



BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE DELAWARE RIVER SOJOURN

What is the Delaware River Sojourn?

The Sojourn is full of fun and adventure, offering a great time for all participants where wonderful memories are made! The purpose of the Sojourn is to heighten awareness of, and appreciation for, the ecological, historical, recreational, and economic significance of the Delaware River, which flows through New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. The Sojourn combines canoeing, camping, educational programs, historical interpretation, and more.



Who Can Participate on the Sojourn?

Almost anyone can come on the Sojourn: adults, families, kids, and grandparents. The Sojourn is for people who love paddling or are curious about the outdoors. Travelers can sign up for the entire trip or for the section or day(s) of their choice. To show the variety of landscapes, culture, history and nature of the entire Delaware River, we paddle in each section (upper, middle, lower, and estuary). We often take side trips on the historical canals, into the tidal marshes, and down the scenic tributaries. The itinerary varies from year to year, so there is always something new to discover.

Bringing Positive Attention to the River

Over the years, the Delaware River Sojourn has focused mounting attention on the river, creating an awareness of the important role it plays in the lives of the more than seven million people who live in the watershed. By getting people out on the river and experiencing it for themselves, the Sojourn helps foster appreciation and stewardship for this great resource that some may only read about in the newspaper or drive over or alongside on their daily commutes.

Because of the Sojourn, elected officials, including congressmen, have paddled the Delaware and its tributaries, coming away with a better understanding of the importance of protecting a resource which has so much to offer their constituents.

The news media also have written about the Sojourn since its inception, the heightened visibility no doubt giving a boost to the tourism and recreation trades in the four states that make up the watershed. And, lastly, more and more riverbank communities are becoming involved and supporting the Sojourn, recognizing the need for stewardship to protect a national treasure that just happens to run through their backyards.

The Delaware River: Steeped in History

The Delaware, the longest un-dammed river east of the Mississippi, is as steeped in history as it is diverse in nature. George Washington and his troops rowed across it on Christmas night, 1776, en route to a decisive victory over the British Crown. It marked a turning point in the Revolutionary War. The river winds through Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley, birthplace of another revolution - America's Industrial Revolution. During the Civil War, more than 12,000 Confederate soldiers were imprisoned on Pea Patch Island, just down river of New Castle, Delaware. In 1915, to meet the war demand, the world's largest shipyard was built along the Delaware on Hog Island, offshore of Philadelphia. Upstream, the river flows beneath the Delaware Aqueduct, built by engineer John Roebling who designed the fabled Brooklyn Bridge. The aqueduct served as a watery passage for mule-pulled canal boats which hauled the coal that helped fuel the Industrial Revolution. Downstream, the river empties into the Delaware Bay, which washes by old whaling towns.



What Past Sojourners Have Said

Pennsylvania State Senator Chuck McIlhinney:

"The more you educate people, the more they're going to want to preserve and take notice that the Delaware River is a treasure here not to be squandered by development or any number of things."

Florence Wharton, Delaware and Raritan Greenway:

"Not only do you enjoy the experience of being on the river, but you get to know so many people who want to see this river remain a recreational treasure."

Susan Grimes, Sojourn 2000 participant:

"This was the day we experienced simultaneously touching three states, with a single finger on Tri-State Rock. The landmark lies under Route 84 where the Neversink and Delaware rivers meet."

Ken Margolis, Former President, River Network:

"You can't know a river from any one spot on it. A river is the movement of water, from headwaters to mouth."

Kelly Robbins, Student, New Hope-Solebury High School:

"We pulled the canoes up on the bank, then reluctantly walked to the bus with a new appreciation for the Delaware and its wildlife."



Please visit www.delawareriversojourn.org for additional information.