



# *Delaware River Heritage Trail*

State of the Trail Report  
October, 2003



Delaware River Greenway  
Partnership  
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## STATE OF THE TRAIL REPORT FOR THE DELAWARE RIVER HERITAGE TRAIL

October 2003

### *Introduction*

The Delaware River Valley has supported over 10,000 years of human settlement and is unparalleled in the importance of its communities in the formation of the United States. It was the presence of abundant natural resources ranging from the soils and minerals to the forests that contributed to that history, and the industries that developed because of them. Our nation's history is still evident throughout the region to this day in all the communities that line the Delaware River. However, providing a means to appreciate the common relationship between towns in Pennsylvania and towns in New Jersey has not occurred.

The impetus for a trail came from a study produced for The Countryside Exchange, an international planning program that provides an "outsiders" view of a region and solutions to regional issues. The Exchange recommended various measures to unite both sides of the Delaware River, including a land trail on both sides. In 1996, the National Park Service began the process of developing the concept for the trail and was successful in garnering support from state and county agencies, 24 municipalities, and non-profit organizations in both New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The Rivers and Trails Conservation and Assistance

Program of the National Park Service was successful in working with citizens and local interests to achieve the goal of region-wide support for the trail concept.

Benefits of the Delaware River Heritage Trail include:

- The Heritage Trail will link communities up, down, and across the Delaware River. Residents of each town will be able to see not just their towns' assets, but that of their neighbors as well.
- It will provide a unique opportunity for current and future generations to learn about and appreciate the natural and cultural heritage of the Delaware River. It will serve as an outdoor classroom enriched by interpretive signs and areas for use by the general public and schools, fostering a sense of stewardship for the river.
- An inviting pathway will encourage residents and visitors to participate in healthy exercise and fitness activities, providing the venue for walking and cycling, and linking parks and their facilities.
- Based on studies of existing trails, it is anticipated that the trail will foster significant economic benefits, as

businesses are developed or increased to provide the needs of trail users, such as restaurants, lodging, and bicycle sales/rental/repair.

- The trail will help build civic pride and community awareness. A commitment to the trail can spark ideas and actions that bring new unity and pride to the community.

### **The Trail Vision**

Once completed, the Delaware River Heritage Trail will be a loop trail between Morrisville-Trenton to the north, and Palmyra-Philadelphia to the south. This roughly coincides with the northern limit of the tidal Delaware River, the Delaware Estuary, and is south of the federally designated segment of the Delaware in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. More than just a trail that goes from “Point A to Point B,” the Heritage Trail will focus on interpreting the rich natural and cultural resources found along its path. The intent is to make a land trail available for walking and bicycling as close to the Delaware River as possible. Some segments of the trail will be accessible for individuals in wheelchairs and in-line skating. Existing trails within those end points will be used as part of the trail, including the Delaware Canal State Park in Pennsylvania, Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park in New Jersey, the Promenade in Burlington City, New Jersey, and the proposed Kensington and Tacony Trail in Philadelphia. The East Coast Greenway will be using part of the New Jersey Heritage Trail route in Trenton and all of the route in

Pennsylvania as part of its corridor between Maine and Florida.

### **The Setting**

The corridor for the Delaware River Heritage Trail will be located within the floodplain of the Delaware River.

In the north, it will start just above the

fall-line of the river, separating the Piedmont Physiographic Province to the north and the Coastal Plain to the south, and continue down into the tidal estuary of the river. It is within the Inner Coastal Plain Province, with occasional bluffs on the New Jersey side, and flatlands on the Pennsylvania side. The communities through which the trail will pass are some of the oldest European settlements in North America. Philadelphia was first settled by the Swedes in 1646; Burlington City in 1677; Bristol Borough in 1681; and Fallingston, home of William Penn’s Pennsbury Manor, in 1684. Before that, Native American Lenape Tribes were using the area for several centuries. The river and its shorelines were instrumental in furthering early colonial cities, and they became ports for goods and immigrants to the new world. During the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, many of the towns established industries that used the river for transportation, or became transportation hubs. Bordentown was the

East Coast



Greenway

southern terminus of the Delaware and Raritan Canal in New Jersey; Bristol the southern terminus of the Delaware Canal. Both canals were used to transport anthracite coal from northeast Pennsylvania to points south. Philadelphia, Trenton, and their environs became manufacturing hubs. Industrial activities still characterize the shoreline of the Delaware River for much of the route. In some cases, industries continue that are over a century old, in other cases, the manufacturing process has ceased leaving empty shells or structures reused for other purposes.

**Accomplishments to Date**

The National Park Service was responsible for:

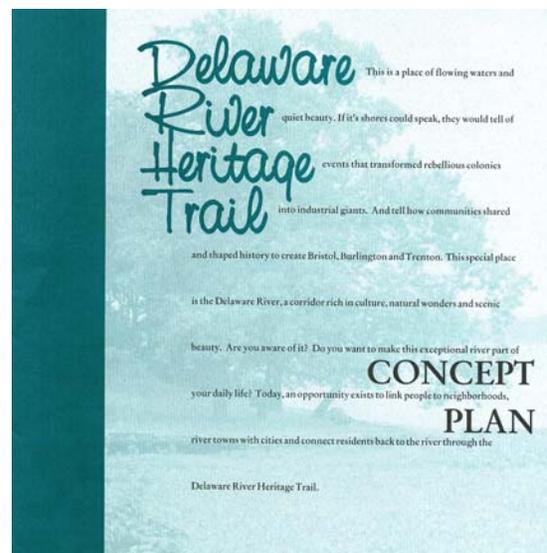
- Creating a concept brochure about the intent of the trail
- Producing a video about the trail
- Forming an advisory committee made up of representatives from all the municipalities, counties, and state agencies
- Producing a logo and sign design for wayfinding, trailheads, and interpretation
- Holding a charrette workshop to recommend solutions to interruptions of the Delaware Canal in Falls Township
- With funding from the Grundy Foundation, holding a charrette workshop to develop a preliminary feasibility study of the route from Bristol Borough to Bensalem

In the early stages of planning the trail, the advisory committee worked with the National Park Service to secure endorsements from each of the municipalities along the route. This support was demonstrated by a 1998 National

Trails Day event a “Delaware River Heritage Trail Day” capped by a bicycle relay of two teams of cyclists, one from New Jersey and one from Pennsylvania, traveling from one municipality to the next with proclamations of support by public officials.

Because of the broad community appeal of the trail concept, other agencies have taken on feasibility and scoping projects for the trail:

- In New Jersey, NJDOT working through its contractor completed a feasibility study of the entire route
- Burlington County and DVRPC are currently overseeing a scoping study of the New Jersey route with a private consultant.
- NJDOT as part of a mitigation effort for construction of a part of Route 29 along the Delaware River completed feasibility studies for the trail along the Delaware River in Trenton. This section will also be used by the East Coast Greenway.



With agreement by the advisory committee and municipalities in the trail area, NPS transferred



coordination of the Trail to the Delaware River Greenway Partnership in 2000. The Greenway was selected because it was the only independent organization whose geographic area of concern includes both sides of the Delaware River. It is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of the natural, cultural, and outdoor recreational uses of the river and its corridor.

In 2001, Delaware River Greenway Partnership received a grant of \$110,000 from the William Penn Foundation in Philadelphia to continue coordination efforts over a two-year period. That grant provided funding to hire a coordinator and cover administrative expenses. Funding for coordination will be provided through December 2003. The purpose of that grant was to continue coordination of the project, develop a management plan, and provide public outreach through meetings and outreach products, including web page development and brochures. Also in 2001, the Greenway received a grant of \$6,000 from NJDEP for the production of interpretive signs along the route



in New Jersey.

### **Working with the Community**

Local governments, trail clubs, and private citizens have supported the concept of the trail connecting their communities. Representatives of local governments, drawn from either a municipality's environmental commission or park and recreation board, have continued to participate as an advisory board to trail development. These representatives have served as liaisons between their elected officials and the trail coordinators, and provided major input on selecting the location of the proposed pathway, sign design, and trail uses, as well as provided information on natural and cultural resources that should be highlighted along the trail route. Their participation in the planning process has been invaluable into the overall support of the trail.

**NOTE:** Mileage that follows is for a corridor - a generalized route that is expected in each segment. Actual mileage of trail path can be more, especially if both an on-road and an off-road route are planned. It also does not always include specific roads, unless existing plans indicate their use for the trail.

***Status of Trail Development ~ New Jersey***

Although only a small section of actual off-road trail exists in New Jersey planning for the trail is advancing. Through a combination of efforts at the state, county and regional levels of government, planning is underway for the entire trail. Segments vary in length because they are distinguished by a predominant land use feature associated with the proposed route.



***View of Trenton on the Delaware River***

**Mercer County**

***Segment: City of Trenton,  
northern Hamilton Township  
Corridor Length: 4.1 miles***

**Description.** The City of Trenton is a logical starting point for the Heritage Trail. It is the capital of the State of New Jersey, and also one of the earliest settlements in North America. Trenton’s colonial past is exemplified by the Old Barracks, which housed British Troops during the Revolutionary War, and the Trent House. It is located at the head of tide of the Delaware River, and served as an early manufacturing center, for steel, rubber, pottery, and ceramic works.

Starting at the Calhoun Street Bridge in Trenton and traveling south, the trail will be located next to the Delaware River and behind the state capitol and other state government buildings. For much of its length, the riverfront in Trenton

is dominated by State Route 29. From the Calhoun Street Bridge to just south of the railroad, a grassy strip separates the river from the highway. Trail users will be close to the State Capitol itself, the State Library, and the State Museum, all located on West State Street. Continuing south, the trail will also run next to the Mercer County Riverfront Stadium, home of the city’s minor league baseball team the Trenton Thunder, and on riverside walkways next to nearby office buildings. It will also be within walking distance of the Sovereign Bank Arena. From the stadium property, the trail will continue on a walkway to be developed on the roof of the Route 29 tunnel next to the river, then continue south along Lambertson Street.

**Status.** The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) has completed feasibility studies for development of a multiuse trail that extends south to the Marina Park, a distance of approximately 2.5 miles. A parking lot is also included in the plans for this area.

Locating the trail directly along the Delaware River will necessitate the re-routing of some exit ramps from Route 29, running almost adjacent to the river, cantilevering a trail around bridge abutments for US Route 1, the Alternate Route 1 bridge (the “Trenton-Makes” Bridge) between Trenton and Morrisville, and the railroad bridge for the main Boston to Washington line of Amtrak. For a distance of about ½ miles, the trail is proposed to follow a route adjacent to Lamberton Street within Hamilton Township. Final scoping for this section is being completed under a federal grant to Delaware River Valley Planning Commission (DRVPC), administered by Burlington County (see Burlington County section).



*Trenton waterfront to be used for Heritage Trail*

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** In this segment, the East Coast Greenway will be ending its western New Jersey route. It will also use the riverside route of the Delaware River Heritage Trail up to the Calhoun Street Bridge, where it too will cross the Delaware River into Pennsylvania.

North of the bridge, the trail will be able to connect with either Stacy Park or the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, which extends to Frenchtown. Trenton is a hub for various local bus routes as well as interstate service for New York and Philadelphia. Most buses stop at the Trenton Train Station on Clinton Avenue. Also near the route in Trenton will be the northern terminus of the South Jersey Light Rail Line.

***Segment: Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park***

***Corridor Length: 2.6 miles***

**Description.** The New Jersey Division of Parks and Forestry is responsible for the management of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park. This southerly section has been unused, while the rest of the 60-odd miles of towpath and canal have been a natural and recreational treasure for central New Jersey. Among the tangle of overgrown shrubs and deciduous trees are the remnants of the canal and towpath built in the 1830’s, although they are not connected to the rest of the park, cut off by highways in Trenton. Also, a part of the park has a branch of the former Pennsylvania Railroad line running through it, soon to be part of the light rail line, between Camden and Trenton. In this area, the park is adjacent to the regionally significant Hamilton/Trenton Marsh, the largest freshwater tidal marsh on the Delaware River. Over 1,200 acres of wildlife habitat supports more than 230 species of birds and more than 800 species of plants. All this section of the trail is within Hamilton Township.



### *D & R Canal in Hamilton Township*

**Status.** The Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has received federal Enhancement funding from NJDOT to complete the southerly route of Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park. This will include development of an unpaved surface from Lamberton St. to the end of the canal at Crosswicks Creek across from the City of Bordentown, a distance of almost 3.5 miles. Planning and engineering for the path have been completed and the Division expects to release a Request For Proposals (RFP) for construction by early 2004, with completion expected in 2004 or 2005. The route of the path will be between Interstate 295 and the canal, therefore avoiding the railroad to be used for the light rail line. When the Heritage Trail approaches the end of the canal, a bridge will be constructed over the old canal lock and the trail will continue

on the walkway of the already- constructed bridge for the light rail line across Crosswicks Creek.

New Jersey Transit is in the process of developing the rail line currently owned by Conrail/CSX for a new commuter rail line, with expected service to begin the end of 2003 or early 2004. Because a new stream crossing was necessary for the rail line over Crosswicks Creek, it was agreed by all parties that incorporating a pedestrian walkway with a new railroad bridge over the creek would solve the continuity problem for the trail. Without the bridge, a trail within the southern end of the Delaware and Raritan Canal would end, with no trailhead facility, and users would have to turn around and go back the same way they came. A dual-purpose bridge resolved that issue. During railroad and bridge construction, a six-foot wide wooden walkway was incorporated into the design of the bridge. This has been completed, although it will not connect up with any trail within the park until NJDEP completes the towpath.



*Crossing Crosswick's Creek*

**Burlington County**

The riverfront of the Delaware River has been determined by Burlington County to be an important resource for the county, and it has identified it as a project area in its Parks and Open Space Master Plan. The county-managed scoping study is working with municipalities and the Steering Advisory Committee to determine a preferred route from those included in the previous feasibility study.

***Segment: City of Bordentown***

***Corridor Length: 1.0 mile***

**Description.** Once the trail crosses Crosswicks Creek from the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, it enters the City of Bordentown. Located on bluffs above the juncture of Blacks Creek, Crosswicks Creek, and the Delaware River, Bordentown is one of the oldest European settlements in Burlington County and the State of New Jersey, established in 1682. Many 18<sup>th</sup> and 19 Century buildings remain, including the schoolhouse where Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, taught. The main business district is on Farnsworth Avenue, a harmonious collection of early residences, restaurants, shops, and other businesses.

**Status.** New Jersey Transit has completed an approximate 300-foot section of pathway up to Farnsworth Avenue; the trail is expected to continue up Farnsworth Avenue to West Burlington Street, a distance in the city of approximately one mile. According to the scoping study, an on-street route has been recommended because of little space next to the

river for a new trail. Parking for trail users may be provided at the light rail line near Park Street and the municipal lot off Farnsworth Avenue.

**Other Possible Routes or Links.** Using local streets within Bordentown presents an opportunity to travel through one of Burlington County’s oldest and most charming towns. However, it may be possible to locate a short (approximately 3,600’) route that will border the bluffs of Blacks Creek south into Bordentown Township up to the Burlington Street crossing. Such a route may provide the



***Farnsworth Avenue in Bordentown***

only hills along the entire trail on both sides of the Delaware River, as well as provide opportunities for interpreting a fresh water estuary and ecosystems of the Inner Coastal Plain. As part of a \$25,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, DRGP will be working with both municipalities to further study this area.

The City of Bordentown is also the beginning of the Hamilton/Trenton Marsh Canoe and Kayak

Trail. Beginning at the city’s beach on Crosswicks Creek, a water-based route established by the Delaware and Raritan Greenway includes an interpretive water trail along Crosswicks Creek between Burlington and Mercer counties and Watson Creek in Hamilton Township, Mercer County.

Bordentown is serviced by New Jersey Transit’s Route 409 bus, with service between Philadelphia and Trenton; it will also have a stop on the South Jersey Light Rail Line.

*Segment: Bordentown Township-Borough of Fieldsboro-Bordentown Township  
Corridor Length: 1.8 miles*

**Description.** This segment of the trail will be on-road along Burlington/Fourth Street. From the City of Bordentown, the route will cross the wooded floodplain of Blacks Creek and enter Bordentown Township. A mature upland deciduous forest borders 4<sup>th</sup> Street up to the Route I-295 underpass and the State Johnstone Center and a medium security juvenile facility with a spacious campus-like setting that is also on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places.

The route continues south through the Borough of Fieldsboro, and then again Bordentown Township, where marine storage and construction facilities are located between the river and the road. The route will continue until the end of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, at Route 130.

**Status.** Under the scoping study, this segment is being planned as all on road because of the lack



*Fieldsboro along 4<sup>th</sup> Street*

of riverfront property. The railroad hugs the bluffs next to the Delaware River, thereby making it extremely difficult to locate the trail next to the right-of-way or the river unless major earth moving were to be performed on the bluffs to create a safe trail next to the railroad.

**Other Possible Routes or Links.** As previously noted, local officials are exploring the feasibility of creating a trail along Black’s Creek that would start in the City of Bordentown and continue eastward for several miles. A segment of this is being studied as an alternate route for the Delaware River Heritage Trail for a distance of approximately .5 miles up to Burlington Street.

Fieldsboro is serviced by New Jersey Transit’s Route 409 bus.

***Segment: Mansfield Township/Route 130***  
***Corridor Length: 1.9 miles***

**Description.** Mansfield Township’s section of trail will be mostly along Route 130. In this area, the river comes close to the bluffs of the Inner Coastal Plain, and what little flat land exists between the bluffs and the river is occupied by the railroad. The route is characterized by mixed uses of agriculture, upland forests, commercial, and light industrial, with a scattering of residential properties along the four-lane highway. In this segment, the route is also close to Newbold’s Island, which does not have land access from either New Jersey or Pennsylvania. Newbold’s Island was one of the first settled areas in New Jersey and is also notable as prime habitat for migrating and year-round bird populations. The Route 130 segment continues south into Florence Township.

**Status.** Planning for this segment is part of the current scoping study being undertaken by Burlington County. It is anticipated that a side path available for walking and cycling will be provided between Burlington Street in Bordentown Township and Hornberger Avenue in Roebling.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** The former right-of-way of the Kinkora Railroad that used to run between the Roebling Steel Works and



***Route 130 at Kinkora Overpass***

Fort Dix is included in Burlington County’s Open Space Plan as a proposed trail. Also, The Roebling Complex is currently being reviewed for mixed-use redevelopment for the future. It may be possible to link the Kinkora Line with this complex, thereby providing an alternate route along the Roebling riverfront area and access to a part of New Jersey’s industrial history.

This entire segment is serviced by New Jersey Transit’s Route 409 bus, which travels on Route 130 in this area.

***Segment: Florence Township***  
***Corridor Length: 3.5 miles***

**Description.** All of this section will either be on-road, or close to the road. From Route 130 it is planned that the trail will enter Florence Township from Mansfield Township into the Roebling section of the township via Hornberger Street. Roebling was developed in 1905 as a “company town” by the John Roebling Company in order to provide labor for

the adjacent steel mill, constructed the previous year. Brick row houses characterize Roebing, more typical of Philadelphia neighborhoods, than a New Jersey township. Today, the mill is a Superfund site and undergoing cleanup by EPA, although additional much funding is needed. The riverfront section of Florence was established in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century with the Florence City Company, and later it too was noted as a company town, with the establishment of the Florence Iron Works in 1857. The company made pipes, fittings and hydrants, exported to Europe. That tradition of pipe making is continued today with major manufacturers in Florence Township, Burlington Township, and the City of Burlington. The riverfront in the Florence “town” has single residences, manufacturing, and municipal open space at Carey Municipal Park, primarily a boat launch, and Wilkie River’s Edge Park. Unfortunately, the riverfront vista in this part of Florence Township is dominated by the active GROWS Landfill in Falls Township, Pennsylvania, rising above the tree line next to the river.



*Florence Township’s River’s Edge Park in winter*

**Status.** The current recommendation in the draft scoping study is to route the trail on local roads and sidewalks, following Hornberger St. where it will pass the now-abandoned Roebing mill complex, then the business center of Florence Township next to the Delaware River, up to the border with Burlington Township. Part of the trail may include River’s Edge Park with its approximate ¼ mile section of paved path next to the Delaware River.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** Roebing Park is located adjacent to Riverside Avenue in the Roebing section of the township, and has a network of footpaths along its seven-block length. This area can provide one of the few vistas of the Delaware River, as it wraps around a small Inner Coastal Plain bluff.

Two train stops are planned to be located in Florence Township, just blocks away from the proposed path. The township is also serviced by New Jersey Transit’s Route 409 bus.



*Typical Roebing brick houses*

***Segment: Burlington Township, East***  
***Corridor Length: 2.5 miles***



***Burlington Township East, River Road***

**Description.** The Burlington Township northeastern border is just north of the Turnpike Bridge. In the vicinity of that bridge, an approximate ½ mile stretch of forested privately owned open space area borders the river, up to land owned by National Gypsum Corporation. Another stretch of open forested land continues for approximately one mile, until the shoreline comes right next to River Road, with very little room for even a road shoulder. Burlington Island is visible at this point. The island is cited as the first European settlement in New Jersey, established in 1624. Further on along River Road, the trail would continue next to US Pipe Corporation land, enclosed in chain link fencing, in both Burlington Township and the City of Burlington, and then continue on the road until it reaches the City of Burlington.

**Status.** The scoping study recommends that the trail in this section go on a side path between River Road and the river. In some sections, it will border the road where there is no additional space. Street markings and signs will indicate the route of the path into the City of Burlington.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** It is recommended that any open space along the river that is in private ownership such as in the vicinity of the Turnpike Bridge and south of US Pipe be pursued for an easement or public ownership. Although there is little depth to these lots as River Road is very close to the river, a trail could be located off the road and potentially next to the river shoreline, providing a more scenic route than on the road.

This segment is serviced by New Jersey Transit’s Route 409 bus.

***Segment: City of Burlington***  
***Corridor Length: 2.5 miles***

**Description.** The City of Burlington is one of New Jersey’s oldest European settlements,



***The Promenade in the City of Burlington***



***Wood Street in Burlington***

established in 1677. Within the City of Burlington, a short section of the trail will be on River Road, adjacent to US Pipe Corporation; but after crossing Assiscunk Creek, the trail has the opportunity to follow the city’s Riverfront Promenade, a one-mile stretch of walkway that passes next to the city’s central business and historic district, and continues under the Burlington-Bristol Bridge. If not on the promenade, which at this time has sections not wide enough to safely accommodate both walkers and cyclists, cyclists can use the adjacent Pearl Street up to the Burlington-Bristol Bridge, traveling through the historic district with its late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century stores, churches, and residences. On the west side of the bridge, a new pathway of approximately ½ mile was constructed to accommodate both walking and cycling, and it is planned that the trail route will use this path. It passes through an industrial park and the county YMCA. One block away, New Jersey Transit will have a stop for the light rail line, with a large parking area.

**Status.** The Promenade is almost completed although city officials are recommending an increase in width for its entire length. There is one section that is privately owned, for which the landowner has not granted a public access easement with the city. Before any additional reconstruction and marking in the area takes place, that section of the path should be either acquired or access easement obtained. However, other sections are ready for designation and posting of signs noting the Promenade as a part of the Delaware River Heritage Trail. It may be possible to use the light rail line parking lot as a trailhead for the Delaware River Heritage Trail, with information about the trail.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** The City of Burlington will have two stops of the South Jersey Light Rail Line within a few blocks of the trail, one on Broad Street in the downtown district, and one with parking in the southwestern section near Route 541. Also, bus service is provided by Routes 409, 413 (between Philadelphia, Mt. Holly, and Burlington), and 419 (between Philadelphia and Burlington).

***Segment: Burlington Township West***  
***Corridor Length: 1.3 miles***

**Description.** In western Burlington Township no riverfront land is available for trail use, as the entire stretch of riverfront is dominated by mixed uses of heavy industry and houses mostly constructed in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two-lane Beverly Road, Route 543, is the

principal connector road between Bordentown and Edgewater Park and will also be used for part of its length as the trail route between the two municipalities.

**Status.** Because of developed use next to the riverfront, the scoping study recommends that this section of the trail be located on local streets and Beverly Road.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** New Jersey Transit bus service is provided by Route 419.

**Segment: Edgewater Park**  
**Corridor Length: 1.2 miles**

**Description.** Edgewater Park has no public riverfront access, as the riverfront is dominated by private residential use. Route 543 (Warren Street) is characterized by mature oaks and sycamores shading the road in front of 19<sup>th</sup> century residences. Not visible from the road are large Victorian estates, which can be viewed from the Pennsylvania side of the river at Neshaminy State Park. East of the river area, the township is characterized by post WWII suburban housing development in what were once orchards and other farmland. Beverly National Cemetery, established in 1864, is located in Edgewater Park.

**Status.** This segment is being recommended to include a short on-road route up to Warren Street and then turn inland. The inland route will avoid the “S” turn tunnel in Edgewater Park, where Warren Street narrows, dips below



**Edgewater Park's Wood Lake Park**

grade, and twists twice while the railroad passes overhead. Unfortunately, this design provides short sight lines, making it unsafe for trail users and motor vehicles alike. The new “inland” route will be on the existing asphalt path in the pastoral-like setting of Wood Lake Park, the stone and dirt paths winding through the mixed-oak forest of Roosevelt Park, and an as-yet new off-road pathway that will connect trails in these parks with Memorial Park, which can also be used as a trailhead and parking area.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** Edgewater Park will be serviced by the South Jersey Light Rail line and by New Jersey Transit’s Route 419 bus.

**Segment: City of Beverly**  
**Corridor Length: 1.2 miles**

**Description.** The City of Beverly has about 2,000 feet of waterfront access, part of that at Gaines-Russel Memorial Park. Adjacent forested open space to the south of the park and



***Beverly Waterfront at Gaines-Russel Memorial Park.***

sewerage authority, some in private ownership, also borders the shoreline up to the border with Delanco Township. Beverly was the historic site of the New Jersey landing for the 18<sup>th</sup> century Dunks Ferry from Pennsylvania in Bensalem Township. The city placed an important role in providing a convalescent hospital for wounded soldiers during the Civil War.

**Status.** The scoping study recommends both on-road and off-road routing. From Edgewater Park, the path would come down tree-lined Cooper St., bordered by 19<sup>th</sup> century homes and businesses. The sidewalks from the light rail station at the Edgewater Park border to the waterfront were reconstructed with the aid of two NJDOT Pedestrian Safety Grants in 2001 and 2003. As part of a Transit Oriented Development Grant from DVRFC, the City is exploring its options for the layout of an improved waterfront park through which the trail will pass. The trail will extend along the Delaware River, past the Wastewater Plant at Magnolia Street, to the dunes area where it will connect with Delanco.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** Beverly is currently serviced by New Jersey Transit’s Route 419 bus and will also have a stop on the South Jersey Rail Line off of Cooper Street.

***Segment: Delanco Township***  
***Corridor Length: 2.5 miles***

**Description.** Established in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century with the Delanco Land Company, Delanco Township’s image is mostly one of a residential community with a few service stores on Route 543 (Burlington Avenue). About half of Delanco’s waterfront is not obstructed by private use, largely on the approximate ½ mile of picturesque Delaware Avenue, already frequented by walkers and bicyclists. There is one former industrial/warehouse property bordering significant forested open space next to the river. Also located in Delanco Township is the state-owned Hawk Island, not an island but really a dredge spoil-created peninsula. It is not designated as being available for public



***Delanco’s riverbanks are privately owned but the public can still see the river from Delaware Avenue.***

use at this time, although it may be considered available in the future.

**Status.** Two routes are included in the scoping study, one on-street down Burlington Avenue and another that takes advantage of Delaware Avenue with its riverview access. Another section of riverside route is recommended that would continue from the proposed route originating in Beverly. This area of part woodland, part former industrial use is privately owned.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** Burlington County has included Rancocas Creek in its Open Space Plan as a potential greenway area. The county has acquired numerous parcels along the creek in order to establish a broad greenway of open space with trails and river access. It is planned that these would eventually connect with the Delaware River Heritage Trail.

Delanco is serviced by New Jersey Transit's Route 419 bus.

**Rancocas Creek Bridge.** Crossing Rancocas Creek will occur on Pavilion Avenue between Delanco and Riverside. The bridge is owned and operated by the Burlington County Bridge Commission. A west side walkway will provide room for walkers, and cyclists will be required to walk their bikes or use the vehicle lanes. The bridge is a swing bridge that opens 90 degrees in the center in order to allow boat traffic to pass on the creek.

**Segment: Riverside Township**

**Corridor Length: 1.3 miles**

**Description.** The first thing noticed when entering Riverside is the historic Watchcase Building, included on state and national Registers of Historic Places. Although it was completed in 1908, other sections of the building date back to 1852, and used for what was called the Pavilion Hotel. The town itself, originally named Progress by a real estate promoter, was founded in 1851. The trail as proposed will pass the building and continue through Riverside on local streets. The next thing noticed is the light rail line running through the middle of town and next to Broad Street (Route 543). A large part of the shoreline along Rancocas Creek, next to Riveredge Drive has been developed into a grassy park-like border allowing visual access to the creek, and in the distance, the mouth of the creek where it flows into the Delaware River.



**Riverside, with Watchcase Building in background**



*Along Rancocas Creek in Delran/Riverside*

**Segment: Delran Township**  
**Corridor Length: 1.6 miles**

**Status.** The scoping study includes a plan to locate the trail entirely on local streets, until it reaches the section next to Rancocas Creek where the shoreline is publicly-owned along Riveredge Drive and continuing into Delran Township. The grassy shoreline provides quiet views of Rancocas Creek as it meets the Delaware River.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** Riverside Township has the opportunity to use land along Rancocas Creek for a path that will come as close as possible to the Delaware River. Although there are some wetlands that would have to be crossed, a boardwalk trail for walking could provide an alternative to use of sidewalks for pedestrians.

The Route 419 New Jersey Transit bus services Riverside along Route 543. Also, there will be a stop in Riverside for the Light Rail Line.

**Description.** Except for a small section of Riveredge Drive, most of Delran’s riverside is in private commercial use, including boat building establishments and other marina-related activities. The “short” route through the township would have the trail all on local streets, connected to adjacent Cinnaminson Township via St. Mihiel Drive. Another alternative is to have a parking area and trailhead at Swedes Run Park, skirting Swedes Lake. There, an existing path through the woods follows the shoreline of the lake and could easily be used for part of the trail system. Restrooms are also available at the park.

**Status.** The scoping study is recommending an on-road route for all of Delran, with parking at Swedes Run Park. A trail follows the shoreline of nearby Swedes Run Park.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** Delran Township has recommended that off-road trails through Swedes Run Park be included to provide an alternate trail next to the lake and creek. Swedes Run provides wildlife habitat for numerous bird species and a trail from here could connect up with trails in the Taylor Preserve in adjacent Cinnaminson Township. The Township recently received a \$25,000 Recreational Trail Program Grant from NJDEP to extend the trails in Swedes Run Park that will

be incorporated into the Delaware River Heritage Trail.

The Route 419 New Jersey Transit Bus has numerous stops along Route 543 in Delran. A rail line stop in Riverside will be in walking distance to the route in the township.

***Segment: Cinnaminson Township***

***Corridor Length: 1.9 miles***

**Description.** Cinnaminson Township’s waterfront is characterized by pre and post WW II homes, large and small industry, some open space, and farmland at Taylor’s Farmstead on Taylor Lane. Along the entire route of the trail in both New Jersey and Pennsylvania, this is the closest the trail borders any farmland. Taylor’s Farmstead has an easement with the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust that allows walking on dirt paths through the preserve, used mostly as a wildlife sanctuary. Tours and bird watching trips are conducted in the wildlife preserve by various environmental groups throughout the year.

**Status.** The scoping study is recommending both an on-road route and off-road paths through Cinnaminson. The off-road route includes some river edge property with access easements and some state lands, south of Taylor’s Lane. There are also various riverside properties up for development consideration in Cinnaminson. Providing public access along the riverfront could incorporate these lands in the Delaware River Heritage Trail system.



*Taylor Preserve in Cinnaminson*

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** Cinnaminson is serviced by the Route 419 New Jersey Transit bus, which runs down Route 543 (River Road/Broad Street).

***Segment: Borough of Riverton***

***Corridor Length: 1.0 mile***

**Description.** Riverton, like Delanco and Riverside, has maintained a portion of its riverfront as a grassy shoreline next to the Delaware River, all in private ownership. However, routing the trail on Bank Avenue could provide the river access so important to the trail project. The town itself retains the aura of its 19<sup>th</sup> Century origin with large Victorian homes once used as summer retreats for city dwellers from Philadelphia. Much of the town is now included in a state and national historic district.

**Status.** The draft scoping study recommends river view and avenue routes, both on-



***Along Riverton's Bank Avenue***

road. One route will go alongside Bank Avenue, a narrow one-lane street next to the river, after taking local streets from Cinnaminson. The other will continue from Cinnaminson onto Broad

Street. There is local opposition to the line running down Bank Avenue.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** Broad Street in Riverton is serviced by the Route 419 bus, and will also have a stop on the South Jersey Light Rail Line.

***Segment: Borough of Palmyra***  
***Corridor Length: 1.1 miles***

**Description.** The Borough of Palmyra is defined by its location as the most southerly municipality in Burlington County on the Delaware River. The “City of Palms” took on its identity in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century with the development of the Camden and Amboy Rail Line, which in turn helped lead to the establishment of several industrial enterprises including a brass foundry, glass manufacturer, brewery and knitting mills. Today, the borough is a mostly residential small town with service businesses for its residents. The waterfront to

the northeast of the Tacony Palmyra Bridge is dominated by a residential development with houses, condominiums and rental units.

The southwest is all included in the Palmyra Cove Nature Park, owned and operated by the Burlington County Bridge Commission. The Nature Park consists of 350 acres located on the Delaware River from Route 73 south to Pennsauken Creek. Created around existing woodlands, the park was enhanced to provide wildlife habitat, and with that, nature education with walking trails winding through native forests and other tidal ecosystems. It also provides access for small boats, kayaks and canoes. The Environmental Discovery Center was recently constructed that highlights the beauty of the Delaware River and the natural and cultural resources found along both sides of the bridge. Inside, the center provides interactive displays about the river area, and outside provides scenic vistas of the river and the Philadelphia waterfront.

**Status.** The path as currently planned in the scoping study will end in Palmyra and cross the



***Broad and Cinnaminson in Palmyra***



### ***Palmyra Cove Nature Park***

Tacony-Palmyra Bridge, all using local streets. Palmyra Cove Nature Park is recommended as a trailhead and parking area for trail users. The new park administration building will also provide restroom facilities for trail users.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** An alternative to the proposed route is to work towards acquiring easements for public trail use through the condominium development, which maintains its own paths next to the river.

Palmyra Borough has been approved to receive a \$33,000 grant from NJDOT for the trail. Funding will be used for street markings and signage.

The Route 419 New Jersey Transit bus runs down Broad Street (Route 543), and a stop on the light rail line will also service Palmyra.

**Tacony-Palmyra Bridge.** Owned by the Burlington County Bridge Commission, the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge will provide the southerly connection over the Delaware River to Pennsylvania. From Palmyra New Jersey it crosses into the Tacony neighborhood of northeast Philadelphia. One walkway can be used for walking, but because of width limitations in some sections, sometimes as little as 30 inches, cyclists will be required to walk their bikes.



***Tacony Palmyra Bridge***

### **NEW JERSEY SUMMARY**

Total corridor length: 33 miles

Total miles of trail (off-road) completed:

Mercer County/City of Trenton	.25
Florence Township	.25
City of Burlington	2.50
Edgewater Park	.55
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3.55</b>

Total miles of trail under construction: 0

Total miles of trail corridor under formal study, both on-road and off-road: 41.2

#### **Major Constraints:**

- Locating a trail immediately adjacent to the shoreline of the Delaware River is physically prohibitive or at the least difficult in many areas because of natural topography, such as in Bordentown City, Bordentown Township and the Borough of Fieldsboro, heavy industrial use of waterfront in Florence and Burlington townships, and private residential property in all other sections of the New Jersey Trail.
- What little remaining open space adjacent to the river exists is not immediately available for a trail. Most of that land is in private ownership and any land for a trail must be acquired or easement sought.
- In sections where the trail will be off-road, some of those sections may require water and wetland crossings that will require state/federal permits before constructing bridges or boardwalks. Although the permitting process may not prohibit the establishment of a trail, it will extend the length of time needed to complete it.
- In some cases, locating the trail adjacent to local roads such as Route 543 may require the reconstruction of sidewalks for pedestrians, some only four feet wide or less, and creation of bike lanes on the roads. Some sidewalks or side paths could have additional landscape treatment in order to physically separate the path/sidewalk from vehicular traffic on the roads, and in some cases, provide some privacy for adjacent property owners.
- Many sections of the trail, particularly next to heavy industrial uses, will benefit from landscape screening to make the viewsheds more enjoyable. Also, because there are some abandoned industrial properties, the land on which they are located may be used in the future for the trail. However, doing so comes with the knowledge that in some cases, these may be “brownfield” cases due to toxic contamination of the soil. If that is the case, any trail building effort must make proper arrangements for either no soil disturbance or remediation.

## *Status of Trail Development - Pennsylvania*

Major sections of a route are completed in Pennsylvania using the towpath of Delaware Canal State Park, while other sections are yet to be determined. The Delaware Canal is also part of the Delaware and Lehigh National and State Heritage Corridor. The route for the Delaware River Heritage Trail in Pennsylvania is located in both Bucks County and the City of Philadelphia (Philadelphia County). In general, towns along the Delaware River in southern Bucks County reflect early settlement from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, industrial development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that relied on the river for transportation, and in the post WWII era, suburban growth inland from the river. Unfortunately, many of the hulking remains of that 19<sup>th</sup> century industry still remain in the form of large, un-occupied structures, some now designated brownfield sites.

### **Bucks County**

In May 2003, federal and state legislators and Bucks County officials announced the awarding of a \$431,000 grant to study the riverfront from Morrisville to Bensalem. Funding came from the Delaware River Port Authority, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, Bucks County, and the six towns whose waterfront is being studied: Morrisville, Falls Township, Tullytown Borough, Bristol Township, Bristol Borough, and Bensalem Township. The study will examine all existing uses and landcovers, and make

recommendations on any and all combinations of mixed uses, that could include recreational river access. That could include a possible riverfront routing of the Delaware River Heritage Trail. The study is expected to start in 2004.

**Calhoun Street Bridge.** The Pennsylvania side of the trail would start in the north at the Calhoun Street Bridge, owned by the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission. The Calhoun Street Bridge includes a pedestrian walkway that is heavily used by walkers and cyclists between Trenton and Morrisville. The



*Calhoun Street Bridge*

bridge is on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Segment:** *Delaware Canal State Park in Morrisville Borough, Falls Township, Tullytown Borough, Bristol Township*  
**Corridor Length:** *9.5 miles*

**Description.** Delaware Canal State Park was created to preserve the original 60-mile canal between Easton and Bristol, constructed in the 1830s as a means of transporting anthracite coal from Pennsylvania’s Lehigh Valley to Philadelphia, New York, and other eastern cities. The canal was made a part of the Pennsylvania State Park system in 1940 and established by Congress as a part of the 165 mile-long Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor in 1988. In 1993, it was designated a State Heritage Park. Heritage Corridor designation is a joint federal-state program that honors significant cultural heritage sites. The Delaware River Heritage Trail will use that portion of the park towpath, beginning in the north in Morrisville and continuing to its southerly end in Bristol.

By a matter of two votes, Morrisville missed becoming the site of the US Capitol. Instead, it became part of the region’s important industrial heritage, and now a pleasant town along the Delaware River across from Trenton. Named for Robert Morris, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation and the U.S.

Constitution, Morrisville was officially incorporated in 1804, although European settlements existed in the town site since the 1680s. All of Morrisville’s section of the trail will be on the Delaware Canal State Park towpath with a stone-dust surface that easily accommodates walking and cycling. After leaving the bridge, the trail will cross North Delmorr Avenue to land owned by Morrisville Borough, and continue south on the towpath into Falls Township. There is a major interruption in the path at the Amtrak crossing which must be addressed.

The Delaware Canal continues through Falls Township. The township was developed first with Dutch settlers around 1616 and later around the historical settlement of Fallsington. The Township was legally established in 1692. The most notable structure in the township is Pennsbury Manor, a re-constructed manor home based on the original owned by William Penn, and owned by the State of Pennsylvania.



*Delaware Canal in Morrisville*



***Delaware Canal in Tullytown near Route 13***

More recently, the township has been the site of the Fairless Steel Mill, now largely abandoned, and landfill operations near and next to the Delaware River, owned by Geological Reclamation Operations and Waste Systems, Inc. (G.R.O.W.S.). This part of the Delaware Canal towpath still exists as a trail and was recently rehabilitated with new crushed stone. In some areas, the towpath abuts the back yards of residences and in others, goes through open woods. There is a major interruption of the canal and towpath at Tyburn Road that also must be addressed. The trail also borders Falls Township’s Community Park, a multi-purpose recreational facility.

The trail in Tullytown Borough will also be on the former Delaware Canal towpath. Tullytown is one of the younger municipalities in the region, incorporated in 1891. In Tullytown, the path continues behind post WW II houses and through woodlands. The path is interrupted at the site of the Levittown Shopping Center, now demolished, and at the

adjacent The Home Depot at Bristol Pike (Rt. 13) and Levittown Parkway. However, it will be possible to continue on a designated pathway through the planned parking lot of the shopping center and entrance to The Home Depot.

The Delaware Canal reaches its third interruption in Bristol Township where the Pennsylvania Turnpike crosses in the vicinity of Route 13. At this location, the towpath also crosses Route 13, so there is a serious safety problem at Route 13, and then an interruption at the Turnpike. But after the Turnpike, the canal continues south-southwest into Bristol Borough.

**Status.** The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has recently undertaken a reconstruction of the towpath from Morrisville to Bristol. The towpath has been resurfaced with the stone dust that is used for the towpath north of Morrisville. The Delaware and Lehigh Heritage Corridor is developing a plan to provide continuity of the path. Plans call for a tunnel to be constructed under the railroad to continue the path and canal, and develop a path through the Levittown shopping center. A study of just the Levittown shopping center has been drafted and is undergoing public review and comment.

Included in the State of Pennsylvania 2001-2002 budget was \$9 million for construction of an approximate 10-mile section of the park from Morrisville to Bristol. Of that \$9 million, \$500,000 is for land acquisition and \$500,000



***Delaware Canal in Bristol Township***

for design/contingencies. Also included in that same budget were \$3.6 million for bridges to reconnect the canal at Route 13 in Bristol Township, another bridge over Route 13 in Bristol Township in the vicinity of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and in Tullytown Borough a bridge over Levittown Parkway in the vicinity of the Levittown Shopping Center. Work will begin this year in the Morrisville section.

Bucks County is performing a study of Route 13 and will make a trail crossing in Bristol Township when re-designing the road.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** Within Morrisville, the flood control levee along the Delaware River is a popular walking route for local residents and workers. The Pennsylvania departments of Environmental Protection and General Services have allocated \$1.2 million to rehabilitate approximately 4,600 feet of the levee. According to Morrictown officials, at

least 1,000 walkers a day cross the Calhoun Street Bridge from Trenton, walk along the levee and return by the “Trenton Makes” bridge (Alternate Route 1).

Planned to connect with the Delaware Canal in Falls Township is the Falls Township Community Connector, a 2.5- mile trail for pedestrians and bicyclists, costing approximately \$850,000. An eight-foot wide path will connect Levittown, Wheatsheaf and other communities within the township to the Falls Township Community Park and the Delaware Canal State Park. Construction is targeted for FY 2005.

South Eastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) operates bus service for various towns along this section of the proposed trail route. The Route 127 bus between Trenton and the Neshaminy Mall services this segment. Also, Morrisville and Tullytown/Levittown have passenger rail service on the SEPTA R7 line between Philadelphia and Trenton.

***Segment: Bristol Borough***  
***Corridor Length: 2.0 miles***

**Description.** Bristol Borough is one of the oldest communities along the Delaware River, founded in 1681. Many old buildings are still standing, and the central part of the borough and 19<sup>th</sup> century Grundy Industrial Complex are National Historic Districts. The Borough is the only municipality in the Heritage Trail area that leases the canal and towpath from the State



***Bristol Borough – Delaware Canal towpath at Grundy Industrial Complex***

of Pennsylvania. The Borough maintains the towpath and adjacent parkland, as well as the Spurline Trail, once part of the Pennsylvania Railroad system. It was in Bristol Borough that the Delaware Canal ended, and the Borough has developed a park and paved path along the canal, with interpretive signs describing the history of the canal. A path is complete up to the Maple Beach Road Bridge that crosses over Otter Creek into Bristol Township and property owned by the Rohm and Haas Corporation. The bridge is blocked to vehicular traffic, but is accessed for fishing and walking over into Bristol Township. A large parking lot behind Mill Street, the principal commercial street in the borough, is suitable for Heritage Trail trailhead and parking area.

**Status.** In 2000, The Delaware River Greenway Partnership and the National Park Service hosted a planning charrette with key community representatives from local and state governments, non-profit organizations and Rohm and Haas Corporation to assess the

opportunities and constraints for trail development between the southwest end of the Delaware Canal in Bristol Borough, the southern part of Bristol Township, and Bensalem Township. The participants surveyed existing land use patterns and plans relevant to the Delaware, and made general recommendations on potential routes. In essence, it presented conceptual routes, but was short of presenting a more detailed feasibility study.

Within Bristol Borough, two alternatives were identified, one crossing Otter Creek over the now closed bridge into the Maple Beach section of Bristol Township, and the other following local streets and roads to Route 413 in Bristol Township.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** The Borough has developed a greenway and walking path along the Delaware, similar to Burlington in New Jersey, where the original canal ended near the river.

Bucks County Department of Parks and Recreation manages Silver Lake Park, located



***End of the Delaware Canal in Bristol***

upstream of Otter Creek, past Route 13. Although there is not a specific trail linking the park to Bristol Borough and the canal towpath, it is possible to reach Silver Lake Park using local streets. Silver Lake Park is a 235 acre complex dedicated to natural resource protection and education, with walking paths used for nature interpretation, water access for boating and fishing, and picnicking.



*Levy at Rohm and Haas Corporation property with the Burlington Bristol Bridge in the background*

SEPTA has bus service for Bristol on the Route 128 bus (between Neshaminy Mall to Oxford Valley Mall, and the Route 129 bus (between Oxford Valley Mall and Torresdale in Philadelphia). Also, local passenger rail service is provided on the R7 line, with a stop at the Bristol Train Station.

Bridge next to the waterfront and continuing inland to River Road in Bristol Township.

The waterfront segment of the property is bisected by the Burlington Bristol Bridge. Because this bridge has no walking access, it is not recommended as a trail connector.

***Segment: Bristol Township Rohm and Haas Corporation***

***Corridor Length: 2.0 miles***

**Description.** Rohm and Haas Corporation property in Bristol Township can provide one of the longer stretches of riverfront open spaces along the entire route of the trail, both in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The corporation is a major international manufacturer of chemical products, and several industrial buildings are on this property, with some facilities close to the river. A one to 1 ½ mile section of the trail can be routed on Maple Beach Road, the raised levee adjacent to the river, and other lands owned by the corporation south of the Burlington Bristol

**Status.** Currently, Rohm and Haas Corporation is studying alternative open space uses of their property, including the location of the Delaware River Heritage Trail. Planning and analysis aspects of that study, undertaken by the Natural Lands Trust through a grant from Pennsylvania DCNR, is expected to be completed early, 2004. Rohm and Haas owns the concrete Otter Creek Bridge connecting Bristol Borough with Maple Beach Road and officials have expressed interest in reopening the bridge to trail use for non-motorized vehicles and walkers. The Nature Conservancy has an easement on a small portion of land bordered by Otter Creek and the Delaware River. Corporate officials have also expressed their cooperation in locating the trail on other

Rohm and Haas properties, and will continue to review any proposals about the trail.

***Segment: Bristol Township - Southwest***  
***Corridor Length: 2.1 miles***

**Description.** After leaving Rohm and Haas Corporation property, the trail will most likely be all on-road through the remainder of Bristol Township up to Neshaminy Creek. Heavy industrial use and a power plant dominate the waterfront from Route 413 to the Croyden section of the township. Neshaminy State Park owns property in the Croyden section of Bristol Township along the Creek, but there is no in-park connection between the part in Bristol Township and the part in Bensalem Township. The route would likely go on local two-lane roads, characterized by mixed post-WWII residential and commercial uses.



***State Road in Bristol Township***

**Status.** The charrette study recommended trail routing on State Road through the southwestern part of Bristol Township.

However, the waterfront in Bristol Township will be studied for its current and potential uses with the county-administered study, which will include public access as a trail.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** The feasibility of trail access should be explored from River Road, through Croyden Woods, owned by Rohm and Haas Corporation, to State Road.

This section of Bristol Township is serviced by SEPTA’s Route 129 bus.

***Segment: Neshaminy State Park***  
***Corridor Length: 1.5 miles***

**Description.** Neshaminy State Park is located on both sides of Neshaminy Creek at its terminus with the Delaware River. A relatively new park, it was bequeathed to the State of Pennsylvania by Robert Logan in 1956. The 330 acres provides a variety of recreational uses including trails, picnicking, swimming, and on the northern side of Neshaminy Creek, a marina. An existing four-mile trail network that includes an approximate 1.5-mile River Walk, can also be included as a part of the Delaware River Heritage Trail on the south side of Neshaminy Creek. Because of an existing private marina, constructing a footbridge over Neshaminy Creek at the park may be prohibitively costly, as any bridge built for the trail would have to be clear of any sailboat masts, or be constructed to either be raised or swung open by a full-time bridge tender when boats would need to pass through.



*Neshaminy State Park's River Walk*

**Status.** To maintain trail continuity, connecting both sides of Neshaminy State Park near the creek's mouth at the Delaware River would be desirable. However, as noted in the charrette report, an alternative route may need to use the State Road Bridge crossing of Neshaminy Creek further upstream. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has acquired additional lands next to Neshaminy Creek in the vicinity of State Road, and redesigning and reconstructing the bridge could allow for pedestrian access, with additional road shoulders developed to accommodate walkers and cyclists.

Neshaminy State Park can serve as a trailhead, with an information center, parking, picnicking and restroom facilities. Neshaminy State Park provides the opportunity for interpretation of the upper estuarine Delaware River.

**Neshaminy Creek Bridge.** Along State Road a bridge over Neshaminy Creek connects Bensalem and Bristol townships. A

Westside walkway is part of the bridge and protected from vehicular traffic. Its width is suitable for walking and cycling in one direction, although two-way bike traffic would require cyclists to walk their bikes. For the most part, cyclists use the road. Upon reaching land at either end, no pathway exists and current conditions are considered dangerous for pedestrians, as they are forced to either walk on the road or on private property. Any future design and engineering studies of the bridge and adjacent roadway must include solutions for safe pedestrian use.

**Segment: Bensalem Township**  
**Corridor Length: 4.4 miles**

**Description.** Bensalem Township is one of the larger municipalities in the trail area, and has experienced great residential and commercial growth since the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Southwest of Neshaminy State Park, Bensalem's riverfront area is characterized as a mixture of large residential estates once used by wealthy Philadelphia families as summer retreats, more modest residential development, private boat



*Penn Ryn Mansion in Bensalem Township*

clubs, and heavy and light industry. Bucks County owns parkland, Delaware River Access Area, used for a boat launch with picnic tables and restrooms. The Pen Ryn Estate includes an early 19<sup>th</sup> Century former residence now used as a catering establishment. Penn Ryn and the adjacent privately-owned Andalusia are on the National Register of Historic Places. After Neshaminy State Park, it is expected that the trail will continue along State Road. State Road has a variety of adjacent uses, from industrial to residential, with little commercial.

**Status.** According to the charrette study, the Bensalem Township segment of the trail is largely recommended to border State Road. The riverfront public open space owned by Bucks County may be used for a short riverfront trail, but its main value is in the potential to provide a trailhead with parking and restrooms. One section that needs to be explored for riverfront trail access is in the Salem Harbor Apartment complex and marina that already has a 1,300-foot long riverside trail. Bucks County has an easement along the river; however, the extent of public access must be clarified. Some sections of the path may require easements on private property to at least locate the trail off-road, as on a side path, but not immediately adjacent to State Road, thus providing a visual as well as physical barrier to traffic.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** Bensalem Township has received a \$75,000 grant from Pennsylvania DCNR to develop a township-wide greenway plan. This plan, once



*State Road in Bensalem Township*

completed, will recommend routes throughout the township that will be used for natural resource protection. Part of that plan may also include a possible greenway and riverfront route for the Heritage Trail. It is anticipated that the study will also review the feasibility of establishing a greenway along Poquessing Creek. This may provide an anchor for a crossing into Philadelphia at Glen Foerd Estate, administered by the Fairmount Park Commission.

**Segment: City/County of Philadelphia**  
**Corridor Length: 3.9 miles**

**Description.** Philadelphia is the heart of the colonial and modern heritage of the Delaware River. From its early Swedish settlers coming in the 1640s and later development by William Penn in 1682, Philadelphia has become the regional hub for the lower Delaware River Valley and for all towns along the route of the Delaware River Heritage Trail. Founded along the Delaware River north of the Schuylkill River, Philadelphia became our nation’s early capital by virtue of its location and size in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The structures in which the nation began are part of the jewels of the National Park System, including Independence Hall, Carpenters’ Hall, the Liberty Bell, and now the new National Constitution Center.

The segment of the Delaware River Heritage Trail that passes through Philadelphia does not go through the colonial historic district, although there will be links that will. This part of Philadelphia was not developed until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century with the advent of the Industrial Era, and then the rapid development of row homes after WWII. The Delaware River shoreline in the northern part of Philadelphia is characterized, like the rest of the area, as a combination of uses including industrial, residential, commercial boating, and municipal. Philadelphia is often call the City of Neighborhoods, and the Delaware River area is



***Glen Foerd Estate, owned by the Fairmount Park Commission in Philadelphia***

characterized by moderate and working class housing, with row homes, a condominium development, and later-constructed twin homes, all made of brick, which is characteristic of Philadelphia. The trail is expected to follow a variety of on-road and off-road paths within the City, first through the Torresdale and then the Tacony neighborhoods.

Immediately across Poquessing Creek from Bensalem Township, the City owns the Glen Foerd Estate, with a mansion constructed in the 1850s and surrounding grounds managed by the Fairmount Park Commission. It would be desirable to connect the footpath at Salem Harbor Apartments with Glen Foerd via a pedestrian bridge over Poquessing Creek. South of Glen Foerd is a condominium development with restricted access and then property owned by the City with parkland and other municipal services. Pleasant Hill Park

includes open space and a boat launch; adjacent to it is a fish hatchery and water department operations. To the south is Pennypack on the Delaware, parkland along Pennypack Creek at the mouth of the Delaware River which includes an existing asphalt trail.

**Status.** In 2001, the City of Philadelphia, through its consultant team led by Field Operations, developed a conceptual plan for its Northern Delaware Riverfront that calls for a variety of mixed uses, including a public linear greenway along seven miles of the riverfront with a continuous pedestrian and bicycle trail along the river. The studied area included property it already owns, approximately 2.3 miles of waterfront, and trail connections adjacent to State Road and other local streets where waterfront open space is not contiguous. Under the Fairmount Park Commission, the City also plans to assume title to the former right-of-way of the Kensington and Tacony Railroad from Conrail. The plan prepared has been accepted by the City of Philadelphia and proposed routes for both the Heritage Trail and East Coast Greenway would use any right-of-way constructed along the river. A separate study was conducted for a trail system along Poquessing Creek that would connect up with the Delaware River trail system. Currently, PEC is conducting a study of a seven-mile linear greenway along the North Delaware Riverfront, as proposed in the first plan. This plan will include mapping of current ownership, alignment and boundaries of the greenway, cost-benefit analysis and preliminary designs that will include the trail. \$363,000 has been

obtained from a variety of federal, state and private funding sources for this study.

**Other Possible Routes and Links.** The north Philadelphia waterfront is part of a larger plan to develop a bicycle route around and through the city. Part of the trail will pass through Pennypack Park, a greenway park along Pennypack Creek that includes a variety of recreational uses, including trails. Although the Heritage Trail will stop at the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge, a trail, either through local streets or off road, will continue as part of the East Coast Greenway to points south through the City and Delaware and Chester counties. The East Coast Greenway will travel through Center City, Philadelphia’s central business district, and provide access to cultural and historic sites commonly associated with Philadelphia.

The SEPTA Route 70 bus travels down State Road in this segment, between Philadelphia’s Fern Rock Terminal and the Torresdale neighborhood.



*Pleasant Hill Park – remnant building from a former water supply station*

***Segment: Kensington and Tacony Trail***

***Corridor Length: .8 miles***

**Description.** The Kensington and Tacony Railroad Company, commonly referred to as the “K and T,” was incorporated in 1893, and it eventually became part of the former Pennsylvania Railroad system. That line will become known as the Kensington and Tacony Trail. It will closely follow the Delaware River under the old steel towers that provided electrification for the railroad cars. It will also pass next to several active industrial buildings that previously had the only access to the river. However, once constructed, the K & T Trail will provide the community with the opportunity to experience and appreciate the Delaware River that has not existed since the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century.



***Kensington and Tacony Trail Route in Philadelphia***

**Status.** Now abandoned, The K and T is being pursued for acquisition as a trail by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) on behalf of the City of Philadelphia/Fairmount Park Commission. The property is under contract for acquisition. Of the total 2.8 miles, only the northern .8 miles will be included in the Delaware River Heritage Trail. The rest of the trail will continue south into Philadelphia.

**Alternate Routes and Links.** As the K & T is also part of the East Coast Greenway, the trail route will continue south into Philadelphia. PEC is also preparing a study of the Lardner’s Point area near the Tacony Palmyra Bridge that will include a nature trail off of the K and T, fishing access and parking, which can also service the Delaware River Heritage Trail.

SEPTA service is available on State Road by the Route 70 bus.

**PENNSYLVANIA SUMMARY**

Total miles of trail (off-road) completed:

Delaware Canal State Park	9.50
Bristol Borough	2.00
Neshaminy State Park	1.50
Bensalem Township	0.25
<b>Total:</b>	<b>13.25</b>

Total miles under construction: 0

Total miles of trail corridor studied or undergoing formal study:

Rohm and Haas Corporation	2.00
Bensalem Township	4.25
Philadelphia: northern waterfront	3.90
Philadelphia, Kensington and Tacony	0.80
<b>Total:</b>	<b>10.95</b>

**Major Constraints:**

- At the present time, efforts are underway with the Delaware and Lehigh Heritage Corridor to champion additional funding that would eliminate the obstructions along the Delaware Canal. Until these obstructions are corrected, either temporary routes must be established to provide for both continued access and safe routes, or route designation should be delayed if no alternate routes are determined.
- Agreement must be reached by Rohm and Haas, Bristol Township and Bristol Borough to legally provide walking and cycling access from Bristol Borough across Otter Creek to the Maple Beach section of Bristol Township.
- An agreement must be sought with Rohm and Haas to permit the trail on its property next to the river and then west to State Road.
- The Army Corps of Engineers must be consulted with regard to permits for trail development and use of the waterfront berm/levee on the Rohm and Haas property.
- Heavy industrial use existing or abandoned in Bristol Township and Bensalem Township appear to constrain riverside trail development, which will necessitate

locating the trail next to State Road. However, the previously-noted study for the riverfront communities will address the current land use patterns and make recommendations for either re-use or enhancement of the waterfront. It will be important to have trail access considered as a part of that study.

- Private estates in Bensalem Township will also make it difficult to locate the trail next to the river. However, easements can be sought that could locate the trail near State Road, but set back from the road as side paths with possible berms or grass strips separating the path from the road. These will have to be sought with the cooperation of a land trust or governmental agency.
- A formal agreement/easement for public trail access must be researched for the Salem Harbor apartments in Bensalem.
- Permission must be obtained from the Fairmount Park Commission to use Glen Foerd Estate as a trailhead, and if possible, location for pedestrian bridge over Poquessing Creek. This will also require permission from Bensalem Township/Salem Harbor apartments.

## Future Activities for Planning, Construction, and Public Outreach

- On both sides of the river, planning studies must be advanced to the next level to produce more detailed information for actual design and construction. In New Jersey elements of the scoping study for environmental studies and cultural resource surveys must be performed before continuing onto final design. In Pennsylvania, the pattern is not as uniform, with planning studies affecting the trail underway in Philadelphia, but not in Bristol Township or Bensalem. Scoping, or preliminary engineering studies, must be performed to ascertain the exact trail footprint, need for environmental resolution, stream crossings, road and road shoulder improvements, sidewalk improvements, and areas of new off-road construction. Delaware Canal State Park will be performing engineering studies for its trail interruptions. Once these issues are addressed, cost estimates can be determined for construction.
- As other trail and open space planning activities take place, it will be necessary to include the Delaware River Heritage Trail as a key part of those efforts. Although other trails may use the same route or footprint of the trail, it will always be necessary to stress the Heritage Trail as a community natural and cultural resource, and not merely a route that goes “from point A to point B.” At the same time, cooperating with other planning and development efforts can elevate the status of the trail as a fundable entity eligible for local, regional and federal grants.
- Coordinating efforts to establish long-term management of the trail have been started by the Delaware River Greenway Partnership. Funded by a grant from the William Penn Foundation, the Partnership has begun the process of gathering information that will help assure the trail’s continuity, multiple non-motorized use, community support, and public appreciation for the resources located within the corridor. A management plan will address these long-term issues, as well as chart a course for development and interpretation. The aim of that management plan will be to not only address trail construction needs and management, but clarify the means by which the trail meets the goal of providing access to the river and interpret and appreciate the natural and cultural heritage of the communities through which it will pass. The outline of management plan is in the appendix.
- Land managing agencies and municipalities through which the trail will pass will be requested to approve the route and support development of the trail. Depending on the location of the trail, they may also be asked to assume responsibility for trail maintenance. This will be further discussed in the management plan.
- Because the trail is called the Delaware River “Heritage” Trail, interpretation is a key element that will impact both community acceptance and adoption of the trail as a valued asset. It will be necessary in the future to develop an interpretation strategy that looks at the resources found

along the trail, provide for signage, provide written material such as brochures that include significant features along its route, and also develop a web page that will not only provide general information about the trail, but also provide updates on trail development during construction, other projects that might temporarily restrict access to parts of the trail, and listings of ancillary facilities for trail users. Interpretation needs will be incorporated in scoping studies, and also the management plan.

- The advisory committee will continue to play an important role in the planning, development, and long-term management of the trail. The committee will also be able to present local concerns about the route and use to public officials and the trail coordinator, provide information about any local issues and regulations affecting the trail. As the trail develops, the advisory committee will be involved in promoting the trail and its benefits, and provide recommendations on events and participation of the trail coordinator in local events and festivals, such as Bordentown's Cranberry Festival. The committee may also provide the means to discuss the potential use of surveys about the safe and enjoyable use of the trail, once constructed, focus groups, etc.
- Because the Heritage Trail will share the rights-of-way of other trails, coordinating signage will be important to provide information about all trails while not contributing to sign overuse. Standards will need to be agreed upon to that give credit to all trails, provide information on appropriate or allowed uses, and provide information on the natural and cultural resources found along the route.



## Acknowledgement

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## *Appendix*

### *Delaware River Heritage Trail Management Plan Outline*

#### Executive Summary

- I. Title Page
- II. Acknowledgements
- III. Table of Contents
- IV. Overview Map of trail and region
- V. Introduction
  - ≈ Natural history of area
  - ≈ Cultural history of area
  - ≈ Description of project
  - ≈ How project got started
  - ≈ Concept/vision
- VI. Planning Process
  - ≈ Goals and objectives
  - ≈ Types of participants in the planning process
  - ≈ Accomplishments to date
- VII. Trail Segments by Municipality/ Major Public Land Manager, e.g., Delaware Canal State Park, Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park
  - ≈ Maps and photos of trail, points of interest
  - ≈ Detailed description of proposed route including location, estimated length, type of trail uses, resources along route
  - ≈ Acquisition/easement needs for public use
  - ≈ Needs for existing/proposed off-road trail surface and landscaping
  - ≈ Needs for existing/proposed routes on public rights-of-way
  - ≈ Existing/proposed trail enhancement facilities, including mile markers, benches, fencing, parking lots, kiosks, etc.
  - ≈ Existing/proposed trail continuity facilities, including bridges, traffic lights/pedestrian traffic stop buttons
  - ≈ Access and/or access restraint needs, i.e., methods to prohibit motor vehicles
  - Transportation and traffic: street and rail
  - ≈ Proposed ownership/management/maintenance and partners/support
  - ≈ Constraints, including breaks in continuity, major road crossings
  - ≈ Safety requirements, e.g., lighting, clearing brush, telephones
  - ≈ Brown fields and other environmental concerns
  - ≈ Invasive plant management for off-road segments
  - ≈ Neighbor concerns, e.g. trespassing, liability

- ≈ Spur and connecting trails
- ≈ Event coordination and regulation, e.g., walks/rides for charities

VIII. Regional trail issues and requirements

- ≈ The Heritage Trail as a component of other trails, including East Coast Greenway, Delaware Canal State Park, Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, etc.
- ≈ The Heritage Trail as a component of the Wild and Scenic River designation of the Delaware River
- ≈ Access and safety issues with the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge, Calhoun Street Bridge

VIII. Action Agenda Overview and by Municipality/Major Public Land Manager

- ≈ What needs to happen
- ≈ How should it be accomplished
- ≈ Who will be responsible
- ≈ When will it happen
- ≈ How much will it cost (estimate)
- ≈ Resolution for support

IX. Partners

- ≈ Public agencies
- ≈ Non-profit groups and clubs
- ≈ Businesses
- ≈ Private citizens

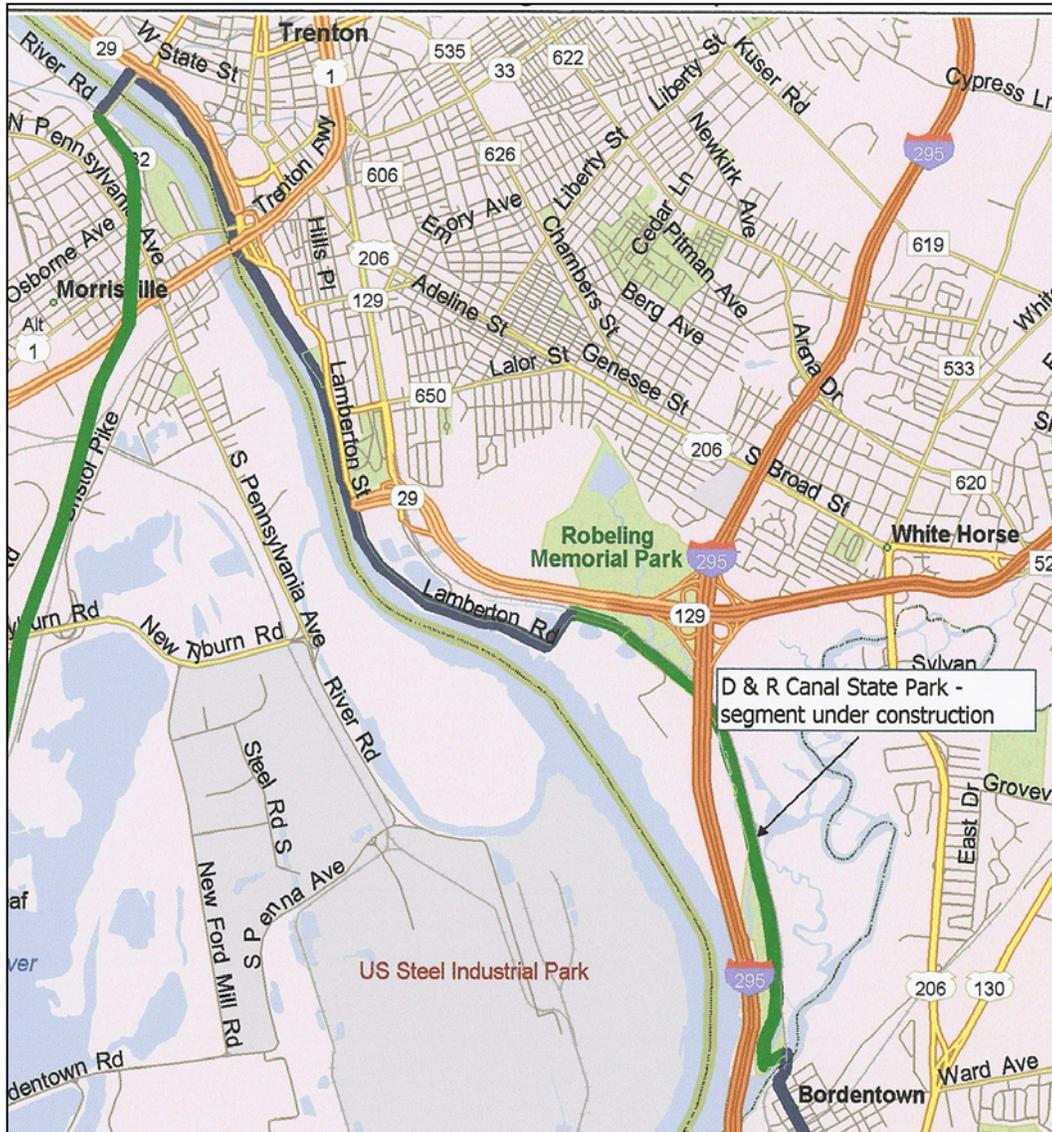
X. Potential Long Term Development and Management Strategies

- ≈ Include addition of addition or alternate segments

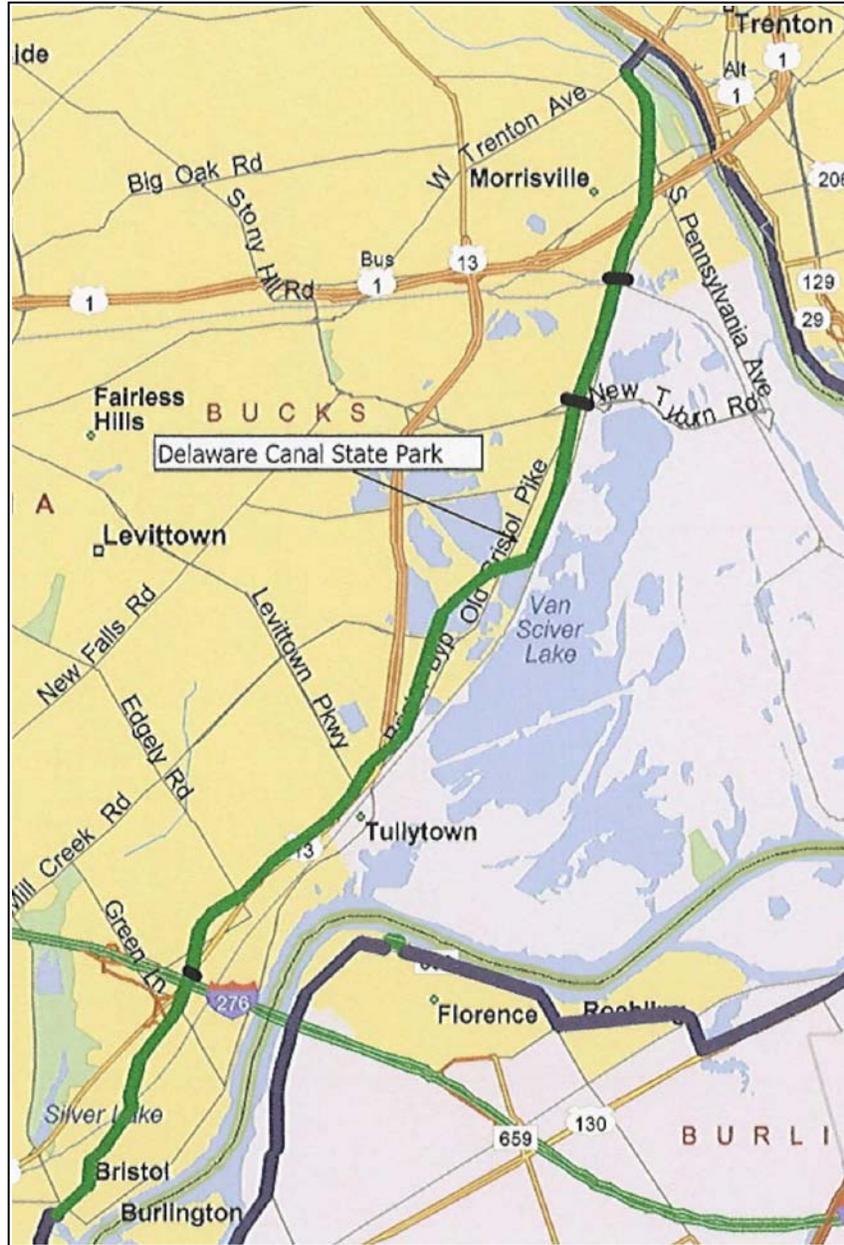
XI. Public Outreach

- ≈ Brochures with general information and those tailored to specific interests including those for historic features found along the route, natural features, health features and tips
- ≈ Web page with Delaware River Greenway Partnership with links to other public agencies
- ≈ Periodic events and tours directed at specific interests. Include necessity of local or land manager special use permits
- ≈ News articles and press releases, specific to trail segment openings, route changes, events, notice of temporary interruptions or construction (also to be included on the web page)

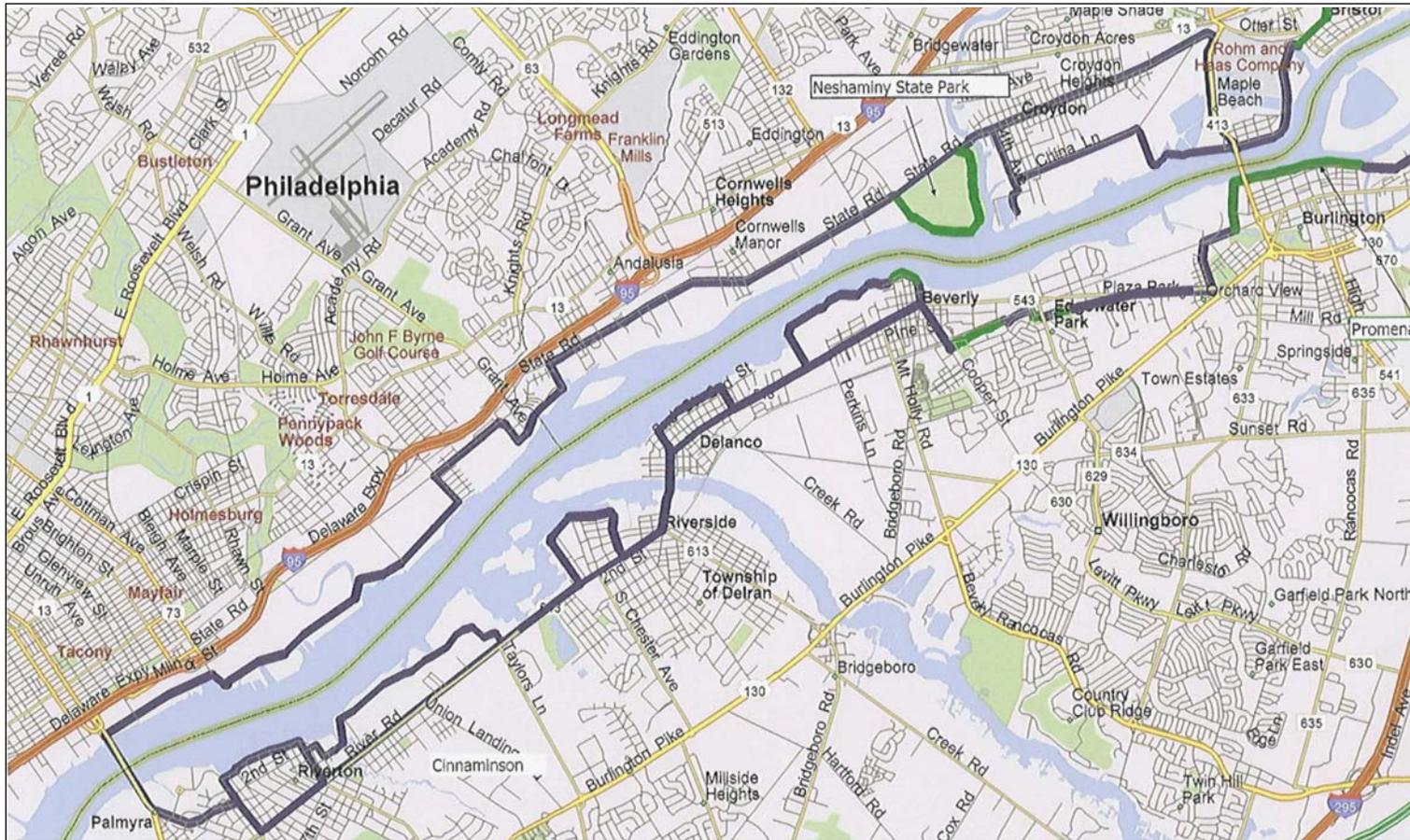
## Delaware River Heritage Trail Proposed Route in Mercer County, New Jersey



## Delaware River Heritage Trail Proposed Route on the Delaware Canal State Park in Pennsylvania



## Delaware River Heritage Trail Proposed Route Southern New Jersey and Pennsylvania



## Delaware River Heritage Trail Proposed Route Overview

