

Environmental Impact Statement

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River
Appalachian National Scenic Trail

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Issues and Impacts

Take a Hike and Enjoy Part of Pennsylvania's Diverse Wilderness!

Hogback Ridge is a unique and important habitat, containing distinctive geology and a rich variety of flora and fauna. The geology of Hogback Ridge is dominated by limestone, which is exposed in many areas; the ridge supports eastern hemlock – northern hardwood forest and limestone-loving plants such as walking fern. This area also contains extensive wetlands and dry sand habitats in the lower elevations. These different habitats create significant contributions to the biological diversity of Pennsylvania, as they support numerous plant and animal species of special concern.

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River and Appalachian National Scenic Trail offer extensive visual resources via numerous trails and recreational areas. Scenic resources of these NPS units include: open areas and vistas of the Appalachian Trail; numerous historic districts of DEWA, such as Millville, Old Mine Road and Peters Valley; and spectacular views of fall colors (DEWA was rated as one of the top ten national parks to view fall color for 2009).

Rebuilding the existing Susquehanna to Roseland 230 kV transmission line by adding a 500 kV circuit would involve removing existing structures and replacing them with taller, modern structures.

The new transmission line structure would project above the forest canopy, increasing the visual impact of the line. Taller structures would represent a noticeable change to visitors, including those using the Delaware River from kayaks, rafts, canoes, and other water craft.

The river segment over which the transmission line would pass is designated as "scenic" under the Wild and Scenic River Act. Changes to the river's scenic resources would occur and would be apparent to recreational boaters on the Delaware River.

Disruptions in the continuity of the hillside vegetation and/or noticeable increases in the height of existing structures would occur. Affects to historic architectural properties (buildings, structures, and historic districts) and any cultural landscapes would primarily be visual, created by installation of new towers where none exist, of higher towers where shorter towers now exist, and by clearing forested land.

A transmission line can affect aesthetics by:

- **Removing a resource**, such as clearing fencerows that provide visual relief in a flat landscape
- **Degrading the surrounding environment** (intruding on the view of a landscape)
- **Enhancing a resource** (evoking an image of economic strength in a developing business or industrial area)



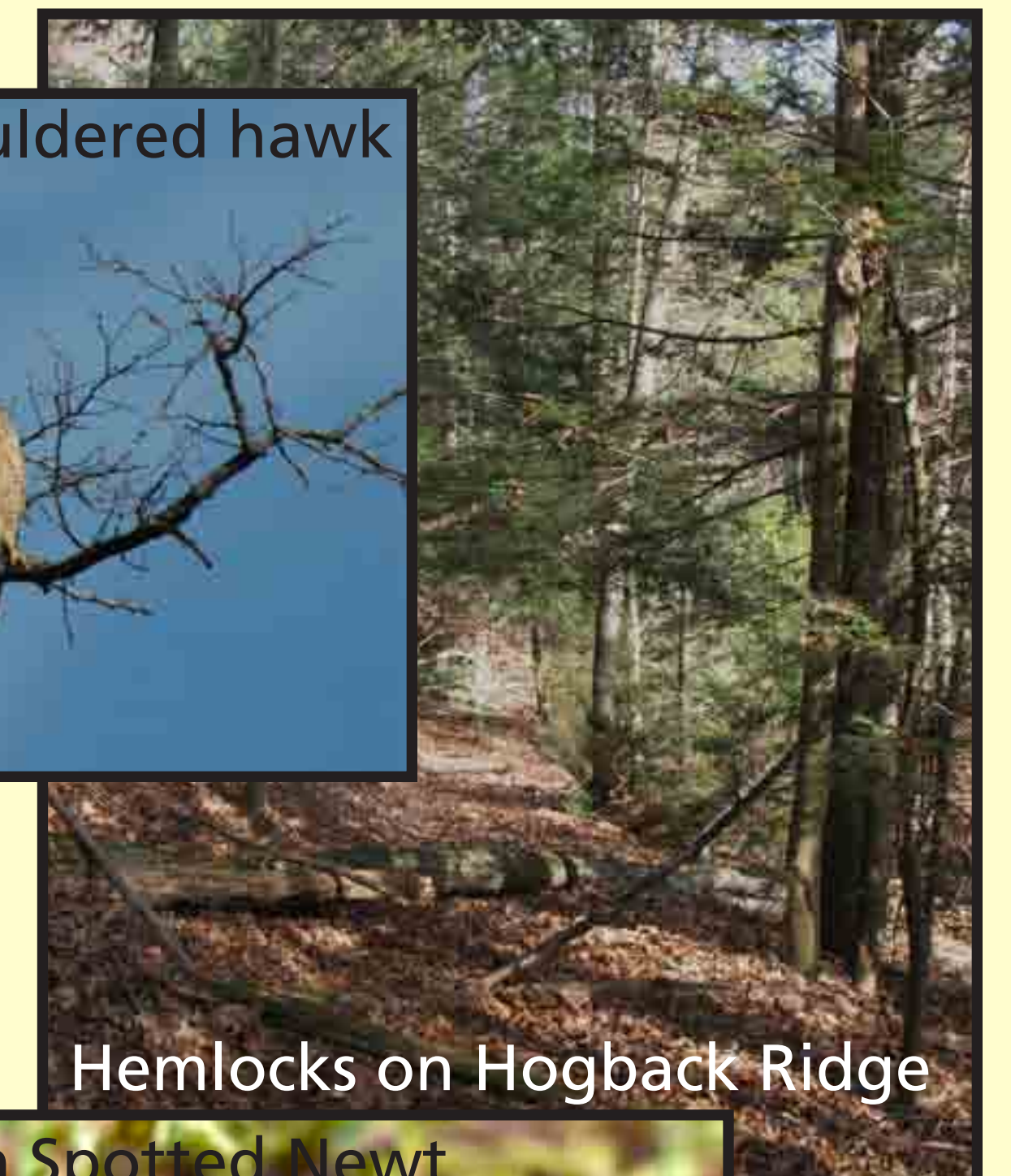
of a landscape. Vegetation can no longer "absorb" and de-emphasize visual impact when transmission structures exceed the height of the background vegetation.

Backgrounding occurs when transmission lines and corridors do not exceed the height of background vegetation and are visually absorbed by the landscape. Transmission corridors below public viewing angles have less impact.

Skylining occurs when structures and conductors are highly visible against the sky when viewed from scenic roads or public vantage points. Structures can block a long-distance view and impact the aesthetic qualities



Red-shouldered hawk



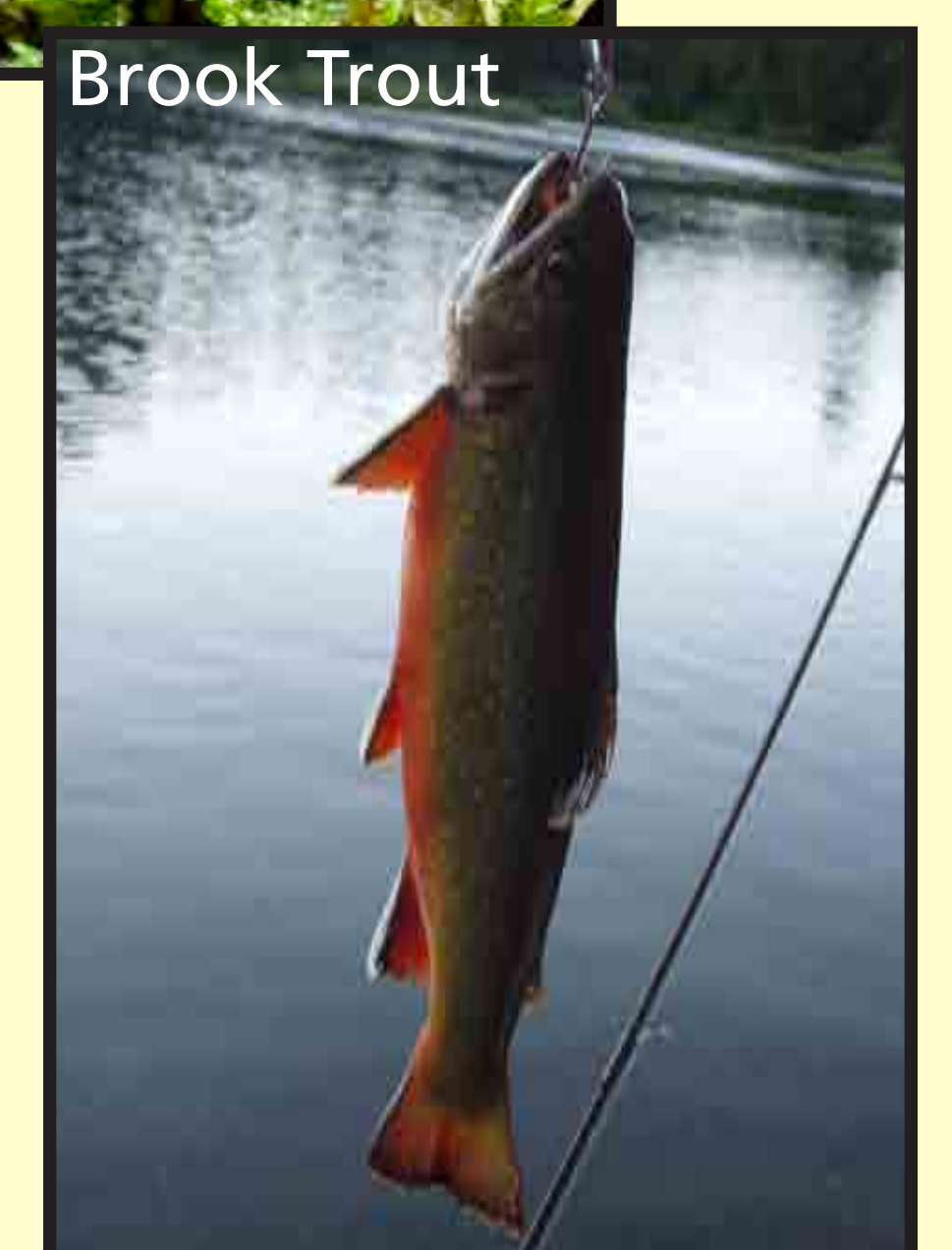
Hemlocks on Hogback Ridge



Eastern Spotted Newt



Black bear and cubs



Brook Trout