

# The Upper Delaware

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

Volume 18 Number 2

Published by the Upper Delaware Council, Inc.

Summer 2005



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**The Upper Delaware  
welcomes submissions and  
new subscribers (free)!**

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**2005 HONOREES:** Recipients at the Upper Delaware Council's 17th Annual Awards Ceremony held April 17 at The Inn at Lackawaxen included, seated from left: Sally Zegers of The Hancock Herald, Special Recognition; keynote speaker Michael Bedrin, director of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Northeast Regional Office; Gerald DaBrescia of Hancock, Cultural Achievement; David J. Lamereaux, Distinguished Service; Nadia Rajsz of Lumberland, Oaken Gavel; and John Conway, president of the Barryville Chamber of Commerce, representing the Hamlet of Barryville, Outstanding Community Achievement. Standing, from the left: John S. McKay, UDC 2005 Chairperson; Robin M. Daniels Memorial Lifesaving Award winners Eric J. Bunch, representing the Town of Cocheton Volunteer Ambulance Corps, James Farrel, representing the Lake Huntington Fire Department, and New York State Police Trooper Peter Bizjak; Dr. William A. Lellis of the USGS Northern Appalachian Research Lab in Wellsboro, PA, Partnership Award; and Krista Gromalski, representing Milford Magazine, Community Service. Honored in absentia were Northeast Sports Ltd. of Honesdale, PA with the Recreation Achievement Award; National Park Service Ranger Larry Neal with the Lifesaving Award; author/historian Frank T. Dale with a Special Recognition Award; and Christopher Cappello of Glen Spey, NY with a Special Recognition Award. The restaurant's deck overlooks Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct. (Photo by David B. Soete)

## UDC Bestows Annual Awards

There was a common thread running through the diverse accomplishments of those recognized at the Upper Delaware Council's (UDC) 17th Annual Awards Ceremony held April 17 in Lackawaxen.

Whether achieved through community volunteerism, extraordinary job performance, historical and scientific contributions, or service to the environment, the shared principle was a desire to enhance the Upper Delaware River Valley.

Michael Bedrin, director since June 2004 of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) 11-county Northeast Regional Office, cited the UDC's motto to explain how everyone needs to work together to achieve success.

"I offer my heartfelt congratulations and sincere thanks to all of you being recognized today. We should not rely on government to get this all done. We need the

Please see AWARDS on Page 4

# Upper Delaware Profile: Jim Rodgers

"Think globally -- act locally" is the motto that has inspired Jim Rodgers to delve into Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River conservation issues.

"Being a good steward of the planet is always something I've been interested in since high school. You do what you can where you live," he says.

The Fremont Town Board appointed Rodgers on Nov. 10, 2004 to serve as the town's alternate representative to the Upper Delaware Council at his request.

Finding himself with more free time as his children got older and he cut back on some activities like refereeing basketball and soccer, Rodgers volunteered to succeed the busy (and grateful) town supervisor in the position.

He had already been attending many of the UDC meetings out of his interest in the discussions and actions taking place.

His move from the audience to the board reflects Rodgers' respect for the valuable work of the Council.

"The strength is that it's community-based. It's not an outside agency. It's the people who live here and care about this place - the people who are inspired by its aesthetic and spiritual value - who are looking out for the best interests of this river valley and its environs," he says.

Rodgers is a 30-year resident of western Sullivan County, living in an area of Fremont between Long Eddy and Basket Creek known historically as Fernwood.

Born in Brooklyn, Rodgers and his family moved in 1966 to West Milford, NJ when he was eight. Many vacations were spent in Pine Bush, NY (Orange County).

For his first two years of high school, Rodgers attended St. Joseph's Seraphic Seminary in Callicoon before finishing out his secondary education at a Catholic preparatory school in New Jersey.

He studied sociology for three years at Montclair State College before taking a job running a summer youth recreation program in the Town of Colchester, NY.

"I knew I wanted to get out of the metropolitan area," Rodgers says, expressing how disheartened he was to witness the sprawl and subdivisions that were eating up the open spaces in his old community.

Having fond memories of his time in Callicoon and feeling a strong connection to the Upper Delaware, Rodgers first settled in Kenoza Lake before finding his current property.

Rodgers was an original staff member of the Delaware Valley Job Corps Center in Callicoon when the federal vocational facility opened its doors in 1979. He worked in the recreation department for 16 years. Ironically for Rodgers, the Job Corps is



Jim Rodgers, Town of Fremont

located at the site of the former St. Joseph's Seminary.

After a stint as sports editor for *The River Reporter*, Rodgers began employment with The Family Foundation School in the Town of Hancock about eight years ago.

Rodgers' primary position at the accredited, private, residential campus has been staff training and development. He also teaches an English class and handles various writing assignments for the school.

Rodgers is a certified CPR instructor, and a member of Trout Unlimited Upper Delaware Chapter, American Canoe Association Upper Delaware Division, Adirondack Mountain Club Mid-Hudson Chapter, and the Natural Resources Defense Council, among several other conservation organizations.

His greatest passion is "anything outdoors on the water." Rodgers enjoys kayaking and canoeing, and has paddled nearly every mile of the Upper Delaware River from Hancock to Port Jervis.

"We have such a wonderful resource. It's essential to take care of it," he says.

Rodgers is also a hiking enthusiast, has done some freelance magazine writing, and is a poet.

The 52-year-old Jim and his wife, Mary Ellen, a Registered Nurse specializing in obstetrics at Wayne Memorial Hospital and the chairperson of the Town of Fremont's Zoning Board of Appeals, will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary this August.

The couple has two daughters: Eve, 23, a New Jersey resident who works for a film editing company and is mother to their five-year-old grandson; and Kathy, 21, a senior at Ithaca College majoring in sociology. ❖

**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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### 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)

**Printing Services:** Courier Printing Corp., 24 Laurel Bank Ave., Deposit, New York 13754



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# Conservation Easements Protect Land

By Sue Currier and Chris Olney

Just about anyone living in the Upper Delaware River Valley region, whether they've been there for five weeks or five generations, will tell you they love the scenic beauty, rural character, abundant fish and wildlife, small communities, and great quality of life.

In recent years, you may have begun hearing more about non-profit land trusts (also called land conservancies) working with private landowners to permanently protect natural resources and rural landscapes. There are now more than 1,500 land trusts nationwide, and the amount of land they help protect keeps growing.

With increasing development pressure, rising taxes, and escalating land prices threatening the landscapes we value most, this work is becoming ever more important.

## What's a Land Trust?

A land trust is a non-profit, charitable organization whose mission is to protect a variety of natural lands such as wetlands, stream corridors and floodplains, scenic areas, working farms, and forest land.

Protecting these lands provides public benefit by protecting wildlife habitat and biodiversity, preventing environmental degradation, and supporting our rural nature-based economies that rely on farm and forest products, water supply, and tourism. (Consider how many people come to the Delaware to fish, canoe, enjoy the fall colors, and see bald eagles!)

Land trusts are not government agencies. They are run by a board of directors made up of volunteers from the communities they serve.

There are a variety of ways in which land trusts achieve their conservation mission.

Sometimes land trusts own land that they manage as a nature preserve open to the public, and other times they may help convey land to a State agency for public ownership. More often, land trusts work with private landowners to protect property using a "conservation easement."

## Conservation Easements 101

A conservation easement is a legal agreement that a willing landowner voluntarily enters into with a land trust; it permanently protects the important conservation values of a property by restricting its future uses and development potential.

With an easement, the landowner continues to own the land, pay property taxes, and manage the land - subject to certain development and land use restrictions that are detailed in the conservation easement.

Landowners can sell the property or transfer it to their heirs at any time. The land does not need to be open to public



**SANCTUARY EXPANDED:** Arthur Watres, founder of the Lacawac Sanctuary, raises the scissors triumphantly on May 15, 2005 as he cuts a ribbon to symbolize the long-planned acquisition of a 10-acre forest adjoining the Ledge Dale, PA property. The Sanctuary purchased the land in partnership with the Delaware Highlands Conservancy (DHC) with grant funding from the Growing Greener Keystone Program and Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Now restricted from development, the property will be used for public hiking trails and conservation research. Pictured from left to right are: Lacawac board member John Whitehouse; DHC Executive Director Sue Currier; DHC board members Cindy Wildermuth, Barbara Yeaman, and President Carson Helfrich; Watres; Lacawac Sanctuary Board Chairman Jon Tandy and members Graham Rice and Bob Eckstein; and Lacawac Sanctuary Executive Director Janice Poppich. (Photo by David B. Soete)

access. Easements are recorded at the County Clerk's Office along with the deed, and they are binding on all future owners of the property.

Once an easement is in place, it becomes the land trust's responsibility to ensure that all future owners of the property abide by the terms of the conservation easement.

Every easement is unique and tailored to the specifics of the property and the landowner's goals. The restrictions written into an easement must achieve meaningful protection, but also allow for maintenance of residences and farm buildings, and sometimes allow limited new development.

Landowners agree to conservation easements for one primary reason: to ensure that the valuable land they love remains available through future generations.

## Financial Incentives

However, there are some financial incentives too. By donating an easement, the landowner can claim a federal income tax deduction for the value of the easement, as determined by a qualified, independent

appraiser.

Conservation easements can also yield significant estate tax benefits, helping to keep the land in the family.

## Selling vs. Donating Easements

Most land trusts do not have the substantial funding required to purchase an easement. There are certain opportunities to secure funding from outside sources.

There are State-funded agricultural land protection programs designed to purchase conservation easements specifically on prime farmland, but these programs are highly selective and competitive.

Similarly, the Forest Legacy Program, which is federally funded but administered by state conservation agencies, provides money to purchase easements on large tracts of working forest land.

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection and the Watershed Agricultural Council spend millions to purchase easements and protect the water quality in the New York City Watershed area of the Catskills.

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'partnership of land, water, and people,' he said.

**David J. Lamereaux** received the UDC's Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his outstanding representation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as an alternate to the Upper Delaware Council and key member of its Water Use/Resource Management Committee from 1989 to 2005, and the accomplishments of his 37-year career with the Pennsylvania DEP.

Lamereaux, who retired on April 1, 2005 as Assistant Director of the DEP's Northeast Regional Office, said that when he made his first trip to the Upper Delaware from his Wilkes-Barre office, he was "struck by how beautiful and pristine" he found the river valley landscape to be.

"There have been some changes, but it's still one of the most breathtaking areas across the United States. As far as the water, what a powerful resource you have here. I exhort you to protect it. The partnership is land-water-people, but the greatest of the three is the people. I'm going to miss the camaraderie. I believe that the Upper Delaware Council truly cares about their surroundings and the quality of life," Lamereaux said in his emotional speech.

Ninety-six guests honored Lamereaux and his fellow award recipients at the afternoon reception and banquet.

Oaken Gavel Award - **Nadia Rajsz**, the Town of Lumberland's UDC representative for five years, made Council history when she was elected as the first female chair of the board on Jan. 8, 2004.

Special Recognition Award - Since graduating from Eldred High School in 2000, **Christopher Cappello** worked during his summer college breaks with Town of Lumberland Historian Frank V. Schwarz to complete four valuable UDC Technical Assistance Grant historical projects.

Special Recognition Award - **Sally Zegers**, editor and publisher of The Hancock Herald, wrote an informative and well-researched article series titled "Living in the Shadow of New York City" about the reservoir system which appeared in her



Keynote Speaker Michael Bedrin

Summer 2005



**ENJOYING THE PRESENTATION:** 2005 Distinguished Service Award recipient David J. Lamereaux and his fiancée, Sue Turpack, laugh at the mention of his motto during his 37 years with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection: "A bad day in the field is better than a good day in the office." Lamereaux was liaison to numerous organizations, including the Upper Delaware Council, routinely volunteered for river and trail clean-ups, and enjoyed getting out among the people to work directly on projects. (Photos by David B. Soete)

newspaper on Oct. 6, 13, and 20, 2004.

Special Recognition Award - Historian, lecturer and freelance writer **Frank T. Dale** of Warren County, NJ has taken an interest in chronicling the history of the Delaware River from Trenton to Hancock as his book subjects, from diaries to bridges to ferries.

Outstanding Community Achievement Award - An infusion of creative people opening a diverse range of businesses, making significant aesthetic improvements, offering fresh promotional ideas, and re-energizing a chamber of commerce to capitalize on the area's resources has revitalized the **Hamlet of Barryville, NY**.

Community Service Award - **Milford Magazine**, in publication since July 2001, values protection of the environment and cultivation of the Delaware Highlands area as its core editorial mission.

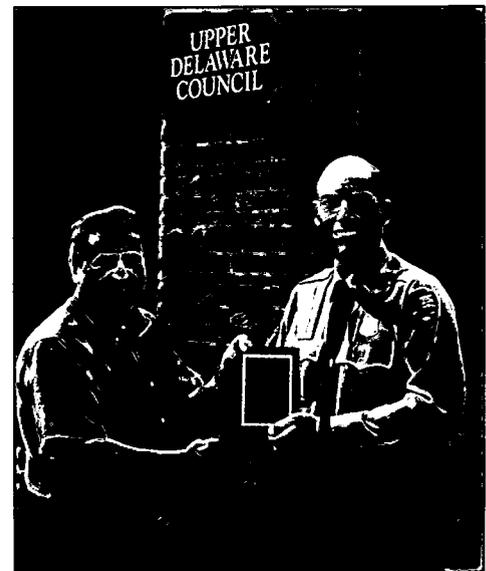
Cultural Achievement Award - As one of Hancock's leading community boosters and a history buff, **Gerald DaBrescia** created a 180-slide Power Point presentation from his memorabilia collection to document the town's history for the public.

Recreation Achievement Award - The owners of **Northeast Sports Ltd.**, Paul and Sue Mang, have evolved their small sports shop located in Honesdale, PA into a thriving river tour guide business with a resource education focus.

Partnership Award - **Dr. William A. Lellis** and the U.S. Geological Survey's **Northern Appalachian Research Lab** that he directs in Wellsboro, PA have been conducting a series of freshwater mussel studies from 2000 to the present under a Cooperative Agreement with the National Park Service which has revealed three

previously-unknown populations of dwarf wedge mussel and furthered understanding of the Upper Delaware River's ecosystem. The team snorkeled 121 miles in their search for mussels.

Robin M. Daniels Memorial Lifesaving Award - **National Park Service Ranger Larry Neal**, **New York State Police Trooper Peter Bizjak**, the **Lake Huntington Fire Department** and the **Town of Cocheton Volunteer Ambulance Corps** extricated a man who had been submerged up to his neck for over 90 minutes in the Skinner's Falls Rapids after his foot became trapped under a large rock during an evening swim on July 3, 2004. ❖



**LIFESAVER:** UDC Executive Director Bill Douglass, left, presents National Park Service Ranger Larry Neal with his Robin M. Daniels Memorial Lifesaving Award plaque.

The Upper Delaware

# Park Service Expands Summer Programs

The National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River (UDS&RR) is offering educational programs every weekend from July 2 to August 14 at various river valley locations.

The presentations cover topics that focus on the environmental and cultural history of the Upper Delaware River Valley. They are free and open to the general public.

Upcoming programs include:

July 9 - *The Lenape*, 10:30 a.m., Zane Grey Museum, Lackawaxen, PA

July 10 - *Fishing on the Upper Delaware*, 2 p.m., Main St. Deck, Narrowsburg, NY

July 23 - *Wildflowers*, 10:30 a.m., Barryville Ranger Station, Barryville, NY

July 24 - *Invasive Invasives*, 2 p.m., Skinner's Falls Access, Cochecton, NY

July 30 - *The Delaware River Watershed*, 10:30 a.m., Ten Mile River Access, Town of Tusten, NY

July 31 - *The D&H Canal*, 2 p.m., Barryville Ranger Station, Barryville, NY

Aug. 6 - *Wild About Wildlife*, 2 p.m., Zane Grey Museum, Lackawaxen, PA

Aug. 7 - *Birds of Prey*, 2 p.m., Narrowsburg Deck, Narrowsburg, NY

Aug. 13 - *Fishing on the Upper Delaware*, 10:30 a.m., Ten Mile River Access

Aug. 14 - *The Lenape*, 2 p.m., Zane Grey Museum, Lackawaxen, PA

To keep the love of learning and reading alive during the summer months, UDS&RR also offers a "River Readings" program for children in pre-school through first grade.

Every Thursday at 10:30 a.m. from July 7 through Aug. 11 at the Zane Grey Museum

in Lackawaxen, children will learn about the Delaware River and the many animals, insects, plants, and trees that can be found along its shores through stories and crafts.

Registration is limited to 20 children.

In addition, the National Park Service has partnered with the Hancock Fire Company and the Louise Adelia Read Memorial Library for the first time to present "Summer Saturdays" in Hancock, NY.

This series of free educational programs began June 18 and continues every Saturday through Aug. 20 at 11:30 a.m. at the Firemen's Field and 2:30 p.m. at the library.

For a schedule of events or more information on these educational programs, call NPS Education Specialist Ingrid Peterec at (570) 685-4871 or visit the UDS&RR web site at [www.nps.gov/upde](http://www.nps.gov/upde). ❖

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

July 16-17 - 2nd Annual Zane Grey Days, sponsored by the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River and Zane Grey's West Society. Celebrate the life and writings of the famed western author with presentations by various speakers, the showing of movies based on his novels, exhibits, and children's activities throughout the weekend at the Zane Grey Museum in Lackawaxen, PA. Call (570) 685-4871.

July 22 - 31st Consecutive Annual Commemoration at The Grave of the Unknown Soldier in Lackawaxen, PA, sponsored by the Office of the Pike County Historian, 4 p.m. ceremony at the gravesite on Scenic Drive. Call George J. Fluhr at (570) 559-7394.

July 23 - 226th Anniversary of the Battle of Minisink, sponsored by the Sullivan County Historical Society at the Minisink Battleground Park in Minisink Ford, NY, 3 p.m. program on "Joseph Brant in Retrospect" by Frank Salvati at the pavilion, 4 p.m. traditional commemoration featuring the Navasing Long Rifles with a living history presentation at the monument; and 5 p.m. public picnic sponsored by the Upper Delaware Heritage Alliance at the pavilion. Bring side dishes and desserts to share. Call Allan Dampman at (845) 292-6609. Visit the re-enactors encamped at the park from July 22-24.

July 24 - 15th Annual RiverFest, a music, art & environmental festival celebrating the Delaware River, sponsored by the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance and the Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Main Street, Narrowsburg, NY. Call (845) 252-7234 or (845) 252-7576.

August 7 - 17th Annual Family Raft Trip, sponsored by the UDC. See page 8 for details.

August 9 - Day on the Delaware, seminars, lunch, and other activities sponsored by the Delaware River Foundation at West Branch Angler's Resort near Hale Eddy, NY. Contact Jim Serio at (607) 637-3474 or visit [www.delawareriverfoundation.org](http://www.delawareriverfoundation.org).

## Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Encourages Highway Adoption

The Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc. encourages businesses, organizations, and citizens to participate in the New York State Department of Transportation's (DOT) Adopt-a-Highway program to help keep Route 97 free of litter.

"As we enter another busy traveling season in the river valley, greater attention is focused on our region's scenic beauty. That appeal is marred for visitors and residents alike when litter is allowed to accumulate on our roadways," said Larry H. Richardson of the Town of Cochecton, who chairs the volunteer organization.

Upon entering a formal agreement to adopt a typically two-mile highway segment and conduct at least four trash pickups per year, the DOT provides adopters with free trash bags and orange safety gear, collects and properly disposes the litter, and installs blue and white signs at the

location for public acknowledgement.

Visit [www.dot.state.ny.us](http://www.dot.state.ny.us) to learn more about the Adopt-a-Highway program. ❖

## Vegetation Mapped

The New York Natural Heritage Program is cooperating with the National Park Service to map the vegetation on both the New York and Pennsylvania sides of the Upper Delaware River.

A draft map was created based on interpretation of aerial photos taken last spring. Ground-truthing will compare the photos with actual conditions in selected areas.

The vegetation map can provide information about overall landscape health as well as the status and distribution of many non-native invasive plant species of concern in the river valley.

In locations where selected ground veg-

etation plots occur on private property, landowners will be contacted in advance to seek permission to access their property.

For more information about this project, call the National Park Service's Milanville, PA office at (570) 729-7842. ❖

## Name That Stream

The Pennsylvania Stream Signage Program is designed to raise awareness, connect people to their watersheds and waterways, and encourage them to protect water resources.

Statewide, 1,650 sites along Pennsylvania streams have been marked with two blue-and-white identification signs on each approach to the waterway.

The program is funded by a Growing Greener grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and administered by the Pennsylvania Organization of Watersheds and Rivers in cooperation with regional resource conservation and development councils.

For information, call (717) 234-7910 or log onto [www.pawatersheds.org](http://www.pawatersheds.org). ❖

# UDC Highlights Quarterly Activities

Upper Delaware Council activity highlights from mid-March to mid-June 2005, not covered elsewhere, include:

## GREENWAY LEGISLATION

New York State Senator John J. Bonacic and Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther each introduced legislation in early May to create an Upper Delaware River Greenway.

Sen. Bonacic had hosted an informational meeting about the greenway concept at the UDC office on April 30, 2004. Eight municipalities subsequently approved resolutions of support for the voluntary program: the City of Port Jervis; Towns of Deerpark, Lumberland, Highland, Tusten, Cochection, and Delaware; and the Village of Hancock. The Towns of Fremont and Hancock intend to opt out of participation.

A greenway could benefit communities along the Upper Delaware River by providing additional access to and higher priority ranking for grant funding, and assisting with regional planning coordination.

The legislation must be approved by both Houses and the governor in two subsequent sessions before it would take effect. The Act would expire on Jan. 1, 2012 unless an extension was requested.

## FISHING GUIDE PERMITS

A proposal by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission that would require non-resident fishing guides to pay an annual fee of \$400 for a permit prompted a June 2 comment letter from the UDC.

The Council recommends that there be a reciprocal agreement between PA and NY to accept the licenses of fishing guides operating on the common border of the West Branch and Main Stem of the Delaware River, as is the case with general fishing licenses.

New York State currently charges fishing guides a \$100 fee for five years. Upper Delaware fishing guides are also required to obtain Commercial Use Authorization permits from the National Park Service.

## NY TOWN GRANTS

The Town of Cochection received a check for \$5,000 on June 1 representing its share of the Community Projects State Grant funding as secured by Senator John J. Bonacic for the UDC's eight NY towns.

Cochection invested \$7,650 in its project to correct structural damage to its Town Hall. Repair work stabilized the basement to advance the town's goal of using the area for safe storage of official records.

## SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings in which the UDC participated this quarter included:

-- Apr. 1, Comprehensive Planning Forum for Municipal Officials, presented by the Pike County, PA and Sullivan County,



**CAME TUMBLING DOWN:** National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Chief of Resource Management Michael Reuber shows the damage to a retaining wall adjacent to the New York side abutment of Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct that occurred as a result of the April 2-3 flood. The Upper Delaware River level rose to just three feet beneath the deck of the circa 1848 wire cable suspension bridge. An engineering firm has been retained to develop a three-pronged plan to stabilize the area against further damage, improve the washed-out D&H Canal Towpath trail to allow accessibility of construction equipment, and make permanent repairs to the abutment wall. (Photo by National Park Service)

NY planning commissioners, sponsored by the Upper Delaware Visioning Committee.

-- May 12, Zoning Overlay Districts for Ridgeline Protection, a public workshop presented by UDC TAG project planning consultant Tom Shepstone.

-- May 18, American Eel Fishery Management Plan public meeting, sponsored by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, at the UDC office.

## SINKHOLE MONITORED

On May 5, Mirant Corp. workers discovered a 30-foot sinkhole in the center of the earthen dam at the Swinging Bridge

Reservoir on the Mongaup River hydroelectric project in the Town of Forestburgh.

Concern for the safety of residents downstream of the Swinging Bridge, Mongaup Falls, and Rio Reservoirs caused the National Park Service to close the Upper Delaware River from the Mongaup tributary through the Delaware Water Gap until regulators determined that a dam breach was unlikely. UDC monitored the situation.

Repairs following a water draw-down are expected to continue throughout the summer. Mirant has set up a toll-free information line at 1-888-326-3389. ❖

## Second Flood in Seven Months Causes Millions \$\$ in Damages

Significant damage to property, infrastructure, and the already frayed nerves of residents along the Delaware River and its tributaries occurred in early April as the region that had been hit hard by the remnants of Hurricane Ivan on Sept. 17-18, 2004 experienced a second bout of flooding destruction.

Two rain storms on March 28 and April 2, combined with an abnormally wet early spring period and snowmelt from mild temperatures, soaked the oversaturated soils. By April 3, flood stages were exceeded on rivers and streams throughout the upper and middle Delaware River Basin regions.

Records on the main stem Delaware River were recorded at 17.97 feet in Callicoon, an all-time high; 24.8 feet in Barryville; 20.53 feet in Port Jervis; and 31.69 feet in Montague, NJ. The Lackawaxen River in Hawley, PA rose to 15.31 feet at its peak. In many cases, the river levels exceeded or rivaled the infamous Delaware River Flood of 1955.

While the 100-year flooding was a naturally-occurring phenomenon, criticism has been levied at the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for maintaining their Delaware System reservoirs at full capacity or spilling levels to ensure an adequate supply of drinking water without regard to upstate conditions. One of the city's reservoirs, Pepacton, had an experimental program in place to draw down water as the snow pack built up, but those releases had ended on March 31.

In a May 5 letter to NYC DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd, the Upper Delaware Council wrote, "The Upper Delaware Council sent you a letter, dated February 3, 2005, respectfully requesting that the spill reduction program for New York City's Pepacton Reservoir be expanded to include the City's Cannonsville Reservoir which could help to reduce flooding along both the West Branch and Main Stem of the Delaware River. We still strongly believe that during exceptionally wet periods, as we have had the last two years, that releases should be made during other times of the year when the reservoirs are spilling and significant storms are forecast, along with a favorable probability of refill. To date, we have not received any response from you."

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) and PPL Generation co-hosted a May 25 informational workshop for public officials at the PPL Environmental Learning Center in Hawley, PA at which experts offered explanations of flood forecast modeling, reservoir design and performance, and flood mitigation planning efforts. Those Power Point presentations are available at [www.nj.gov/drbc](http://www.nj.gov/drbc). The site also includes 10 recommendations by the DRBC's Flood Advisory Committee to improve the basin's flood warning system and implement actions to reduce future flood losses.

In New Jersey, which requested \$60 million in federal flood aid, acting Governor Richard J. Codey created a state task force to consider new ways to lessen future flood damage.

The Upper Delaware's New York state legislators have taken up the cause as well. Senator John J. Bonacic (R-42nd District) and Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther (D-98th District) each introduced legislation in early May that would amend the state's Environmental Conservation Law to require the City of New York to develop a protocol to lower the water levels of certain reservoirs when major precipitation inflow is anticipated.

The UDC approved sending June 2 letters in support of Senate Bill 1768 and Assembly Bill 07836, while cautioning, "It is our understanding that lowering the New York City reservoirs for enhanced flood protection would require the unanimous approval of all the parties to the [1954 Supreme Court] Decree, so such an undertaking will not be a simple one." The NYC DEP's position is that the reservoirs were not designed for flood control. ❖

## In Memoriam ...

### V. Edward Curtis, 75

Valleau Edward Curtis of Callicoon, NY, the 1995 recipient of the Upper Delaware Council's highest honor, died at home on April 13, 2005 after an extended illness.

"Ed" Curtis earned the Distinguished Service Award for his activism during the drafting and early implementation of the River Management Plan for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River.

Mr. Curtis was born Dec. 15, 1929. A 1947 graduate of Delaware Valley Central School and Syracuse University, he served as a Naval Aviator during the Korean War through 1955, receiving numerous commendations.

Mr. Curtis was president of the Callicoon Water Company and executive director of the Landscape Materials Information Service in Callicoon. The former president of Curtis Nurseries also managed the Sullivan County Airport and flew as a commercial charter pilot for Tsuga Air.

The environmental advocate chaired the Town of Delaware Planning Board for over 30 years. He had served on the Sullivan County Parks & Recreation Commission since 1964, was a member of St. James Episcopal Church, and a reserve member of the Callicoon Volunteer Fire Department.

Survivors include his wife, Theresa; four daughters, Valerie Boss of Decatur, GA, Holly Perdan of Pelia, IO, Jessie Baade of Modena, NY, and Christine Curtis of Fort Worth, TX; two granddaughters, Dr. Diana Boss of Portland, OR and Phoebe Baade of Modena; a brother, Robert, of Damascus, PA; and a sister, Mary, of Callicoon.

Memorial donations may be made to the Callicoon Fire Department, P.O. Box 806, or the Delaware Youth Center, P.O. Box 354, Callicoon, NY 12723.

## 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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Check here to be removed from our mailing list.

# Register for UDC's 17th Annual Family Raft Trip on August 7th

All are welcome to join the Upper Delaware Council for its 17th Annual Family Raft Trip on Sunday, August 7.

This year's river trip will be a seven-mile segment of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River between Barryville and Pond Eddy, NY. The host livery is Kittatinny Canoes and Campgrounds.

Participants will meet at 9 a.m. at Kittatinny's Pond Eddy Base, located on Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Route 97, three miles north of the Pond Eddy hamlet.

After parking and checking in at the UDC registration table, rafters will board shuttle buses to take them north to Barryville.

Rafts, paddles, and life vests are provided. Safety instructions and a river orientation will be given prior to launch.

Minimum occupancy per raft is four people. Parties of less than four will be matched at the UDC's discretion. Participants should be in good physical condition. Children must be at least four years of age, able to swim, and weigh a minimum of 40 lbs. to participate.

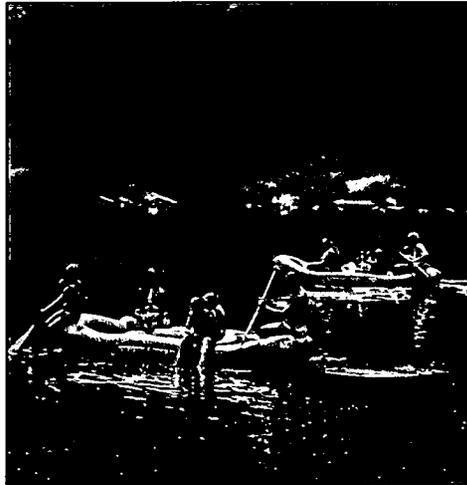
The UDC strongly recommends that all boaters and swimmers wear securely-fastened life vests while on the water. Children age 12 and under are required by law to do so.

Average rafting time is two miles per hour, depending on river levels, wind, and each group's desired pace.

Pack a picnic lunch and plenty of drinking water. Small coolers and waterproof bags for items such as cameras and keys may be tied into the raft. Dress to get wet, wear sunscreen and foot protection, and avoid bringing valuables or glass containers.

The deeply discounted cost is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children under age 12.

Pre-registration is needed by July 29.



**FUN TIME:** Rafting on the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River is a fun summer outing for the whole family. (Photo by David B. Soete)

Submit the names of all participants, with the ages of any minor children, to the UDC at 211 Bridge St., P.O. Box 192, Narrowsburg, NY 12764; fax (845) 252-3359; or e-mail [udcramie@hvc.rr.com](mailto:udcramie@hvc.rr.com).

Please direct any questions to Public Relations Specialist Laurie Ramie at (845) 252-3022. ❖

**LAND, continued from Page 3**

An increasing number of municipalities around the country recognize that conserving natural lands keeps down the rising costs of municipal services. Increased development inevitably leads to increased town, school and county services, which of course means more taxes. As the old saying goes, "Cows and trees don't go to school." Some municipalities, therefore, are creating their own funding sources for land protection.

Conservation easements are one of the most versatile land conservation tools, but there are other options.

To learn more, contact either of the following local land trusts serving the Upper Delaware River Valley. They are happy to answer your questions and help you get started (and they also can't wait to get out of the office and walk around on your beautiful property!):

#### **Delaware Highlands Conservancy**

Sue Currier, Executive Director  
P.O. Box 218, Hawley, PA 18428 or  
P.O. Box 219, Narrowsburg, NY 12764  
Phone (570) 226-3164

E-mail: [info@delawarehighlands.org](mailto:info@delawarehighlands.org)

#### **The Catskill Center for Conservation and Development**

Chris Olney, Director of Conservation  
Route 28, Arkville, NY 12406  
Phone (845) 586-2611

E-mail: [chriso@catskillcenter.org](mailto:chriso@catskillcenter.org). ❖

## Grant Applications Due by July 29

The Upper Delaware Council is accepting applications for its 2005 Technical Assistance Grants (TAG) program through July 29. Eligible to apply are the eight New York towns and three Pennsylvania townships that are members of the UDC, or their county governments.

Since 1988, the UDC has awarded \$542,992 to help fund 153 projects related to implementation of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Management Plan:

The UDC's Project Review Committee will convene a special meeting on August 10 to review the TAG applications. The full Council is expected to award the grants on Sept. 2.

Application packets including program guidelines and a brochure of the 1988-2004 TAG projects are available. For more information on the 2005 TAG program, contact UDC Senior Resource Specialist David B. Soete at (845) 252-3022 or [udcsoete@hvc.rr.com](mailto:udcsoete@hvc.rr.com). ❖

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 Council**  
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Narrowsburg, NY 12764-0192

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