

Highlands water supply and quality

Water Supply

People who live in and outside the Highlands are dependent on Highlands water.

- Many Highlands residents get their drinking water from rainwater that filters through the ground into wells. Development shrinks the amount of land available to recharge the groundwater supply.
- Millions of people outside the Highlands depend on surface water from its reservoirs, rivers and streams as the source of their water supply.



Angler, Speedwell Lake, Morristown
PHOTO COURTESY MORRIS LAND CONSERVANCY

NJ Highlands Fast Facts Series #1

www.njhighlandscoalition.org

Water Quality

People, plants, animals and aquatic life all depend on the quality of water for survival.

If we are not careful to build in a manner that protects our water quality, our lakes, streams, rivers and wells will suffer and so will we.

Stormwater runoff from paved and developed land increases erosion and flooding and carries pesticides and other pollutants into our water supply.



Highlands critical treasures

In 2005, the Highlands Coalition listed the following in its report “The Highlands: Our Backyard Paradise” as Critical Treasures of the New Jersey Highlands. Ensuring that these areas are protected helps secure our drinking water, clean air, critical wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. While portions have been protected, others remain at risk.

- **Farny Highlands** (Morris Co.)
- **Hamburg Mountain** (Sussex Co.)
- **Musconetcong Mountain** (Hunterdon Co.)
- **Musconetcong River Valley** (Hunterdon, Morris & Warren Co.)
- **North Branch Raritan River Watershed** (Hunterdon, Morris & Somerset Co.)
- **Pequannock Watershed** (Passaic, Sussex & Morris Co.)
- **Pequest River Valley** (Sussex & Warren Co.)
- **Pohatcong Creek Valley** (Warren Co.)
- **Pohatcong Grasslands** (Warren Co.)
- **Pohatcong Mountain** (Warren Co.)
- **Ramapo Mountains and Ramapo River Watershed** (Bergen & Passaic Co.)
- **Rockaway River Watershed** (Morris & Sussex Co.)
- **Schooley’s Mountain** (Morris Co.)
- **Scotts Mountain** (Warren Co.)
- **Sparta Mountain Greenway** (Sussex & Morris Co.)
- **Upper Passaic River Headwaters** (Morris & Somerset Co.)
- **Upper South Branch Raritan River Watershed** (Hunterdon & Morris Co.)
- **Wallkill River Valley** (Sussex Co.)
- **Wyanokie Highlands/Wanaque Watershed** (Passaic Co.)



Highlands threatened critters

Can you name ten endangered critters that can be found in the New Jersey Highlands? Just unscramble the words below:

- _____ dowo telrtu
- _____ uleb optsdte msanlraead
- _____ yrpeso
- _____ bmreit atlskateerln
- _____ proscoes kwha
- _____ lvrise dorered rtityfria
- _____ gbo rutetl
- _____ uble rneoh
- _____ rdbera wlo
- _____ rthneor wgaskoh

Answers: 



BARRED OWL / JOHN REED

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There are many species listed as endangered or threatened by the federal and state agencies. Many of these birds, animals and fish are threatened because their habitat is being taken away. Preserving large tracts of land and forests in the Highlands is important to the birds and animals that require those spaces in order to survive.

Protecting our water quality by keeping out pollutants and by maintaining appropriate water levels and temperatures is important to the survival of fish, invertebrates and amphibians that live in Highlands waters. These creatures form the foundation of the food chain that all living things depend on. The presence of threatened and endangered species is indicative of clean water.



Highlands farming

Farming is a way of life for many in the New Jersey Highlands. The state and local governments recognize the benefits agriculture adds to the economy and to quality of life, but agricultural viability remains at risk due to high operating costs and development pressures.



PHOTO COURTESY MORRIS LAND CONSERVANCY

Farm Facts

- 118,000 – acres of agricultural land in the New Jersey Highlands in 2002
- 33,651 – acres preserved since 1983
- 27,500 – acres lost to other uses 1986–2002

Support Local Farms

- Buy Local, Buy Fresh – at roadside stands and community farmers markets; see www.state.nj.us/jerseyfresh; www.buyfreshnwj.org
- Buy Organic – visit the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey's website at www.nofanj.org

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www.njhighlandscoalition.org

- Join a CSA – community supported agriculture, and contract for a share of the produce; www.nofanj.org; www.localharvest.org
- Pick Your Own – fruits, vegetables; www.state.nj.us/jerseyfresh;
- Cut Your Own – Christmas trees; www.njchristmastrees.org
- Plant Your Own – Jersey Grown flowers, shrubs, trees; www.state.nj.us/jerseygrown
- Take a Farm Tour – www.visitnjfarms.org



Highlands outdoor activities

The preserved areas of the New Jersey Highlands offer many opportunities for adventure and for appreciation of their scenic beauty. These areas include national, state and county parks, land around reservoirs such as Spruce Run and Merrill Creek, the scenic Musconetcong and other rivers and streams, wildlife refuges and back roads. Listed below are some activities you can enjoy and examples of places where you can enjoy them. For more information, visit www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests, www.njhighlandscoalition.org and county park web sites.

Birdwatching

- Great Swamp Wildlife Refuge
- Mahlon Dickerson Reservation

Boating/Windsurfing

- Hopatcong State Park
- Spruce Run Recreation Area

Camping

- Jenny Jump State Forest
- Ramapo Valley Reservation
- Voorhees State Park

Canoeing/Kayaking

- Wallkill River
- Musconetcong River

Cycling

- Round Valley Recreation Area
- Wawayanda State Park

Downhill Skiing

- Campgaw Mountain
- Hidden Valley

Fishing

- Merrill Creek Reservoir
- Ken Lockwood Gorge

Hiking/Cross Country

Skiing/Snowshoeing

- Highlands Trail
- Appalachian Trail

Horseback Riding

- Seaton Hackney (stables)
- Allamuchy Mountain State Park

PHOTO COURTESY WILMA E. FREY



Highlands historical heritage

Highlands history is all about **IRON**.

- **Mining** started before the Revolution. Forests were burned for charcoal. Washington's ammunition came from Highlands iron.

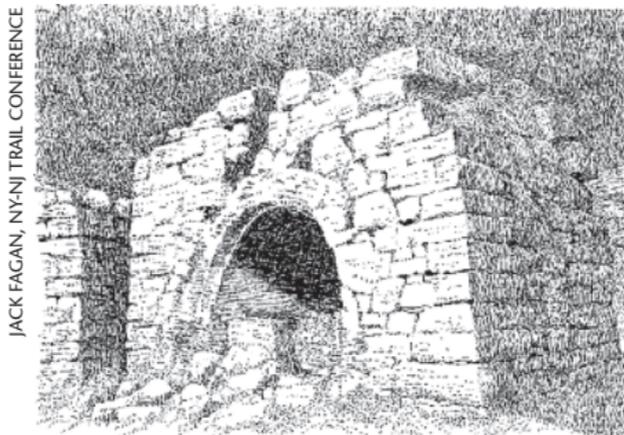
Visit: Ford-Faesch House & miners' church, Rockaway Township
Washington's Headquarters, Morristown
Long Pond Iron Works & Ringwood Manor, New Milford
Oxford

- **Towns & farms** grew on cleared land to support miners and new settlers.

Visit: Boonton, Wharton, Andover, Netcong

- **Transportation** moved people, goods, iron ore.

Visit: Morris Canal sites: Waterloo, Roxbury, Wharton, Warren Co.
Rivers: Musconetcong, Whippany, Raritan



JACK FAGAN, NY-NJ TRAIL CONFERENCE
Hasenclever Furnace, Long Pond Ironworks

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Historic roads: Sussex Turnpike, Routes 46, 23, 24, 206

Railroad stations: Morristown, Netcong, Dover, Mountain Lakes

- **Manufacturing & business** created wealth.

Visit: Cooper Mill, Chester Township
Historic Speedwell, Morristown
Factories: Boonton, Dover, Wharton, Whippany, Andover

- **Lake colonies** brought summer visitors.

Visit: Lake Hopatcong, Budd Lake, Indian Lake, Cranberry Lake

