



NEWS RELEASE

National Park Service

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Bushkill, Pennsylvania 18324

**National Park Service, Delaware Water Gap NRA
The Nature Conservancy - "Protecting nature. Preserving life"
News Release**

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Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Expanded

[Sandyston Township, Sussex County , NJ] — Today, leaders from The Nature Conservancy, the National Park Service, and several members of New Jersey's Congressional Delegation announced the expansion of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. A 91.5-acre forested property, known as the DelGrosso Tract, was recently conveyed by the Conservancy to the National Park Service as an addition to the national recreation area.

In 2008, the Conservancy acquired the property, which lies just east of the Delaware River , on behalf of the National Park Service until federal funding to re-acquire the property could be secured. The DelGrosso tract was one of the largest remaining private in-holdings within the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area—and a tract that has been a long-standing acquisition priority for the National Park Service.

According to **John Donahue, Superintendent of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area** , "The National Park Service regards this property as a critical element in the overall protection of the wildlife, the lands, and the water in this spectacular unit of the National Park System. The loss of this tract, which runs from the mountain tops in New Jersey to the mountain tops in Pennsylvania, to residential development, would have been a detriment to our effort to protect the larger natural areas. The Nature Conservancy and our Congressional members have been key partners in ecosystem protection in both states. We are fortunate that The Nature Conservancy was able to step in and protect this property until we obtained the necessary funding to make it part of our national recreation area."

The DelGrosso Family Company, LLC, comprising four cousins who inherited the property from family members, agreed to sell it to The Conservancy for its appraised value of \$1 million.

"We're especially grateful for the support of Congressman Garrett as well as Senators Lautenberg and Menendez in helping to make this acquisition a reality" said **Dr. Barbara Brummer, New Jersey State Director of the Nature Conservancy.**

"I'm very pleased to have been able to assist in securing funds from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund for this project and for expansion of various other sites that provide important recreational opportunities along the Delaware River" said **Congressman Scott Garrett**, Representative from NJ's Fifth Congressional District.

"New Jersey is filled with natural wonders like the Delaware Water Gap and it's up to us to protect them." **Senator Frank R. Lautenberg** said. Investing in our natural resources is vital to the ecological and economic health of our state and I am proud to have helped direct funding to this important preservation effort."



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The area is under intense development pressure. Once buffered from New Jersey's first and second home boom by the Highlands to the east, increased protection of the Highlands has made the Kittatinny Ridge and Valley highly attractive to developers.

"The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is a key recreational asset to New Jersey , accommodating over 5 million visitors a year" said **Senator Bob Menendez** . "As a member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I understand the profound importance of preserving land under the auspices of the National Park Service and am pleased to have helped in obtaining the funds to preserve this pristine forested area."

Denise DelGrosso, of The DelGrosso Family, LLC , said her father and uncle originally purchased the land jointly in 1965 for the sole purpose of maintaining it as forested land for family outings, hiking, recreation and enjoyment. DelGrosso added "This crucial acquisition has ensured that many generations to come will continue to enjoy the expansive forests that comprise this property."

New Jersey state director, Dr. Barbara Brummer, summed up the project as "an especially satisfying land protection project – one where a longstanding partnership among the Conservancy, the National Park Service and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area has resulted in a major "save" that benefits New Jersey, all the states that share the Delaware River and, in fact, other states and countries whose birds and fish rely on this area at some point during their life cycles. We are glad to have helped make this possible."

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The Nature Conservancy is the leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. To date, the Conservancy and its more than one million members have been responsible for the protection of more than 18 million acres in the United States and have helped preserve more than 117million acres in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific. Visit The Nature Conservancy on the Web at www.nature.org.

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Delaware Water Gap NRA, the eighth most visited area in the National Park System, encompasses 70,000 acres of ridges, forests, lakes and rivers on both sides of the Delaware River in the states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The park offers exceptional opportunities for outdoor recreation, a rich and diverse sampling of regional flora and fauna, historic structures, craft centers, as well as environmental and outdoor education facilities. The Delaware River , the longest undammed river in the eastern United States , is a designated river within the National Wild and Scenic River System. For further information, visit the park's web site at www.nps.gov/dewa.