Highlands 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.

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

dowo telrtu
uleb optsdte msanlraed
yrpeso
bmreit atlskateerln
proscoes kwha
lyrise dorerbed rtiryfria
gbo rutetl
uble rneoh
rbera wlo
rthneor wgaskoh

Answers:

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.
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.

**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.buyfreshnj.org
- Buy Organic – visit the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey’s website at www.nofanj.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
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
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

- **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