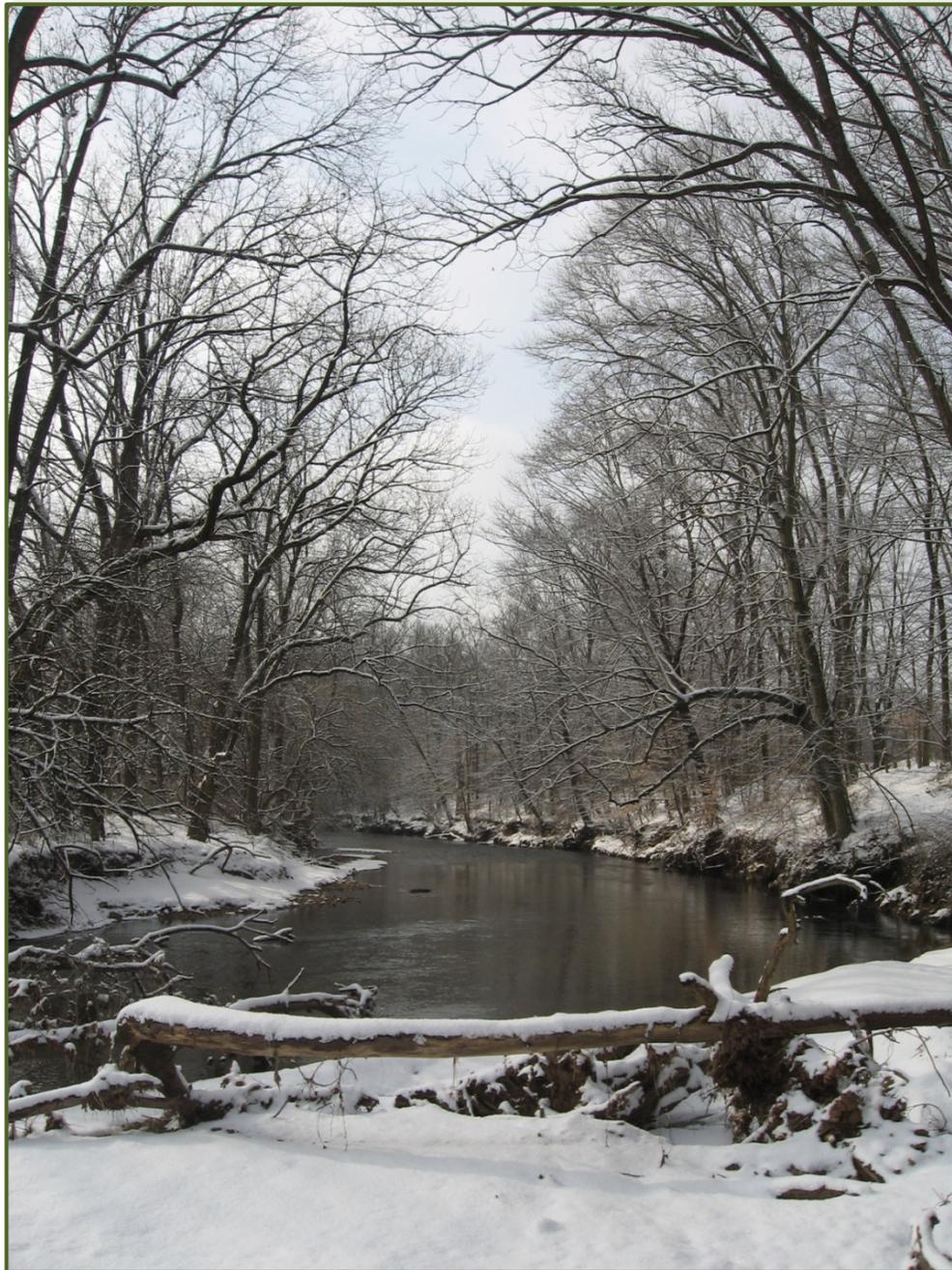
Recreational Trail Designations

The National Trail System Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-534) authorized creation of a national trail system comprised of National Recreation Trails, National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails. National Recreation Trails are designated by the Secretary of Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture to recognize exemplary trails of local and regional significance that connect people to local resources and improve their quality of life. Designations are based on diverse partnerships between federal, state, local, and

private organizations. Through designation, these trails are recognized as part of America’s national system of trails. ^{iv} Delaware currently has three designated National Recreation Trails: Hagley Museum Trail System, James F. Hall Trail (New Castle County) and the Pinelands Nature Trail (Sussex County).

Recommendations:

Increase the number of National Recreation Trail designations in Delaware.



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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	<i>IMPLEMENTERS</i>	<i>AGO</i>
1. Foster public/private partnerships and tourism packaging that promote the ecological beauty and recreational opportunities in Delaware.	DNREC, DEDO, Delaware Dept. of Agriculture, USFWS, private conservation and recreation organizations	
2. Conduct park and recreation economic studies to assess the benefits of parks, wildlife, conservation areas, and Delaware’s outdoor recreation economy.	DNREC, local parks and recreation departments, DEDO, USFWS, private conservation and recreation organizations	
3. Preserve and enhance large scale land conservation partnerships to make Delaware a destination for outdoor enthusiasts.	DNREC, Delaware Dept. of Agriculture, USFWS, private recreation and conservation organizations, local governments	
4. Build on public/private partnerships by leveraging state, federal, and private resources.	DNREC, DelDot, DE Dept. of Agriculture, USFWS, private recreation organizations, private conservation organizations, private industry	
5. Develop the Route 9 Corridor Management Plan.	Rt. 9 Byway Working Group, DNREC, DelDOT	
6. Seek Federal designation for the Route 9 Coastal Heritage Scenic Byway.	Rt. 9 Byway Working Group, DNREC, DelDOT, DE Greenways	

7. Examine potential corridors that would extend the existing Bayshore Byway south.	<i>DNREC, DeDOT, DE Greenways, Byway Advisory Group</i>	
8. Continue to support the establishment of the Delaware National Historic Park units.	<i>DNREC, The Conservation Fund, Woodlawn Trustees, Mt. Cuba Center, State Historical and Cultural Affairs</i>	
9. Promote the management of recreation areas to protect unique natural, historical and cultural resources while providing a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.	<i>DNREC, State Historical and Cultural Affairs, private recreation and conservation organizations, outdoor enthusiasts, sportsmen/women</i>	
10. Provide additional interpretive information along the Captain John Smith Water Trail	<i>Nanticoke River Water Trail Working Group, DNREC</i>	
11. Conserve lands within the Nanticoke watershed that are evocative of the landscapes encountered by Captain John Smith and his crew.	<i>Nanticoke River Water Trail Working Group, DNREC, private conservation organizations</i>	
12. Increase access to the Nanticoke River Water Trail	<i>Nanticoke River Water Trail Working Group, DNREC</i>	
13. Protect water access sites identified in the National Park Service's Access Plan.	<i>Nanticoke River Water Trail Working Group, DNREC</i>	
14. Collaborate to improve the shared goals of the White Clay Creek Watershed Management Plan.	<i>White Clay Creek Watershed Management Committee, DNREC, NPS</i>	
15. Increase the number of National Recreation Trail designations in Delaware.	<i>DNREC, Trail managers, Trail enthusiasts</i>	

ⁱ The Active Outdoor Recreation Economy Report. Outdoor Foundation. Fall 2006

ⁱⁱ 2010 Delaware Tourism Study: <http://www.visitdelaware.com/about-us/tourism-statistics/>