



# Musconetcong River News

**Special Edition**

Published by The Musconetcong Watershed Association

Asbury, New Jersey

## It's Official! The Musconetcong River is a part of the National Wild and Scenic River System

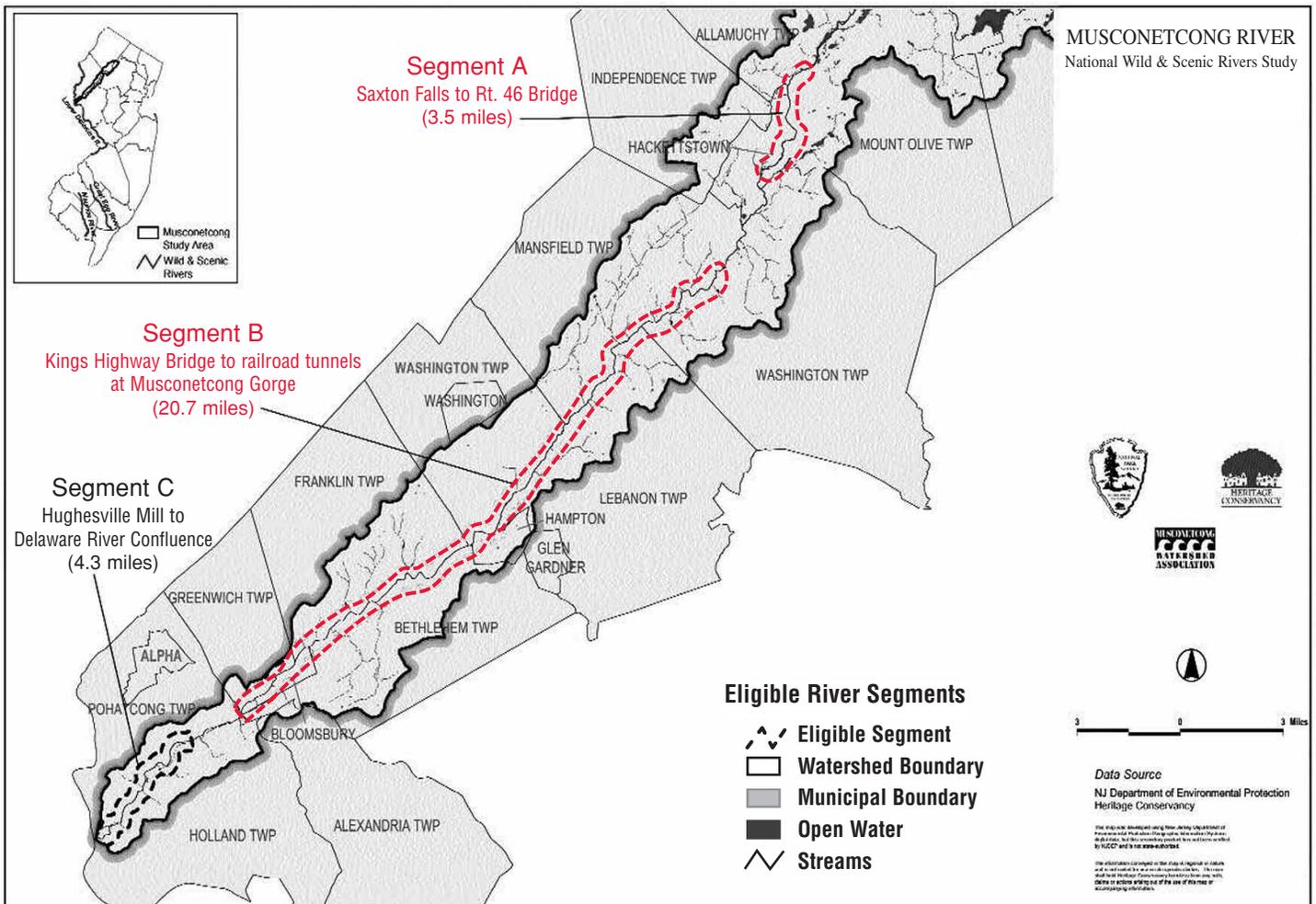
Santa Claus came early to lovers of the Musconetcong River. On December 22, 2006, The President of the United States signed into law bill S. 1096, the "Musconetcong Wild and Scenic Rivers Act," which designates portions of the Musconetcong River as a component of the National Wild

and Scenic Rivers System. News of the signing brought excited telephone calls and e-mail messages of congratulations from supporters of the designation from Maine to Alaska.

The bill passed the Senate in December of 2005 and passed the House in July of 2006.

The final step, passage of the Senate bill by the House to ensure that identical legislation is recorded in both houses, occurred at 2:00 a.m. on Saturday December 9, just hours before the end of the 109th Congress. The Musconetcong Watershed Association is grateful

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to Congressman Scott Garrett and his staff for working diligently to achieve this last minute passage. Congressman Garrett sponsored the bill in the House with co-sponsors Congressmen Rodney Frelinghuysen and Mike Ferguson. The Senate bill was introduced by then-Senator Jon S. Corzine and co-sponsored by Senator Frank Lautenberg. The signing of S 1096 makes two separate segments of the Musconetcong River, a total of 24.2 miles, a part of the National Wild and Scenic River System.

In addition to the elected representatives mentioned above, the designation effort, while led by the Musconetcong Watershed Association, could not have occurred without the hard work of

citizens, municipal representatives, representatives from each of the four counties, Heritage Conservancy, the National Parks Service, the New Jersey Department of Environmental

Protection Division of Watershed Management, Division of Fish and Wildlife, Division of Parks and Forestry and other non-governmental organizations that aided the fifteen year-long process. ☺

## Making the Grade: How the Musky received Wild and Scenic River status

*By Beth Styler Barry*

Before a river is added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, it must be found both "eligible" and "suitable". To be eligible, the river must be (1) free flowing and (2) possess at least one "outstandingly remarkable" resource value as determined by the professional judgment of the study team. Examples of the resource values are: high quality scenery, recreational opportunities, geologic features, fisheries, wildlife, and historic or cultural resources. A river's suitability depends upon a demonstration of local support for designation and the goals of the River Management Plan.

Rivers or river segments found to be both eligible and suitable are then proposed for classification as either "wild", "scenic" or "recreational", depending upon the amount of development, ease of public access and human presence along the river. The Wild and Scenic River Study, the process which determined eligibility and suitability of the Musconetcong, began in 1999 and lasted for three years. The study team found that a total of 28.5 river miles were eligible for designation into the National Wild and Scenic River System. The river's eligible segments are not contiguous, yet are closely spaced. Throughout the study period and the quest for designation, these segments have been

known as segments A, B and C.

Following are the locations, lengths and classification of the eligible segments:

**Segment A:** Saxton Falls to the Rt. 46 Bridge - 3.5 miles  
Classification: Scenic;

**Segment B:** Kings Highway Bridge to the railroad tunnels at Musconetcong Gorge - 20.7 miles  
Classification: Recreational;

**Segment C:** Hughesville Mill to Delaware River confluence - 4.3 miles  
Classification: Recreational.

Based on demonstrated local support for designating the eligible river segments, support for the goals of the River Management Plan, and adequate river resource protection measures at the state, county and local levels, Musconetcong River segments A and B were deemed suitable for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic River system. Segment C was deemed not suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system because of a lack of support in Pohatcong Township. However, because the segment was judged eligible during the study, inclusion of Segment C into the system will be possible if a resolution of support is passed in the future. ☺

### MUSCONETCONG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

**908-537-7060**

[www.musconetcong.org](http://www.musconetcong.org)

#### **Trustee Officers**

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# The Early Grassroots Effort

*By Bill Leavens*

In the early days there was only a vision and a pile of ambition. As anyone can plainly see, the Musconetcong River forms the prettiest valley in northern New Jersey. It deserved to be acknowledged for its beauty and the highest level of recognition was a Federal program called 'Wild and Scenic'.

Prime mover in the initiative was Susan Dickey, presently the Warren County Surrogate. In 1991 Susan formulated the Musconetcong River Project which was little more than Susan and an objective. She worked with the Washington Township (Warren) Environmental Commission and the river neighborhood to obtain more than 700 signatures on a petition to Federal Wild and Scenic designation. Susan has been the persistent force behind the effort as all of the partners recognize.

Former NJ Assembly Member, Dick Zimmer, was on his way to Washington to serve his first term in Congress. Through Dick's aide, Scott Carbon, contact was initiated with the National Park Service (NPS), one agency that held the keys to the Wild and Scenic castle. Against all expectation, NPS returned the call and a relationship was formed between the growing band of river advocates and NPS specialist, Paul Kenney.

Other key members of the effort include MWA trustee, Richard Cotton, who shared the vision. Richard visited many governing bodies of the river municipalities to build support and gain endorsements for Federal recognition.

Another founding MWA trustee, Dennis Bertland, was instrumental in documenting the and architectural history of the river communities. Michael McFadden did much of the mapping and helped to determine planning needs for the ongoing effort. Former MWA Executive Director, Dennis Pohorely, researched local municipal ordinances and created a graphic analysis of how the valley would appear at 'build out' - if all of the properties were developed according to then current zoning ordinances.

Any summary of the Wild and Scenic designation would be incomplete without mention of John Brunner, MWA Executive Director from 1998 - 2004. Brunner worked with a talented group of volunteers over several years to document the many "outstandingly remarkable" qualities found in and along the river and its immediate corridor. He wrote the "Resource Assessment and Eligibility Report" that made the case for the Musconetcong to be made a part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Throughout the fifteen-year process, many individuals have stepped forward, performed minor miracles and continued to support the effort. All their contributions are now a prologue for the future protection and enjoyment of the river resources. Work will always remain in the form of public education, adoption of local ordinances to protect the water quality and to preserve scenic vistas and cultural artifacts. The ultimate aim of all this citizen effort is the implementation of a functional and fair management plan for the region that recognizes the natural beauty of the area, and both public and landowner interests. ●



## Time Marches on

The photo at left originally appeared in the April 1990 Star Gazette. Pictured are MWA founder Susan Dickey's daughter Nicole and watershed resident Todd Ettinger. Nicole is shown gathering signatures of watershed residents in the early days of the Wild and Scenic designation effort. Nicole, 12 years old when this photo was taken, is a graduate of Trenton State College, and works as a Global Account Manager for Software House International of Bridgewater, New Jersey.

# Musconetcong River Management Council to begin work soon

In 1998 the Musconetcong Advisory Committee (MAC) was formed. This advisory committee, comprised of municipal representatives and other interested citizens, was formed to work along with the National Park Service and the Musconetcong Watershed Association in completing the National Wild and Scenic Study and to conduct the Resource Assessment, Eligibility & Classification Report. For more than a decade, MAC members have worked to gather petitions, hold public meetings and educate the public and officials about the Wild and Scenic River program.

After the eligibility of certain river segments was determined, the MAC shifted gears and sought out elected officials that would sponsor the Musconetcong Wild and Scenic Rivers bill in the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate. Once the bills to include the eligible sections in the Wild and Scenic River System were introduced, in 2003 and 2005 respectively, the MAC worked with the Musconetcong Watershed Association and the National Parks Service to keep a forward momentum, always edging the long process along.

Now that the bill has been signed into law, the Musconetcong Advisory Committee, which guided the designation process, will be replaced by the Musconetcong River Management Council (MRMC). The purpose of the Musconetcong River Management Council is to promote the long-term protection of the Musconetcong River by: (1) bringing those involved in river issues together on a regular and ongoing basis, (2) stimulating cooperation and coordination among those organizations and individuals, (3) providing a forum for all river interests to discuss and resolve

issues, and (4) coordinating implementation of the River Management Plan.

The River Management Plan sets forth five major goals and recommends actions to maintain and improve the Musconetcong River corridor, its tributaries and watershed, and surrounding natural, cultural and recreational resources. The development of the River Management Plan was a requirement of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers study and the result of cooperative effort of the Musconetcong Advisory Committee, Musconetcong Watershed Association, Heritage Conservancy, the National Park Service, and a variety of local, county and state representatives. The River Management Plan can be viewed at [www.musconetcong.org](http://www.musconetcong.org).

In the upcoming weeks, the National Park Service will send a "Memorandum of Understanding" to each municipality and county that contains a designated river segment. This memorandum will invite each municipality and county to join the MRMC and formalizes a cooperative commitment to participate in the long-term management of the river and to implement those parts of the Management Plan under their jurisdiction or for which they assume responsibility. The MRMC will include representatives of watershed municipalities, representatives from each of the four counties, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Watershed Management, Division of Fish and Wildlife, Division of Parks and Forestry, the Musconetcong Watershed Association, and other non-governmental organizations. It is anticipated that the first meeting of the Musconetcong River Management Council will take place in the spring of 2007. ☺

## The Musconetcong River will be a "Partnership River"

*By Beth Styler Barry*

Most Wild and Scenic rivers are on federally owned land, but in the case where the river runs through private lands (such as the Musconetcong), the National Park Service forms partnerships with "NGO's (non government organizations) and local governments to carry out a River Management Plan. Thus, the Musconetcong will be a "Partnership River".

The Musconetcong River study process was conducted under the "Partnership Program", a relatively new part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System that applies to rivers that flow primarily through private land. The other three New Jersey Wild and Scenic Rivers, the Maurice River, Great Egg Harbour and Lower Delaware River (Pennsylvania and New Jersey) are all Partnership Rivers. For the Musconetcong, this management system means the

National Park Service will not own, manage or police the river and surrounding riparian areas, as it does within the boundaries of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

As a subset of the greater National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers Program helps communities preserve and manage their own river-related resources locally by bringing together state, county, and community managers to preserve the outstanding and remarkable values for which the rivers were set aside. The other currently designated Partnership National Wild and Scenic Rivers are located in the Northeast, though Partnership designation is not limited to this region. These rivers include the Farmington (Connecticut), Lamprey (New Hampshire), Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Rivers (Massachusetts), and the White Clay Creek (Delaware/Pennsylvania).

# It's Official... Celebrate and spread the news

with a purchase of our new

## Wild and Scenic T-shirt



Help support the Musconetcong Watershed Association with this 100% cotton T-shirt. The message "Wild and Scenic Musconetcong River National River System Newest Member 2006" is superimposed on a list of the names of the 168 other Wild and Scenic rivers. \$22.00 includes shipping and handling. Make check payable to MWA.

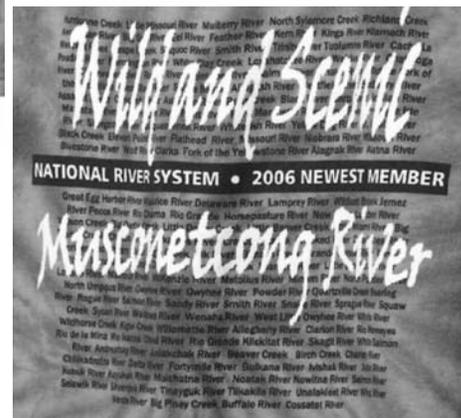
Clip and send the order form below or visit [www.musconetcong.org](http://www.musconetcong.org) to view a color photo, to print order forms or to order online. Please call Beth at (908) 537-7060 with any questions.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: MWA P.O. Box 113 Asbury, New Jersey 08802



## SAVE THESE DATES!

### Saturday, April 21, 2007 14th Annual Spring Clean Up

Each year MWA members, community volunteers and Trout Unlimited representatives remove tons of trash from the Musconetcong River and adjacent parks, roadsides, neighborhoods and river accesses. MWA supplies trash bags, gloves, snacks, and T-shirts. Volunteers meet and clean at various locations in the watershed. Afterwards participants gather at noon at the MWA's River Resource Center 475 Old Main Street in Asbury for hot dogs and sodas. To help us clean up sign up by calling (908) 537-7060 or go to our website.

### Friday, April 27, 2007 Musconetcong Watershed Association Annual Members Meeting

Join us for this year's MWA Annual Meeting to be held at Hawk Pointe Golf Club. John Parke, Conservation Planner and Restoration Ecologist with the New Jersey Audubon Society, will lead us on a bird walk that will begin at 5:30 sharp. After returning from the bird walk, sandwiches and soft drinks will be served. Everyone who attends the bird walk will receive a free bluebird house to take home. A discussion of wildlife habitat in the Musconetcong Watershed led by Mr. Parke will begin at 7:00 p.m., followed by the business meeting. RSVP no later than April 23rd to 908-537-7060 or to [beth@musconetcong.org](mailto:beth@musconetcong.org) (Not a member? This is a great time to join, clip and send the form on the back of this newsletter or join online at [www.musconetcong.org](http://www.musconetcong.org).)

### Sunday, May 6, 2007 7th Annual MWA Run/Walk for the River

Support the MWA by participating in this yearly 4.0-mile event. You don't need to be an athlete! It's always a great, fun way to get some exercise, spend time with friends and family and perhaps win one of our many door prizes. For more information, or to print out an entry application, visit our website - [www.musconetcong.org](http://www.musconetcong.org).

**Note:** If you are not receiving e-mail reminders for these events it means that we do not have a current e-mail address. If you'd like to receive reminders and occasional "Musky News Briefs" please contact [beth@musconetcong.org](mailto:beth@musconetcong.org).

Save These Dates

Next Steps: Musconetcong River Management Council

How Eligibility was Determined

It's Official - Musconetcong River is Wild and Scenic!!!

Inside:

Musconetcong River News



Asbury, NJ 08802

PO Box 113



### The Musconetcong Watershed Association

The Musconetcong River Valley is rich in scenery, history, natural resources, and recreational opportunities. The river rises up in Lake Hopatcong - New Jersey's largest spring-fed lake - and shadowed by 1,000 foot Highland ridges, it slices through a deep limestone river valley, flowing swiftly to the Delaware River. Along the way the "Musky" passes by state and county parks, bustling towns and vital industries, historic villages, and some of the most productive farmland in the state.

The Musconetcong Watershed Association (MWA) is a non-profit organization formed in 1991 to protect and enhance the Musconetcong River and its related resources through advocacy and environmental education programs, scientific research and river restoration projects. The MWA scope spans the 158 square mile Musconetcong River Watershed, and includes portions of four counties, and all or portions of 25 municipalities.

MWA members are part of a network of individuals, families and organizations who care about the Musconetcong River and its watershed. They are kept informed about issues concerning the river and its related resources by receiving quarterly issues of the *Musconetcong River News*.

### MWA Membership Application

Please enroll me as a member of the Musconetcong Watershed Association in which I will receive membership benefits and publications. I have enclosed a check payable to **MWA** for the membership category listed below:

- \$20 Student
- \$30 Family
- \$50 Supporter
- \$100 Steward
- \$500 Champion
- \$1,000 + Life

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Mail to:*

**Musconetcong Watershed Association**

PO Box 113, Asbury, NJ 08802