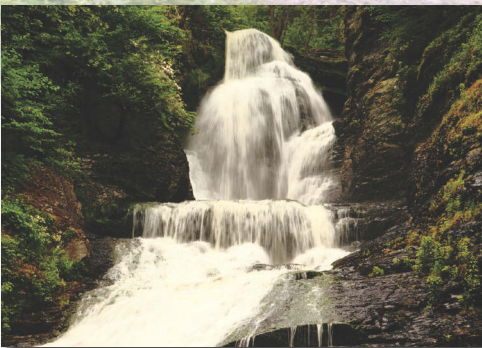


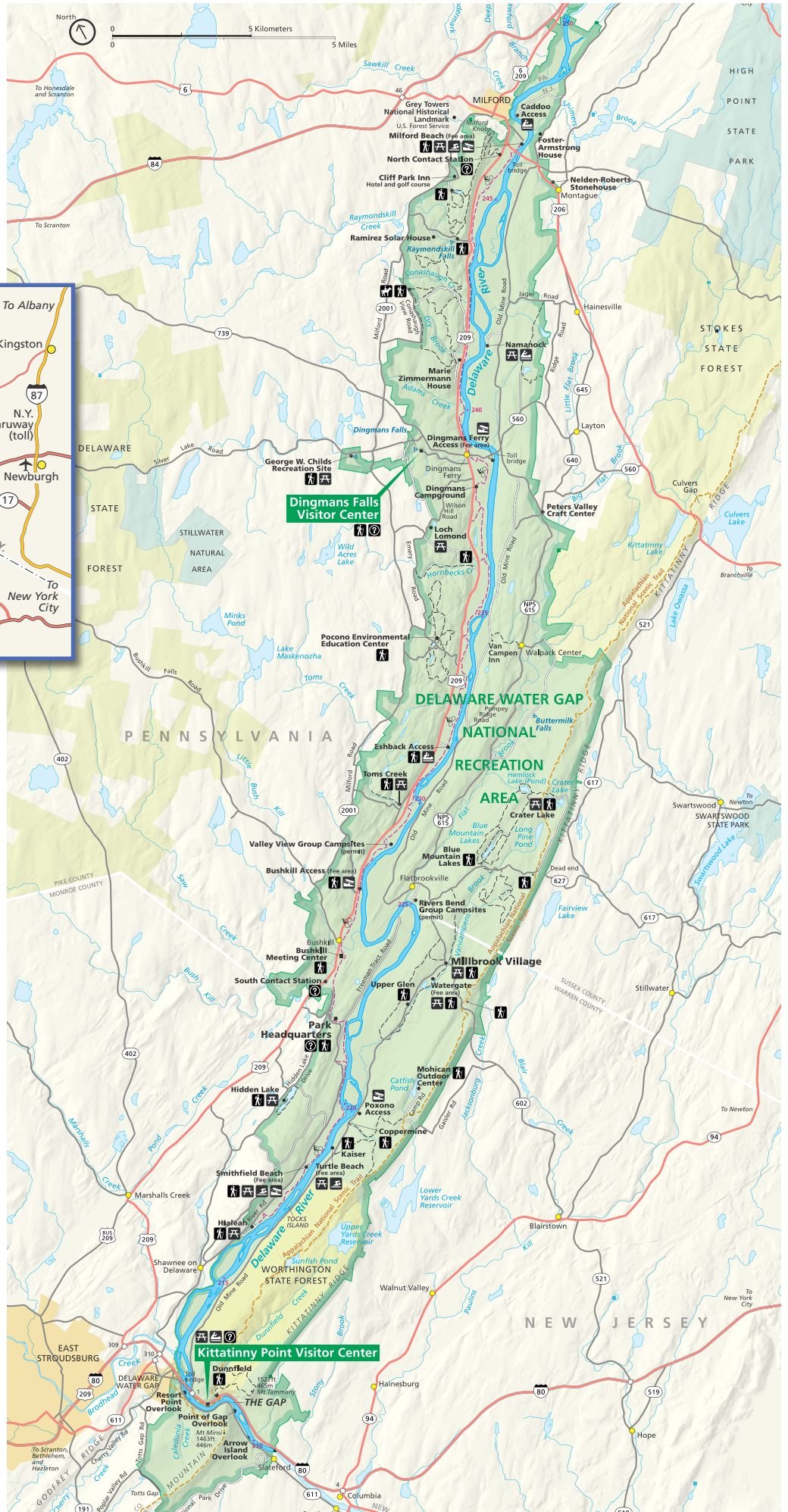
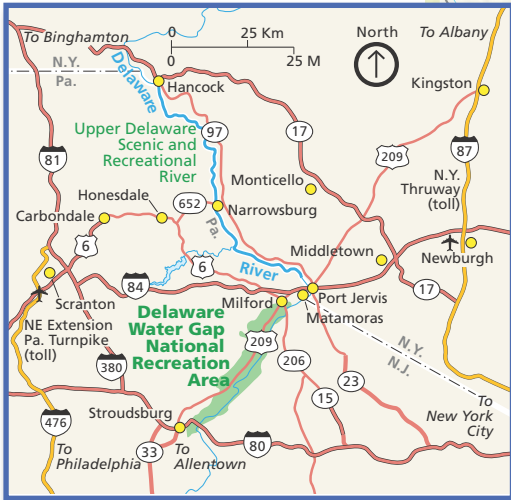


Civic Engagement Report

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River
Visitor Use Management Plan



May 2015



A Message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

The National Park Service is pleased to provide you with the results of this past spring's Listening Sessions and Focus Groups for the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River visitor use management plan which were held in Stroudsburg, PA and Parsippany, NJ. The attached report describes the meeting process and public feedback from the meetings, as well as written comments sent in through mail, e-mail, and online.

This civic engagement effort was undertaken as an initial step in the development of a visitor use management plan for the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River. The purpose of the plan is to maximize the ability of the National Park Service to encourage access and protect the park's natural and cultural resources. The planning process will examine current and potential visitor opportunities to meet those needs while also achieving our mission to preserve and protect resources.

The purpose of the community listening sessions and focus groups is to gain a better understanding of our visitors and their needs, experiences, and preferences and to help us identify existing or new opportunities to meet those needs while also achieving our mission to preserve and protect resources.

We encourage future participation to build on your understanding of the resources, challenges, and opportunities ahead for Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River. This was the beginning of the public input process, and there will be future opportunities to provide additional input. You can find out more information at www.nps.gov/dewa/getinvolved/index.htm.

Thank you for your interest in the future management of the park.

Sincerely,

John J. Donahue
Superintendent

Background

The National Park Service (NPS) is undertaking the development of a visitor use management plan (the plan) for the Delaware Water Gap National Recreational Area and Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River (DEWA). The purpose of this plan is to maximize the ability of the NPS to provide recreational opportunities and protect DEWA's natural and cultural resources. The planning process will examine current and potential visitor opportunities and develop long-term strategies for providing access, connecting visitors to important experiences, and managing visitor use. As an integral part of the planning process, the NPS sought out public input to gain a better understanding of the visitors and their needs, experiences, and preferences to help identify existing or new opportunities to meet those needs while also achieving their mission to preserve and protect resources.

As part of this public input process, the NPS held two listening sessions open to the public, and two focus groups for stakeholders and land managers to gather input. Public comments were also accepted online through the NPS's Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website. Some public comments in the form of letters were brought to the public meetings or were mailed directly to DEWA headquarters. Summaries of the meetings and an analysis of the comments sent in during the month of April 2015 are given in this report.



View of the Delaware River

Public Listening Sessions and Public Comments

The two listening sessions were open to the public and were advertised through a press release posted to the NPS website, PEPC, and through an e-mail blast to local and regional newspapers and organizations related to parks, recreation, tourism, and conservation. The listening sessions were held on April 7, 2015 from 6pm to 8pm at the Stroudsmoor Country Inn, Stroudsburg, PA and on April 9, 2015 from 6pm to 8pm at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites, Parsippany, NJ. There were 71 attendees at the Stroudsburg, PA meeting and 32 at the Parsippany, NJ meeting. The listening sessions started with a PowerPoint presentation, followed by general questions and then a facilitated discussion focused around the questions proposed at the end of the presentation. Notes were taken on flip charts and by a separate note-taker. Display boards were available for information and discussion. Comments were also accepted online and through mail. A total of 223 correspondences were received from April 7 to April 30, with the majority submitted directly through the PEPC website and a few letters brought to the public listening sessions or mailed to DEWA. The questions presented to the public at both listening sessions and on the PEPC website were:

- *What are your favorite things to do at the park?*
- *What are the most important experiences and opportunities at the park and why?*
- *What issues and opportunities (including visitor experiences and resource conditions) are the highest priority to address?*
- *What are your suggestions to address these issues and opportunities?*

Though these questions were presented as individual discussion items, the public's responses to each often related and overlapped through all four questions. Aside from the answers to question, *what are your favorite things to do at the park?*, the responses also generally fell into one of eight categories: natural resources/agriculture; historic resources; educational opportunities; recreation; visitor experience; infrastructure/maintenance; public/external relations; and park management. As the listening sessions and written comments both followed the same format, they are both discussed in this section, though noted separately. The comments have been taken from the topic questions, summarized, and organized based on these eight categories below.

Favorite things to do at the park

"I think the most important asset is the diverse set of activities that the park has to offer. I think the number of activities helps to bring in more people due to the wide range of activities."

—PEPC comment

Listening Sessions:



Park Ranger and Canoe Launch

- Boating
- Bicycling
- Camping
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Educational workshop
- Events
- Fishing
- Golfing
- Hang gliding
- Hiking
- Historic sites
- Horseback riding
- Hunting
- Model aviation
- Off-road vehicles/cycles
- Pocono Pony Shuttle
- Quiet/peace/solitude
- Scenic drives
- Swimming/tubing
- Visiting waterfalls/vistas
- Volunteering
- Walking/running
- Wildlife/bird watching
- Workshops

PEPC Comments:



Hiking in the Recreation Area

- Art workshops
- Bike riding
- Boating
- Camping
- Cross-country skiing
- Dining
- Events
- Explore old farm sites
- Fishing
- Flying glider planes
- Golfing
- Hiking/walking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting
- Kayaking/canoeing
- Model aviation
- Peace and quiet
- Photography
- Pocono Environmental Education Center
- Relaxing in nature unspoiled
- Scenic drives
- Seeing geological formations
- Seeing wildlife
- Snowshoeing
- Supporting local businesses
- Swimming
- Visiting historic sites
- Visiting waterfalls
- Volunteering
- Whitewater kayaking

Natural Resources/Agriculture

The natural resources at DEWA include 67,000 acres of forested mountains, riverine valleys, fertile floodplains and diverse range of wildlife species within. When asked about the most important experiences and opportunities in DEWA, many participants discussed their love of the natural resources DEWA offers, especially as an escape from the busy lives in the suburbs and cities. Participants wanted to keep the natural beauty and preserve the wildlife within DEWA. This emphasis was also evident in the correspondences sent in through PEPC and mail, where members of the public expressed the importance of protecting the natural environment unique to DEWA. These comments focused on enjoying the beauty of nature, feeling “off the grid”, exploration opportunities, viewing wildlife, and enjoying peace and solitude that is not present in the surrounding metropolitan area. In addition to natural resources, the agricultural resources of DEWA were expressed as valuable to many participants and some suggested reuse of the farms that are no longer used.

“The park is blessed with a cornucopia of stunning scenic resources and distinct aesthetic values. While each connection with nature is valuable in its own right, the opportunity to compare and contrast the connection at each habitat situation accentuates the bounty of nature.”

—PEPC comment

The tables below summarize examples of the opportunities/experiences, issues, and suggestions presented by the public at the listening sessions and in written comments entered into the PEPC website. Please note that they do not represent every comment made by the public.

Listening Sessions:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Commenters enjoyed the quiet, serene aspect of DEWA.
Ability to escape busy lives of suburbs and cities.
Scenic drives through DEWA are valuable.
Natural beauty and wildlife is important to preserve.
All activities in DEWA are improved with the natural backdrop.
ISSUES
Slateford Farms is closed, which is a lost opportunity.
Lumbering is needed in the climax forest.
Agricultural land is conventional farming now, alternatives should be considered.
Heavy traffic impacts the ability to enjoy the peace and quiet of nature.
SUGGESTIONS
Many farms have been allowed to fall apart and decay; they should be used as living farms.
Partner to have organic farming.
Create sustainable farming that is inviting and education to the public.
Sell lumber from cut trees to produce revenue.
Maintain and preserve the natural resources.

PEPC Comments:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Feeling “off the grid” and away from busy lifestyles
Viewing nature and wildlife is valuable and unique in the area.
Being able to enjoy nature with family and share it with your children is important.
Canoeing in the clean, quiet river provides an experience unique to DEWA.
Enjoying the natural beauty of DEWA along roadways and handicapped accessible sites.
Connecting with nature is good for the soul.
ISSUES
One commenter worried future actions of this plan might impact the natural resources of DEWA.
Some visitors do not respect DEWA and damage the natural beauty with trash and graffiti.
SUGGESTIONS
Don't change anything or increase activities in DEWA to keep nature as it is now.
Let residents in the area remove fallen or cut trees for firewood.
Timber operations could generate revenue, or be used to repair historic buildings, or add fencing.
Preserve the undeveloped areas for education and a space away from noise and congestion of developed areas.
Keep the New Jersey side as wild as possible.

Historic/Cultural Resources

DEWA boasts over 10,000 years of continuous human use, which can be experienced throughout DEWA. Commenters stated some of the most important experiences are relating their lives to human experience through different historic periods. Those with limited ability to engage in other recreational activities expressed the ability to enjoy history from the scenic roads and some accessible sites. Because of the vast amount of history in DEWA, the public generally felt more effort should be put into preserving and interpreting the existing historic sites so they will not be lost as so many already were. Several commenters stated DEWA should tell the story of how it was created when the land was purchased to build the Tock's Island Dam, but was never built. These commenters had a strong voice, experienced that story, and want to see interpretation of what buildings and resources were in the DEWA area before and how they were affected by that process.



An Historic Structure at DEWA

"There needs to be a concerted effort to stabilize & maintain the historic buildings that remain. Benign neglect is not a program of stewardship." –PEPC Comment

The tables below summarize examples of the opportunities/experiences, issues, and suggestions presented by the public at the listening sessions and in written comments entered into the PEPC website. Please note that they do not represent every comment made by the public.

Listening Sessions:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Exploring the historical significance of DEWA.
Researching and finding the historic sites.
ISSUES
Historic resources are not properly maintained.
Not all historic resources are open to the public.
History is not told correctly and the story of the Tock's Island Dam and lost resources is not portrayed.
SUGGESTIONS
Revisit lease back issue.
Include non-European history; create Native American Village for interpretations.
Restore and open more buildings to public.
Tell the story of Tock's Island Dam and how DEWA was created. It is important to tell the story of the lost resources and what was here before DEWA.

PEPC Comments:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Visiting Millbrook Village to see where ancestors lived, went to school, and are buried.
Learning about the past and sharing that experience with family.
The unchanged historic integrity of much of the area is important as it is lost in so many areas outside DEWA.
Having the chance to tour the historic buildings with local historical and NPS interpreters.
The NPS is ensuring many historic structures will continue to survive for future generations.
ISSUES
Historic sites are being neglected.
The Native American story is not properly represented.
The Tock's Island Dam incident is not properly represented.
SUGGESTIONS
Transform abandoned houses and buildings into businesses and learning centers.
Highlight the historical background of the area.
Strengthen connections with the Lenape tribes that are federally recognized.
Use volunteers and partnerships to rehabilitate historic buildings for use as visitor lodging.
Revise the lend/lease program to encourage citizens to partner with NPS.
Offer more visitor information and self-guided tours of historic sites.
Increase the interpretation of the broad history of the area, including Native Americans.
Offer a virtual tour of historic sites showing different time periods.
Target young people who need to learn about the history of the area.
Tell the story of the resources lost in the Tock's Island Dam plan with a map showing where buildings once stood.

Educational Opportunities

DEWA's resources offer many opportunities for education, and while most commenters focused on schools and children's education, some saw the opportunity to educate the public in general about having respect for nature. The Peters Valley School of Craft offers art workshops which commenters stated were unique in offering art education in a serene, natural setting and the Pocono Environmental Education Center was mentioned as a valuable resource to visitors. Strong opinions were voiced that DEWA should educate visitors about how DEWA was created and the resources that were lost.

"Environmental education for youth and all those interested is a high priority. Overall, the younger generations will lead and take over therefore, we should teach them about our history and landmarks before it's gone." -PEPC comment

The tables below summarize examples of the opportunities/experiences, issues, and ideas/requests presented by the public at the listening sessions and in written comments entered into the PEPC website. Please note that they do not represent every comment made by the public.

Listening Sessions:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Pocono Environmental Education Center is a valuable resource to visitors.
Learning American history in a unique context.
Able to learn about different architectural styles because of the many and varied buildings on site.
Educational workshops are great opportunities.
Art in the Park programs are great.
ISSUES
There are missed opportunities for education programming.
Archeological programs are needed.
Peters Valley School of Craft is the only point of orientation in NJ for an educational opportunity or welcome center.
SUGGESTIONS
Expand Environmental Science Program with schools; add high school volunteers.
Use radio-controlled model aviation in park to teach physics and connect with local schools.
Keep and improve programs for kids.
Continue the Pocono Environmental Education Center.
Add interpretive cross-training for rangers.
Enhance the learning and education process to create life-long supporters of DEWA.
Create additional programs related to photography and art with nature inspiration.

PEPC Comments:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Art workshops set against the natural, scenic backdrop are unique.
DEWA has the ability to educate the public about the historic importance of the site which could lead to a meaningful connection with the area and people will take pride in it and respect it.
ISSUES
There are missed opportunities to education visitors as to how human behavior impacts natural resources.
Activities should attract young people as they are the next generation that will take over the care of DEWA.
SUGGESTIONS
Young people should be target audience for historical sites for education.
Increase NPS-sponsored events such as star-gazing programs.
Environmental education for youth should be a priority.
Maintain programs with Peters Valley School of Craft, as it offers unique opportunities.
Use buildings in need of repair to train vocational students in specialized trades.
Dedicate an unused building to educational programming for use by park staff and visiting teachers, and for children as well as teacher training.

Recreation

Attendees and commenters expressed important experiences through a variety of recreational activities and noted how the scenic backdrop of DEWA added to their enjoyment. River recreation, such as kayaking and canoeing are very popular activities and those opportunities are greatly valued by visitors. Some commenters desired to maintain currently allowed uses, such as hunting and paddling, while others desired to have new uses permitted at DEWA. Many of the comments sent in through the PEPC website expressed the desire to have hang gliding and paragliding allowed in DEWA with designated take-off and landing sites. Advocates for this activity expressed that it is safe, quiet, non-polluting, and requires very little infrastructure. Another concern brought up in several comments was that radio-controlled model airplane flight is at risk of being banned from DEWA and enthusiasts want to open up a dialogue with park management to discuss the issues and find a solution. Other requests for increased recreation opportunities were additional horseback riding trails and dirt road access for motorcycles and ATVs. Hunting was a topic brought up by commenters and had representatives from both sides of the issue; some people felt that hunting should continue to be permitted in DEWA while other people felt it should no longer be permitted to protect the natural wildlife.

“The Delaware River offers the public an accessible, relatively safe paddling opportunity that is suitable for a wide array of skills and experience levels, including children. Whether the river offers a single enjoyable outdoor experience or a gateway to a lifelong pursuit of river-based adventures, this river has incredible value.” –PEPC Comment

The tables below summarize examples of the opportunities/experiences, issues, and suggestions presented by the public at the listening sessions and in written comments entered into the PEPC website. Please note that they do not represent every comment made by the public.

Listening Sessions:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
The trails are accessible and safe.
Outdoor exercise is a great way to be healthy and DEWA offers a lot of variety.
Public campgrounds offer affordable trips for families.
Model airplane flight is a great activity and attracts a lot of people.
Fishing at DEWA is a great experience because it is free and there is no check in or check out process.
ISSUES
Winter access to activities in DEWA is currently limited with many roads and parking areas left unplowed.
There used to be 50-60 miles of horse trails, but it is very limited today.
Illegal activities are going on in the more rural, less patrolled trails.
Plenty of recreational activities already exist, we don't need to add more. Keep DEWA focused on passive recreation.
SUGGESTIONS
Add more trails for horseback riding.
Add a bicycle staging area.
Include hang gliding launch/land sites within DEWA.
Improve information about trail conditions and difficulty, including printed trail maps.
Allow more road and parking areas in winter to provide access to activities.

PEPC Comments:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Exploration opportunities in DEWA are extensive. Many places to “get lost” while exploring.
Exercising while experiencing the natural world.
Playing golf at Cliff Park has been a long staple of the community.
Hang gliding over DEWA is a positive experience, and landing in DEWA should be permitted.
Flying RC model planes is an important activity because flying sites are not common.
The river provides great opportunities for fishermen and hunters that is unparalleled on the East Coast.
The Delaware River and its tributaries provide unique opportunities for whitewater kayaking in DEWA.
ISSUES
Boat launches get too crowded, especially with large groups in the summer.
There is limited access to the river for fishermen with motorboats.
Motorcycles are not allowed on many trails along the river.
Campsites, parking lots, and the river get very crowded on summer holiday weekends.
The closed roads, out-of-service boat ramp, and regulations on motors limits fishing access to much of the river.
Golf course has been a social place in the area for over 100 years, but the restaurant is now closed, affecting the enjoyment of golfers and their opportunities to socialize.
Winter activities seem to be lacking.
Some hiking trails are closed and the reason is not clear.
SUGGESTIONS
Open DEWA to horseback riders, use the old logging roads for trails, and add camp sites with horse stalls.
Ensure traditional activities, especially hunting, continue.
Ban hunting for wildlife protection and visitor safety.
Upgrade/complete the back nine holes of golf course and reopen the restaurant for eating and socializing.
Create designated areas or unmaintained trails for ATVs and off-road motorcycles.
Don't create trails for Jeeps, ATVs, etc.; allow DEWA to remain natural.
Continue to allow radio controlled model airplane flight and maintain the current field.
Create new boat launch for commercial operations to alleviate congestion.
Increase access for motorboats on the river.
Require free permits for campsites and river use during busy holiday weekends to alleviate overcrowding.
Allow and promote take-off and landing of glider planes or foot-launched aviation such as hang gliding.
Add mountain biking trails.
Realign hiking trails to reduce steep inclines.
Add backcountry camps along some trails to attract overnight backpackers.
Offer canoe/kayak rentals for a nominal fee.

Visitor Experience

DEWA is among the top 20 most visited national parks with approximately 5 million visitors a year. Many of the public commenters expressed their most important visitor experiences are ease of access to parking, trails, and sites. The popularity of certain sites throughout DEWA during peak visitation in the summer months and holiday weekends creates overcrowding, which affects the visitor experience. Specific areas of overcrowding mentioned were Smithfield Beach, Kittatinny boat access area, Turtle Beach, Hialeah Picnic Area, Hidden Lake, and Tom's Creek. Some of the biggest concerns were lack of sufficient parking and visitor orientation throughout DEWA, though poor maintenance and conditions of some sites were a concern. Additional visitor orientation sites and wayfinding signage was suggested to improve the visitor experience.



Dingmans Falls

"...experience making friends meeting people...sharing food and drink, meeting hikers and visitors talking about the parks history and issues. Helping to defend the resources and encouraging others to also do so." –PEPC comment

The tables below summarize examples of the opportunities/experiences, issues, and suggestions presented by the public at the listening sessions and in written comments entered into the PEPC website. Please note that they do not represent every comment made by the public.

Listening Sessions:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Volunteering in DEWA is a meaningful opportunity to give back and contribute to DEWA.
DEWA feels safe because the terrain is accessible and trails clearly marked.
Many people, older and younger, have been going to DEWA for a long time.
DEWA feels like our backyard.
ISSUES
Lack of visitor orientation, wayfinding throughout park.
Information on website is lacking.
Trail maps do not adequately provide information on conditions or difficulty of trail.
There is avoidance of DEWA because it is not welcoming.
Lack of Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility to the river.
There is not much signage or advertising presence on the New Jersey side.
SUGGESTIONS
Need new visitor centers/orientation centers/information kiosks.
Add interpretive cross-training for rangers.
Create new volunteer opportunities.
Create visitor center outside of park in NJ on Rt. 206 to help park and town.
Require all items/trash that is brought into park is also brought out.

PEPC Comments:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
This park offers free opportunities, such as waterfalls, which would require admission fees elsewhere.
Peace and serenity provided by DEWA.
It is important to be able to share the DEWA experience with your children and family.
This is an NPS park within an easy drive from New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore.
ISSUES
Beach and picnic areas fill up on summer weekends, leaving visitors with nowhere else to go within DEWA.
Visitors do not always respect the site or other visitors; they leave trash behind and are noisy and disruptive.
Some sites are used for big parties, which disrupt those who want a quiet experience and give DEWA a bad image.
Speeding on roadways is common and dangerous.
Hearing loud motorcycles while on a quiet hike is disruptive and affects the experience.
Eliminating any currently permitted activity would negatively affect numerous people in many ways, even if it is small.
Bathrooms are often closed during the off-peak times, even though people are at DEWA for activities such as hunting.
The tourist destination DEWA once was has been lost and local businesses are hurting because of it. Work to create welcoming environment to bring it back.
SUGGESTIONS
Maintain the trails and keep them clean.
Keep DEWA clean and sustainable, clean up run-down buildings so people see DEWA as a beautiful place.
Develop new picnic areas around the river and Hidden Lake.
Add plenty of trash receptacles.
Advertise/inform the public about all the activities and sites throughout DEWA as many are unknown.
Have more ADA accessible buildings and sites.
Rangers need to be more diligent to enforce regulations and trash pickup, including more river patrols.
Create a grand entryway to help visitors understand that they are somewhere special and should help take care of it.
Create an audio tour of DEWA, possibly through a radio station to listen in the car during scenic drives.
Never allow loud music (e.g. concerts).
Do not allow alcohol to be consumed on site.
Regulate maximum number of visitors to manageable features to keep park from getting too busy, maybe with a reservation system.
Offer more volunteer opportunities at DEWA.

Infrastructure/Maintenance

Many of the comments falling into this category related to the poor condition of roads (both inside and outside DEWA), boat launches, and trails. The public expressed concern that the poor state of certain areas of DEWA lead to the impression that no one cares about it and therefore visitors don't take care of DEWA during their usage. Concerns about safety and emergency vehicle access were also brought up due to the poor road conditions and other infrastructure issues. One commenter wondered how DEWA could serve those who do not have cars to access the sites. The amount of road closures was noted as a concern, especially during the winter. Commenters suggested public alerts regarding road closures to assist visitors in planning their visit.



Illegal parking

"The surrounding area is very unkempt. While the natural trees, vistas, waterways are beautiful, the physical structures are in disrepair. The whole area looks poor and disheveled." –PEPC comment

The tables below summarize examples of the opportunities/experiences, issues, and suggestions presented by the public at the listening sessions and in written comments entered into the PEPC website. Please note that they do not represent every comment made by the public.

Listening Sessions:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Route 209 and Old Mine Road offer scenic drives which set the stage for the entire park experience.
ISSUES
Old Mine Road is in need of maintenance.
Some roads are closed in winter, without notice, limiting visitor access.
Poor road conditions could limit emergency access.
Overcrowded parking areas lead to towing and fines when visitors cannot find parking spots.
Boat launches are in poor condition.
Lack of cell service can be a safety issue in an emergency.
SUGGESTIONS
Clean the culverts on Old Mine Road.
Provide public alerts about road closures.
Expand public transportation for those without cars to travel to and throughout park.
Repair boat launches.
Have volunteers work on cleanup of park, maybe students in need of service hours.

PEPC Comments:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
The most important thing about DEWA is that it is clean, safe, and adventurous.
ISSUES
Many side roads are in poor condition and need to be repaved.
There are a lot of run-down buildings, which gives the impression that DEWA doesn't care.
Is there ample access for emergency vehicles/helicopters, even when roads are closed or in need of maintenance?
Kittatinny boat access has been out of service for many years and many people would like to take advantage of that access again as boat launching is now limited.
Lack of sufficient parking limits access to some sites and recreation activities.
Hiking trails have never been well-marked or maintained.
Minor issues/repairs to buildings are not done until they become a major issue.
Informal/unofficial trails emerge from the official ones, affecting the natural resources.
SUGGESTIONS
Keep route 209 open to through traffic, as it creates a nice commute to work.
There is enough "hidden land" to create solar and wind farms without affecting the natural beauty of the area.
Open as many roads as possible to ensure ample access to recreation for people of all skill and abilities. Have official and sustainable access to each of the terrestrial and wetland habitats.
Maintain hiking trails through regular checks by staff or volunteers.
Use new technologies such as blower door testing, thermal imaging, and interior climate data gathering to improve understanding of what buildings are in most need of maintenance.
Improve and increase toilet facilities and garbage removal.

Public/External Relations

The public seemed to understand that funding for DEWA is sometimes limited and had ideas of how DEWA could work with organizations, both local and national, to help maintain its natural and recreational opportunities in the future. Many commenters offered to volunteer to remove trash from DEWA or to maintain trails. Specific recreational groups offered to assist with creating or maintaining resources the groups would use, such as horseback riding groups creating new trails and hang gliding groups creating and maintaining take-off and landing sites. These groups offered their services so DEWA would not have to use their own limited resources for these activities and facilities. Commenters also appreciated DEWA's efforts to include the public in this plan and want DEWA to facilitate further public discussions and input. One commenter wanted the public to be involved in how items for the plan are selected or rejected.

"Help build love and support for this beautiful natural wonder-filled area. Keep the public involved and relay what the national park service is doing to enhance/support/revitalize." –PEPC comment

The tables below summarize examples of the opportunities/experiences, issues, and suggestions presented by the public at the listening sessions and in written comments entered into the PEPC website. Please note that they do not represent every comment made by the public.

Listening Sessions:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Volunteering within DEWA allows visitors to connect with and build relationships with the site and staff.
ISSUES
There are missed opportunities for increased partnership with local businesses.
SUGGESTIONS
Increase flyers in hotels, diners, local businesses.
Reinstitute citizens' advisory committee for local input.
Friends of DEWA organization to spread information about the group.
Improve opportunities for volunteering through outreach and coordination.
Park employees should also volunteer in the community.

PEPC Comments:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
NPS interpreters have worked with local historians in the past.
Some commenters thanked DEWA for providing the opportunities for public input and feedback.
The Appalachian Mountain Club offers staff- and volunteer-led programs throughout DEWA.
ISSUES
The RC model plane club, RAMAC, wants to ensure there is a good relationship between DEWA and the club.
SUGGESTIONS
Partner with local schools and organizations.
Create a friends group.
Make political connections for funding opportunities.
Explore partnerships with local historians and architects to maintain historic sites.
Engage in meaningful conversations with those who utilize DEWA to understand both sides' positions and concerns.
Connect with recreational organizations such as American Whitewater to maintain recreational opportunities.
Corporate sponsorship can help bring in revenue to improve/preserve DEWA.
Emphasize community involvement to create a sense of pride and responsibility to park.
Partner with local hang gliding groups, as they are great stewards for nature and organize volunteer clean up days.

Park Management

There were comments regarding designation of DEWA as a National Recreation Area versus a National Park. Some commenters thought changing the name to a National Park would change the public impression and increase the level of respect for the natural and cultural resources. Those opposed to changing the name stated it would lead to increased regulations on activities permitted in DEWA, unnecessarily constricting usage. There were also differing views about park management, with some commenters expressing satisfaction and others seeking improvement. Some comments expressed concern about park management, though they cited lack of funds and staffing as a likely contributing factor. These comments were more common in the PEPC submissions than at the meetings. In the PEPC submissions, some commenters stated DEWA rangers are unfriendly and, as a whole, it has an impression of being unwelcoming, but others stated park officials and rangers have always been helpful and courteous during their visits. It was mentioned that a lack of advertising and proper signage results in locals and visitors not knowing what is available or even where DEWA boundaries are located. Commenters mentioned trash and litter problems in certain areas of DEWA in the PEPC comments, and some were disturbed by vandalism. Though some comments were negative, others did express an improvement in park facilities which added to their enjoyment, such as improved fishing on the river. At the listening sessions, questions were asked about the plan changing access, expanding or eliminating different recreation activities, or expanding past park boundaries, to which DEWA replied that no decisions have been made and nothing is currently on or off the table. It was also asked if this plan will advocate for more staffing for DEWA, to which DEWA replied that the plan may look at strategies for additional programming which would require more staff, but will not specifically address staffing.

“Build a stronger DWG [DEWA] brand. Better signage and or a grand entryway would help people understand that they are entering a special place.” –PEPC comment

The tables below summarize examples of the opportunities/experiences, issues, and suggestions presented by the public at the listening sessions and in written comments entered into the PEPC website. Please note that they do not represent every comment made by the public.

Listening Sessions:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
DEWA feels like a safe place to go.
ISSUES
Litter/trash problematic in some areas.
The name “Recreational Area” is lowering visitor expectations and public doesn’t understand everything DEWA offers, such as natural resources.
If the name changed to “National Park,” it might imply the loss of activities available now.
McDade Trail has heavy usage but no food or lodging.
The lack of manpower/park staff limits use.
SUGGESTIONS
Advertise available activities in DEWA.
Add a shuttle service throughout DEWA, which could minimize parking lots.
Educate and enforce public about removing their trash/litter.
Lease buildings not being used for new residents.

PEPC Comments:

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES
Fishing in the river has improved since the NPS took over the area.
Maintaining a wide range of activities in a natural setting is important for enjoyment of all visitors.
Paddling management in DEWA is going well.
DEWA is generally clean and safe.
The Appalachian Mountain Club commented that the NPS should continue to recognize and value the diverse opportunities available at DEWA, and that future management preserves these opportunities.
ISSUES
Some people see DEWA as having too many regulations and giving out too many fines.
DEWA shouldn't spend money on improvements because it is fine the way it is now.
Park rangers at DEWA have a reputation for being unfriendly.
There is not enough monitoring of activities during times of high risk of fire.
Park must find a way to make visitors, residents, rangers, volunteers, feel responsible for the care and maintenance of DEWA's resources.
New Jersey passed a bill to improve tourism, and could have opportunities for DEWA.
While improvements and additional facilities may be needed, do not develop facilities in locations that would detract from natural and scenic values.
There are missed opportunities to generate revenue, such as entrance fees, lodging, and food sales.
Park budget must be assessed and park should invest in improvements that will generate revenue.
Find a way to secure ample funding for the future.
SUGGESTIONS
Don't build new visitor centers, they are expensive and taxpayers are broke.
Create new visitor welcome centers to provide better information.
Consider selling park passes or charge fees to increase revenue and funding.
Utilize automated payment apps for paid parking.
Reinstate ban on commercial traffic through DEWA.
Re-open toll booth for revenue and to restrict access to large trucks.
Increase/improve advertising. Build a stronger DEWA brand.
Open dialogue between park management and visitors to improve usage.
Use habitable buildings for park ranger residences to discourage vandalism.
Change name to "National Park" to improve visitor mindset to protect resources.
Do not change name to "National Park" because more regulations will be put in place. "Recreation area" offers more freedom for visitors.
Increase public relations and involvement to change impression that park and its rangers are unwelcoming.
Have Rangers take courses in public relations.
Put up security cameras if additional patrols are not possible.
Add/Increase signage with regulations and reminders to visitors to clean up their trash.
Engage rangers with the public to be seen as teachers and stewards, not enforcers.
Add better fencing and a locking gate after hours.
Create committees to develop and improve specific resources, programs, economic benefits, and seek out new funding.
Leverage conservation funds from settlement on Susquehanna-Roseland transmission line and from Department of Agriculture for farmland and forest management.
Continue to keep the area relatively unregulated.
Continue with the current management of paddling in DEWA.

Focus Groups

The two focus group meetings were invite-only and consisted of stakeholders, land managers, and other organizations that may be affected by the plan. The groups were split into two meetings, one for stakeholders and one for land managers. These meetings started with a PowerPoint presentation, followed by general questions, and then a facilitated discussion focused around the questions in provided handouts. Notes were taken on flip charts and by a separate note-taker. Display boards were available for information and discussion.

The two groups had slightly different discussion questions to focus on their role and relationship with DEWA. The facilitated discussions were more topical than the public listening sessions, therefore the concerns and requests were more specific to the questions. This report summarizes overall concerns and requests, followed by more detailed summaries of the responses to each question. Because the two groups were presented with different questions, this report addresses them separately.



Kayaking the Delaware River

Stakeholders Focus Group

The focus group of stakeholders from partners, concessions, liveries, and tourism agencies was held on April 7, 2015 from 10am-12pm at the Bushkill Meeting Center. Stakeholders from 42 organizations were invited and 25 individuals attended. The questions presented to the stakeholder group were:

- *How do visitor use patterns at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area affect your operation?*
- *What changes in visitor use patterns have you seen in recent years?*
- *What impacts have you seen to resources at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area?*
- *What can the National Park Service do to better manage use while protecting park resources?*
- *What role can you play in managing visitor use?*
- *Do you have any additional input?*

The following table highlights overall issues and suggestions from this focus group, with more specific responses to each question below.

Highlighted Issues	Highlighted Suggestions
Concessionaires/liveries /tourism agencies could be more effective in supporting DEWA visitor use if there was a stronger working relationship.	Enhance stakeholders' DEWA information resources.
DEWA visitors face inadequate on-site information.	Increase and improve visitor information resources at DEWA locations (new visitor center/s) and at stakeholder's sites within or near DEWA.
Poor signage compromises visitor use and visitor use management.	Improve and increase signage on roads and trails to increase DEWA visibility and make plain the activities that are available within DEWA, and their locations.
DEWA lags in using digital information resources.	Utilize apps, QR codes, and other electronic means to provide easy onsite access to information and meet expectations of both current and future visitors for whom smart phones/devices are their primary information mode.
Current transportation options and conditions do not support either full use of DEWA or optimal access points.	Increase shuttle bus options that are easily understood and used by visitors, provide greater access to the entire recreation area, and improve roads and parking.

How do visitor use patterns at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area affect your operation?

The comments for this question were focused on the lack of visitor information and wayfinding around and throughout DEWA. One participant mentioned that DEWA doesn't look open for business as fee stations are closed and derelict on the main route, which is not inviting to visitors. Stakeholders suggested DEWA increase signage along feeder roads, utilize social media to provide information, and improve visitor welcome centers. They generally expressed that visitors use local tourism agencies, concessionaires, and businesses for information about DEWA because they cannot see any official visitor information center. One concern was that visitors coming directly to DEWA do not feed local businesses, whereas the opposite is true and local businesses send visitors to DEWA. Participants want DEWA to foster a better relationship with local stakeholders to create a mutually beneficial support and advertising system. One suggestion was to circulate buses to more areas in DEWA, or create specific interest bus trips to improve visitor access throughout DEWA. Vandalism near Hidden Lake was also mentioned and it was suggested that increased ranger patrols could help decrease future vandalism.

The table below summarizes examples of the comments presented by stakeholders at this focus group meeting, though they do not represent every comment made at the meeting.

Highlighted Comments
Headquarters is tucked away in DEWA, with no apparent greeting center for visitors to get information as soon as they arrive.
DEWA doesn't look to be open for business or inviting from the outside as fee stations are closed and derelict on the main route through the park.
DEWA entrances are not easily found on Google maps.
Once inside DEWA, information on getting to specific sites is very limited.
Opportunities for good signage are missed on feeder roads into DEWA.
Dingmans Bridge toll collectors are asked for a lot of information, which holds up traffic.
Vandalism to facilities is problematic at Hidden Lake.
Visitors coming directly to DEWA do not feed local businesses and concessionaires.
Increase in photographers to DEWA, which increases photo tours to increase revenue.
Improve visitor information, maps, and signage.
Improve visitor counting metrics.
Consider digital welcome centers in the form of cell phone apps.
Utilize social media to provide information.
Circulate buses to more areas of DEWA; create trips or loops to historic properties.
Improve advertising to local and outlying areas, targeting young people.
Increase patrols around certain vandalized areas such as Hidden Lake.

What changes in visitor use patterns have you seen in recent years?

Stakeholders saw different changes in visitor use patterns as some saw an overall increase and some saw an overall decrease in visitors. Participants expressed a change in visitor demographics, such as a decline in the senior market and an increase in young families. A change in overall culture was noted, leading to more day visitors and less overnight guests. One participant cited an increase in single parent households, which have difficulty getting kids to DEWA. Increased focus on technology in our culture requires using different media for information and communication with visitors.

The table below summarizes examples of the comments presented by stakeholders at this focus group meeting, though they do not represent every comment made at the meeting.

Highlighted Comments
School districts have decreased budgets and are no longer encouraging outdoor educational programs in DEWA.
Some see a decline in visitors, others see an increase.
The senior market is declining, with an increase in young professionals with kids.
There is a growth in bus tour groups stopping in DEWA for day use.
Culture changes over the last 10 years require using different media for information and communication on and off site.
Embrace relationship with liveries and concessionaires to build support system and staff.
Create more educational opportunities to involve local schools and the use of the Pocono Environmental Education Center for classes and teacher training.
Reach out to new demographics and culture through the use of smartphone apps, QR codes, and social media.

What can the National Park Service do to better manage use while protecting park resources?

A common theme in the responses to this question was improving visitor information and wayfinding in and around DEWA. This included adding information kiosks, trail signage, activity guides and itineraries. Participants explained that utilizing new technology such as QR codes and smartphone apps would reach out to young visitors who are also the future visitors of DEWA. Stakeholders also requested better information available in their locations to provide to visitors.



Visitors and park ranger enjoy the view from Mount Tammany

Another topic brought up by participants was enhanced transportation through improved roads, better parking facilities and the use of a shuttle bus system. Participants stated the shuttle bus system would be best if it was expanded to include local hotels and businesses and had the capacity for recreational gear for activities such as hunting and fishing. Stakeholders also emphasized the need for improved visitor experience on the New Jersey side of DEWA, especially at Millbrook Village and other historic sites. Park management was a concern for stakeholders and their comments requested consistent maintenance and cleanup, additional programming, enhanced river use, and spreading out visitors from overused sites through advertisement of additional sites and increase connections between sites.

The table below summarizes examples of the comments presented by stakeholders at this focus group meeting, though they do not represent every comment made at the meeting.

Highlighted Comments
Improve and increase information about DEWA, including information centers and kiosks, wayfinding, points of contact outside park, trail information and maps, directions to sites, and QR codes for smartphone access to detailed information.
Better utilize concessionaires and partners to maximize their effectiveness by providing sufficient materials, including kiosks in some sites.
Improve transportation through better parking facilities, expanding shuttle bus service, improving road conditions, increasing winter access by plowing, and providing access to city dwellers without cars and with limited income.
Facilitate spreading out visitor use to alleviate overcrowding in certain sites during the summer through increased connections between sites and information about additional site and activities throughout DEWA.
Improve the visitor experience on the New Jersey side of DEWA through a stronger presence and visibility at historic sites, increased wayfinding signage, better maintenance of infrastructure, greater river access, and addressing the lack of refreshments.
Create programming to target specific demographics such as preteens, over-65, education seekers, etc.
Enhance river use through stronger connections to the Delaware River Basic Commission, creating more awareness of the river and activities, and guided river tour boats.
Achieve increased maintenance and clean-up of DEWA, particularly those sites that are vandalized and heavily trashed.
Sponsor events as visitor attractions such as expos, NPS anniversary celebrations, and "taste of DEWA" introduction.
Start a farmer's market at Wheatplains, the midpoint in DEWA.
Consider river tour boats as not everyone wants to pilot their own canoe or kayak.
Provide food services within DEWA.
The DEWA 50 th anniversary and NPS 100 th anniversary are great opportunities for events and partnership development.

What role can you play in managing visitor use?

Stakeholders' responses to this question were all related to ways they could work with DEWA management to promote and increase business and revenue for local businesses and DEWA. They understood that DEWA staff needs help with some interpretive programming for partners. Participants requested more detailed information from DEWA to provide their guests. Stakeholders stated that they could be more effective in supporting DEWA if there was a stronger working relationship. It was suggested that DEWA look at other NPS units to incorporate their best management practices. DEWA needs to explore new marketing strategies to reach young professionals and families through social networking.

The table below summarizes examples of the comments presented by stakeholders at this focus group meeting, though they do not represent every comment made at the meeting.

Highlighted Comments
Potentially operate a shuttle bus services with/without a park partnership.
Promote visiting DEWA, including longer stays and making DEWA a vacation destination.
Stakeholders want to be involved in decision-making through a stronger relationship with DEWA.
Businesses could offer package deals that include lodging and activities to attract overnight and multi-day use.
Market DEWA experiences for families seeking healthy recreation, including great food and exercise.
Local businesses need more information and literature to give out to visitors about DEWA offerings.

Any additional input?

The following were miscellaneous comments made outside the facilitated questions.

Highlighted Comments
No food services are within or near DEWA areas, especially on the NJ side.
Broken glass is often found, creating a safety hazard.
Consider charging more fees to increase revenue.
In advertising, "national" is never mentioned in the name.
Visitors have limited personal contact with park staff.
There is a limited number of volunteers.
Suggest an electronic user survey that partners, vendors could help disseminate.

Land Managers Focus Group

The second focus group meeting was held on April 8, 2015 from 1pm-3pm at the Bushkill Meeting Center to gather input from other public landowners/operators and related organizations in the regional vicinity of the DEWA. Individuals from 32 organizations were invited and 20 individuals attended. The questions presented to the landowner group were:

- *How do visitor use patterns at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area affect you?*
- *What changes in visitor use patterns have you seen in recent years?*
- *What impacts have you seen to resources at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, at your site, or in general?*
- *What can the National Park Service do to better manage use while protecting park resources?*
- *How can the National Park Service cooperate with you to better manage visitor use?*
- *Do you have any additional input?*

The following table shows highlights overall issues and suggestions from this focus group, with more specific responses to each question below.

Highlighted Issues	Highlighted Suggestions
Impacts of increased DEWA visitor use on surrounding landowners (spillover visitors, infrastructure wear, new use demands, trash).	Increase synergy and cooperation in zoning, land management, water quality, and public education/awareness.
Unrealized opportunity to enhance visitor experience in the region and to draw more visitors to the region.	Cross-promote and connect information about parks/recreation areas in the region; offer trail and park networks; capitalize on unique DEWA offerings (river experience, history of the area and resource management).
Impact on DEWA's resources of increased use with less maintenance and fewer staff.	More staff, maintenance, and enforcement; manage visitor use to preserve important DEWA values and resources.
Inadequate information to enhance DEWA visitor use experience.	Partnership on information; better on-site information and signage.
Poor roads, inadequate parking and unmet transportation needs.	Improve roads and parking, increase connecting infrastructure and services (e.g. shuttles).
Fishing and hunting are important visitor uses at DEWA that need to be supported.	Better information for these users; promote fishing and protect sites; maintain existing practices that enhance hunting (agriculture, game stocking, etc.).
Need to anticipate and plan for changes in visitors (demographics, expectations, needs).	Offer activities and experiences, promote to certain user groups.

How do visitor use patterns at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area affect you?

Participants responded to this question with ways the overcrowding of DEWA have affected surrounding areas. When DEWA is too crowded, visitors go to surrounding locations, which leads to infrastructure wear, new use demands, and unrealistic visitor expectations. Participants requested an increase in cooperation in zoning, land management, water quality, and public awareness. Landowners commented that there is a movement toward active recreation and visitors don't know about the jurisdictions in DEWA. Visitors are seeking a wilderness experience, not a site for passive family gatherings. Participants noted that different demographics are looking for different experiences.

The table below summarizes examples of the comments presented by land managers at this focus group meeting, though they do not represent every comment made at the meeting.

Highlighted Comments
Heavy usage and management of park have effects on the surrounding areas by creating overflow in local sites outside DEWA, where the township bears the burden of heavy infrastructure use.
High weekend and summer use has increased weekday and off-season use of DEWA.
NPS fees may drive users to state forests for parking and other uses.
Few parking areas within DEWA have decreased hunting.
US Forest Service Grey Towers is used as a rainy day alternative.
PA State Delaware Forest sees overflow from DEWA and visitors don't seem to know the difference.
Resurgence of interest in new local destination water parks.
River restrictions in DEWA displace users to other sections of the river.
US Forest Service visitors are interested in waterfalls, hiking, shopping, and eating.
Mountain bikers already know where they want to go and have researched locations. DEWA can show them new spots.

What changes in visitor use patterns have you seen in recent years?

Participants saw increases in visitor use in some areas and decreases in others. They expressed changes in demographics, and stated that visitors aged 20-30 are declining as they seek more adventurous activities such as zip lining, rather than the passive recreation offered at DEWA. Fluctuating fuel and toll costs were cited as prohibiting use. Participants said that summer weekends are getting more crowded, which discourages return visits for those who are not aware of DEWA sites that are less crowded. It was stated that DEWA needs to anticipate and plan for changes in visitor demographics, expectations, and needs and offer activities to reach these groups. Women and children were suggested as target markets and DEWA needs to find a way to appeal to them. Participants suggested an increase in fees for fishing and hunting creates a decrease in visitors so DEWA must communicate the value of the cost of these licenses and permits.

The table below summarizes examples of the comments presented by land managers at this focus group meeting, though they do not represent every comment made at the meeting.

Highlighted Comments
More use/crowding and full parking lots in some areas discourages return visits.
Reduced river use monitoring/management has led to unclear/trashy riverbank campsites.
Larger water sports are declining, with more individual river uses instead of large groups.
Licensed fishermen decreased over years with increase in fees, generally 10% loss with each increased fee.
Youth aren't interested in passive outdoor activities, they want instant gratification such as zip lines.
More users are seeking a wilderness experience, not family-gathering-type uses.
Young families from cities seek walkable weekend and vacation trips for greenspace.
Anticipated changes as Monroe County is implementing plan to draw visitors to Appalachian vacation towns.
Baby Boomers are still active and want outdoor destinations.
The gap in demographics is the age group 20-30.
A disconnect exists between the value of the experience and the fees being charged.
Economics have encouraged "stay-cationers", not overnight visitors.
Commuters are using River Road to bypass Rt. 209.

What impacts have you seen to resources at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, at your site, or in general?

Though a participant stated the water quality and viewshed are still in outstanding condition given the amount of visitor use seen at DEWA, landowners were concerned about impacts to resources. It was expressed that resources are at risk due to heavy use of certain park sites, high traffic on Route 209, poor road conditions, and trash dumping. Road closures were cited as an issue that can deter potential visitors. Participants said this impact is increased through less maintenance and fewer staff at DEWA. A suggestion was a management and zoning plan update to make DEWA uses compatible with historic and natural resources.

The table below summarizes examples of the comments presented by land managers at this focus group meeting, though they do not represent every comment made at the meeting.

Highlighted Comments
There is noise pollution from traffic on River Road as commuters bypass Rt. 209 during rush hour congestion.
For the amount of use that DEWA sees, the water quality and viewshed are still outstanding.
Resource integrity is at a high risk, we are on the downward side of housing boom.
Regarding trash dumping, there are differing opinions on whether this is increasing or decreasing.
Overflow from DEWA made Stroud Township close their parks.
Road conditions/closures are always an issue and can deter visitors.
The GPS address is incorrect.
The shad population has decreased.
There is an increase in hunting at DEWA with the Game Commission bird stocking, creating an agricultural benefit.
Is there a management/zoning plan for the valley? Make uses compatible with historic and natural resources.

What can the National Park Service do to better manage use while protecting park resources?

The responses to this question were focused on improving park infrastructure such as road conditions, parking facilities, trail maintenance, and access to DEWA. Participants also requested increased programming and activities that focus on the unique aspects of DEWA, including multi-day packages. Networking and promotion of DEWA were also common aspects to these comments, including providing more information about park sites and activities. Advertising unique activities and sites can attract new visitors and encourage returning visitors. A suggestion was to provide better identification of day use opportunities and helping visitors plan out their day at DEWA and adjacent sites. Utilizing social media, smartphone apps, and other technology was suggested to help with advertising and information. Participants stated improved park management and increased staff will help to maintain and protect the natural and cultural integrity of DEWA.



Smithfield Beach

The table below summarizes examples of the comments presented by land managers at this focus group meeting, though they do not represent every comment made at the meeting.

Highlighted Comments
Additional access would open up new opportunities to get to sites for hunting and fishing.
Provide a variety of access types for rural users, suburban users, and urban users.
Explore better ways to direct people to other areas when parking lots are full.
Consider road closings to protect wildlife crossings and incorporate interpretive/educational programs with it.
Consider changes in agriculture policy, such as reducing monoculture and removing crops sooner, while considering impact on hunting.
Explore virtual visits and webcams of eagles.
Capitalize on what makes this park unique—river recreation, spectacular water falls, bird and eagle watching.
Better identification of day use opportunities and activities.
Unique activities such as 3-day river/camping trips are important.
Showcase historical importance of the area with more interpretation, even on mobile apps and the website.
Emphasize and educate the public on link between natural and cultural resources.
Tell the story of how DEWA was created and what resources were here before DEWA.
Get more staff and more rangers to have a cleaner park.
Promote hunting and fishing more.
Network with other NPS and non-NPS parks/areas.
Connect McDade Trail to surrounding county trails and to Appalachian Trail and create more spurs to the river.
Address transportation issues such as improving road conditions, parking, and shuttles.
Consider fees for river camping.
Maintain the quiet that exists in many areas.
Keep the New Jersey side as it is—more wild and undeveloped.

How can the National Park Service cooperate with you to better manage visitor use?

Participants had many ideas for partnerships to assist DEWA in management and maintenance issues as funding and staffing can be low at times. These ideas not only included local organizations, but also regional and national networking for cross-promotion opportunities. One suggestion was to connect trails and access with managed lands adjacent to DEWA, and advertise where those connectors, trailheads, and amenities are located. Private companies could be partnered with to handle hiking, swimming, and camping overflow during peak season. A participant suggested DEWA staff attend more local and regional meetings to better connect with the public. One participant wanted DEWA to discuss overflow opportunities and connect with public and private sites to where overflow visitors can be directed.

The table below summarizes examples of the comments presented by land managers at this focus group meeting, though they do not represent every comment made at the meeting.

Highlighted Comments
Reduce silos of land management in and outside DEWA and in the Pocono area.
Partner with local governments on enforcement and public education of trash removal.
Partner on water quality with Conservation Districts.
Continue with Game Commission bird stocking to increase hunting opportunities.
Promote hunting and fishing in partnership with private companies/clubs, e.g. Trout Unlimited.
Use partnerships for better information delivery system and to encourage people to come to the outdoors.
Cross-promote all parks in the region.
Create a network of connected parks/conservation areas/recreation areas so the public can learn about different sites and enhance the experience.
Better zoning, model zoning, improve land management synergy.
Take a regional approach to increasing and broadening the demographics of visitors.
Cross-promote with Upper Delaware River as those visitors tend to not know about DEWA and vice-versa.
Explore private opportunities to handle hike, swim, and camp overflow.
Utilize cooperation with historical societies to enhance historic interpretation opportunities.
Attend more local and regional meetings to connect with the public.