



WATERSHED COUNCILS

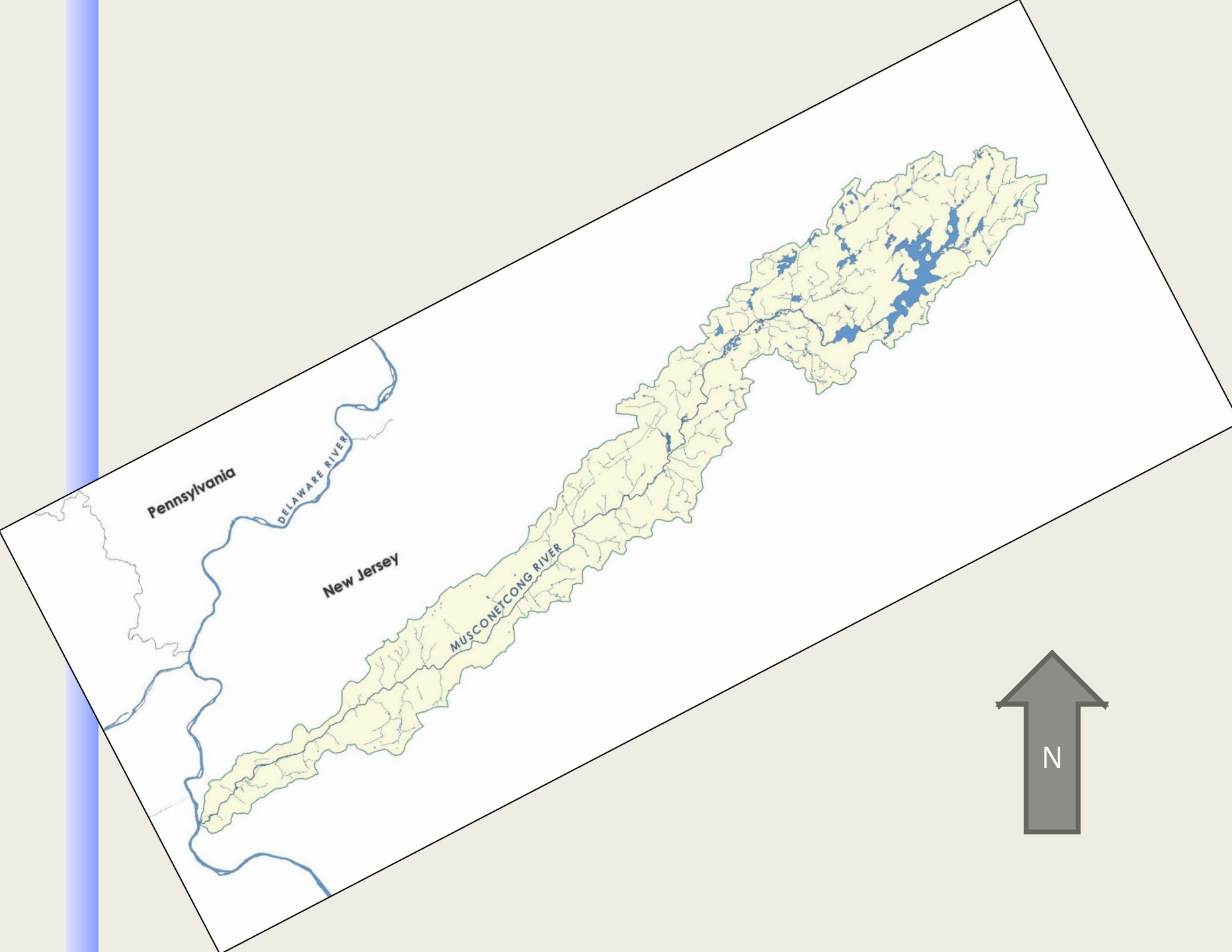
Alan R. Hunt, Ph.D.

Director Policy & Grants, Musconetcong Watershed Association
River Administrator, Musconetcong River Management Council



Watersheds

■ Geology



Watershed Management

■ Geography

- Geology

- Water Quality
- Terrestrial Habitats
- Human Uses

- Infrastructure

- Roads
- Housing
- Businesses
- Water infrastructure

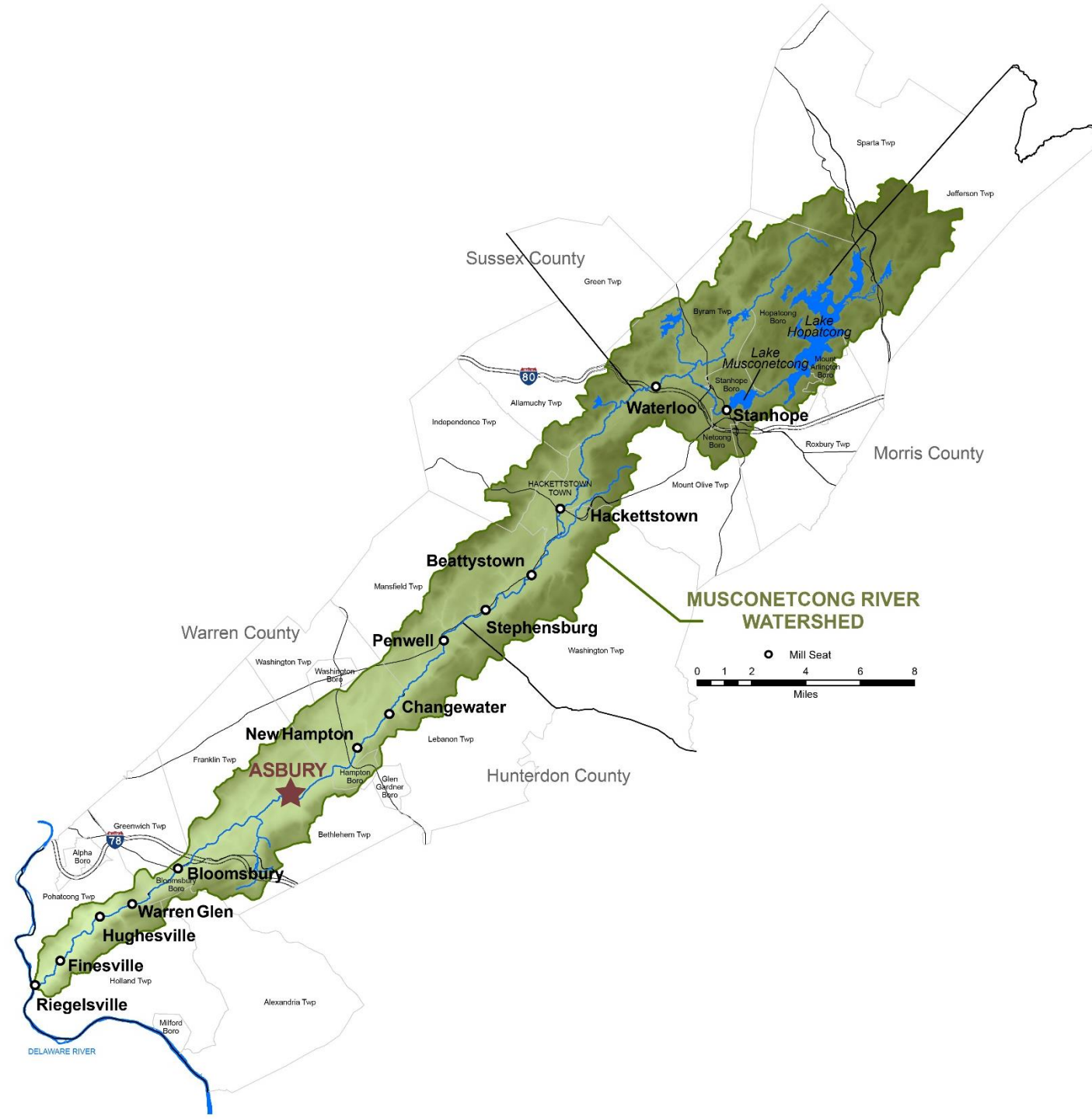
- Economic

- Natural Resources Use

- Political Boundaries

- Cultural (Who lives here; How is the land & water used)

- History Scenery
- Recreation
- Spiritual



Collaborative Resource Management

■ Geography

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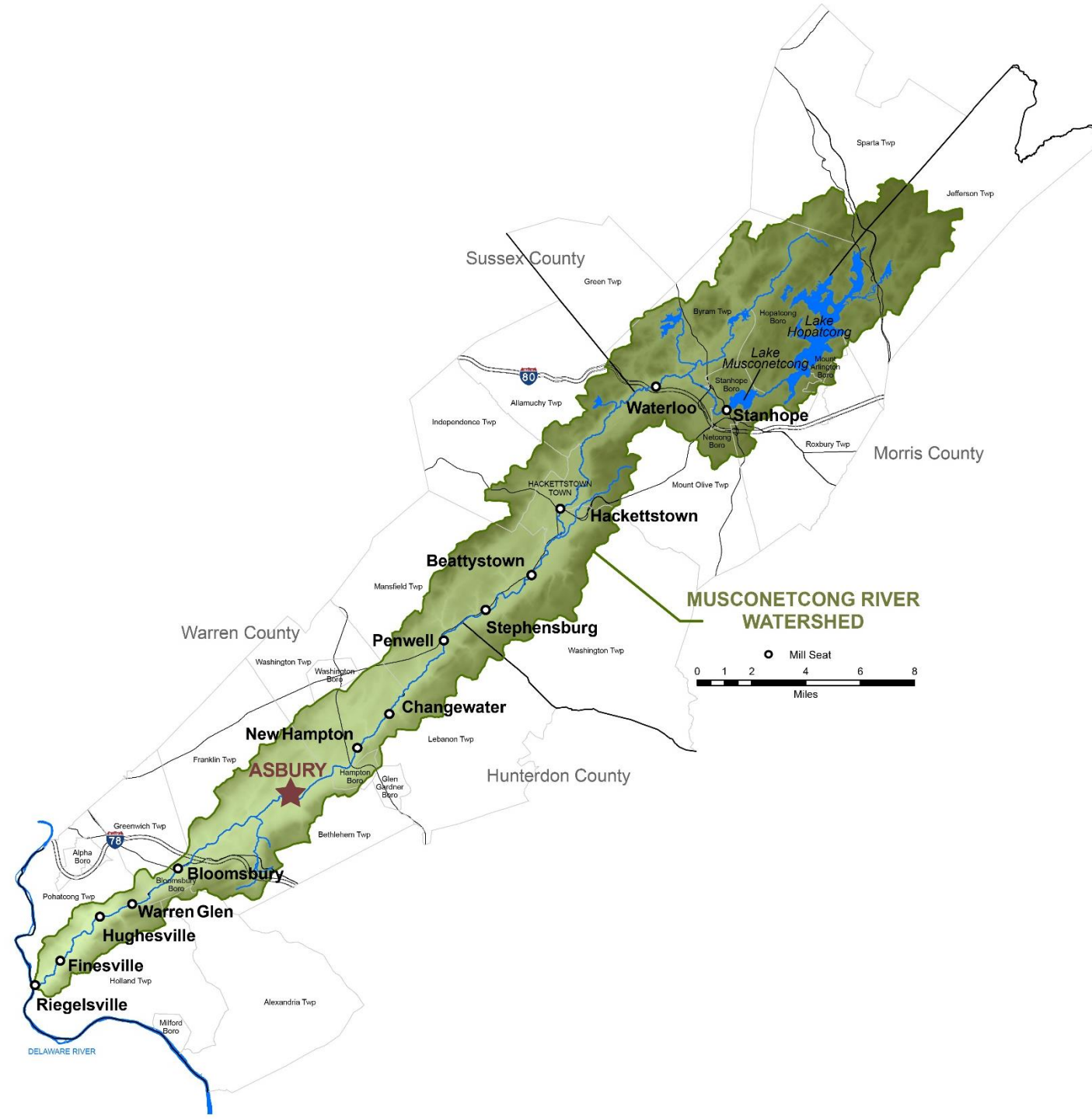
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Watershed Councils

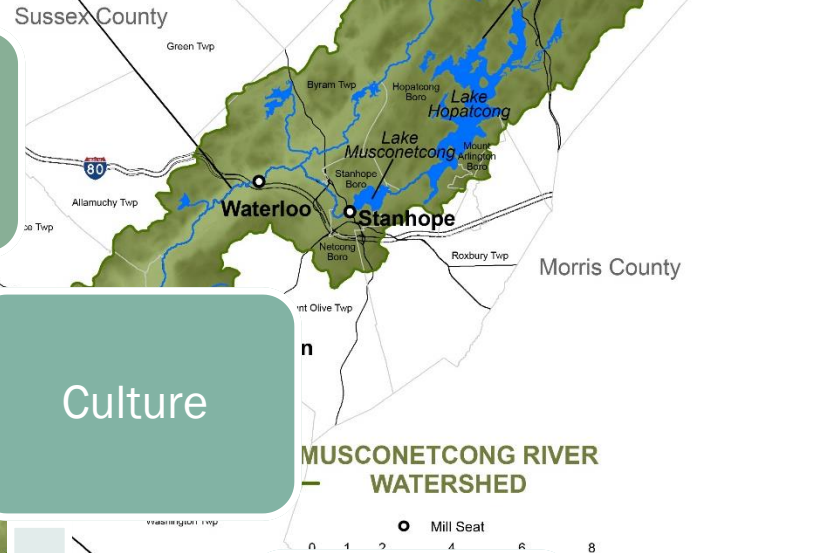
Geography

Political
Boundaries

Culture

Collaboration

Watershed
Councils



■ Geography

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“Watershed Councils”

Where do we see them?

- Commissions
 - *Lake Commissions*
 - *Inter-State Commissions (e.g. DRBC)*
- Projects (Temporary)
 - *Watershed Implementation Planning (319h program) Advisory Councils*
- Infrastructure-driven
 - *Reservoir Systems*
 - *Water Supply & Dam Systems*
 - *Navigation - Ports & Canal Systems*
 - *Sewerage Authorities*
- Some Wild & Scenic Rivers
- Some States
 - *Massachusetts Watershed Protection Act Advisory Committees*
 - *Council of Governments*

Example: Massachusetts

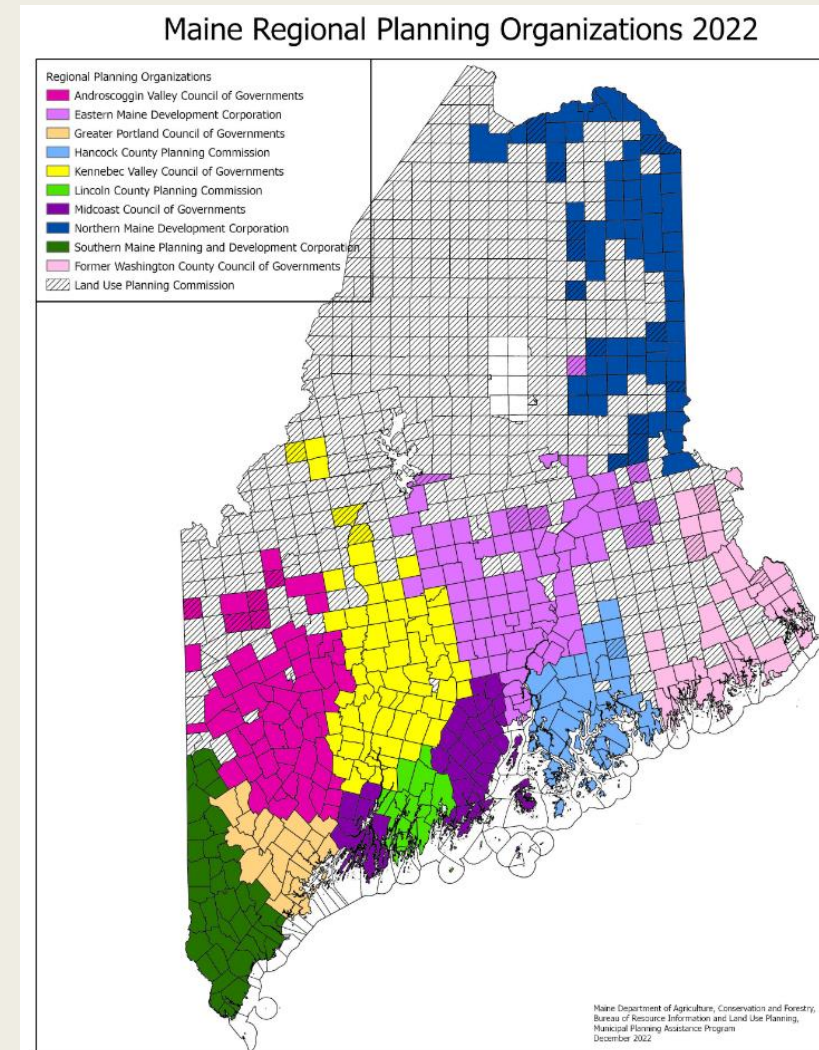
- Section 2. There shall be within the department a **division of water supply protection...** The division shall construct, maintain and operate a system of watersheds, **reservoirs, water rights** and rights in sources of **water supply**, shall supply thereby a sufficient supply of **pure water** to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, and shall utilize and conserve said water and other natural resources in order to **protect, preserve and enhance the environment of the commonwealth and to assure the availability of pure water for future generations. ...**
- "Advisory committee", the watershed system advisory committee for the appropriate watershed system.
- Section 15. The commissioner shall establish a **watershed system advisory committee** to **advise** the division on its policies and regulations regarding **fishing, boating, and recreational activities** and **other environmental and wildlife matters** in all of the watershed system areas under the control of the division, exclusive of the Quabbin watershed and the Ware river watershed. The committee shall consist of **9 members**, the qualifications of whom shall be determined by regulation by the commissioner. The committee shall elect a chairperson from among its members, shall **meet at least twice** each calendar year, and may provide for alternate members to participate fully in its meetings whenever a regular member is unable to do so.
- [General Law - Part I, Title XIV, Chapter 92A1/2, Section 15 \(malegislature.gov\)](#)

Example: Maine

- State Law allows the formation of Regional Planning Commissions to “[Promote cooperative efforts toward regional development](#)”
- Established in 1962, the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments is a regional planning agency serving the Western Maine communities of Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties. AVCOG is a not for profit, 501(c)(3) agency, exclusively owned and operated by member communities, who join on a voluntary basis.
- 3 counties, 52 municipalities
- The Council is a leader in the coordination and delivery of regional planning and municipal services with a full-time professional staff of 15 concentrated in four targeted areas:
 - ***Economic Development***
 - ***Land-Use Planning***
 - ***Transportation Planning***
 - ***Environmental Management***
 - Lake and ground water protection, watershed planning, pollution prevention, solid waste management, waste reduction and recycling, and hazardous and universal waste collection programs

[Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments, ME | Official Website \(avcog.org\)](#)

Regional Planning Commissions

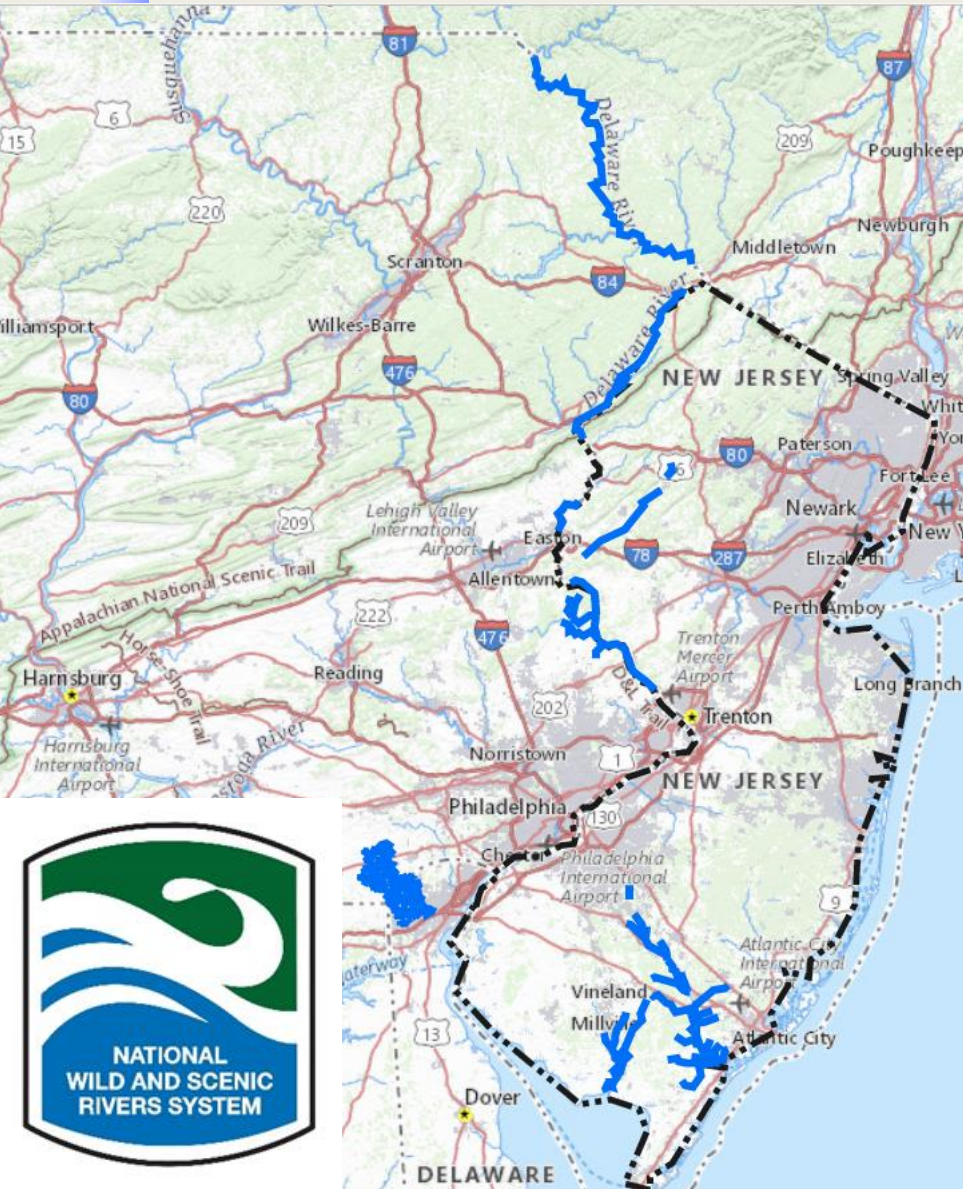


WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS RIVER MANAGEMENT COUNCILS



MUSCONETCONG
River Management Council

Where in our region?

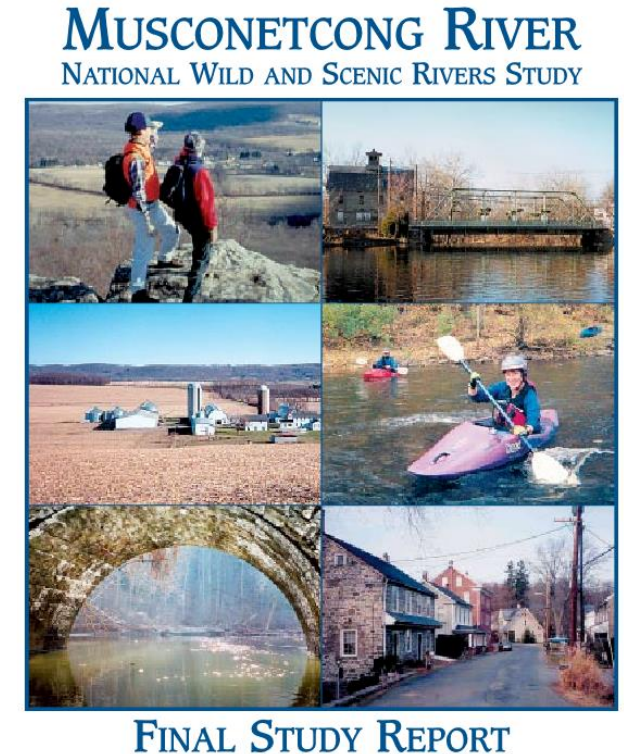


- Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River (NY & PA) – *NPS Unit*
- Musconetcong Wild & Scenic River (NJ)
- Lower Delaware Scenic & Recreational River (NJ & PA)
- White Clay Creek Watershed Wild & Scenic River (DE & PA)
- Maurice Wild and Scenic River (NJ)
- Great Egg Harbor Scenic & Recreational River (NJ)

18 Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers in total...

Wild & Scenic River Study Process

- Wild & Scenic River Feasibility Study – 1998 – 2004
 - *Resident Survey*
 - *Community workshops*
 - *Water Quality a top issue*
- 2003 – NJDEP issued a bacteria TMDL for the entire Musconetcong River
- Pre-designation “lull”
 - 2005 - *Partner organization applied for a 319(h) non-point source pollution grant to use Microbial Source Tracking to ID bacteria source types*
- Wild & Scenic River Designation – December 22, 2006



Prepared by:
Musconetcong Advisory Committee
Musconetcong Watershed Association
Heritage Conservancy
National Park Service

June 2004

The River Management Council: Purpose and Responsibilities

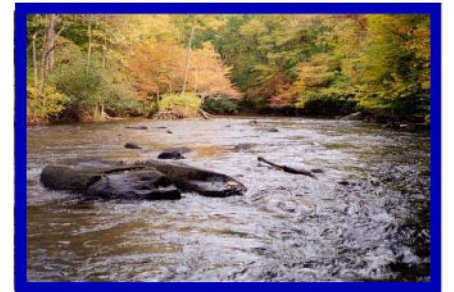
Purpose:

- Required by the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act
- Share in responsibility to protect and enhance the river's Outstandingly Remarkable Values and implement River Management Plan

Roles:

- Non-regulatory
 - *National Park Service has the only regulatory role*
- Advisory
- Work with partners and volunteers

Musconetcong River National Wild and Scenic Rivers Study



River Management Plan

Prepared by:
Musconetcong River Management Council
Musconetcong Watershed Association
Heritage Conservancy
National Park Service



June 2011 Update

The River Management Council: Composition

Voting Members

- *Municipalities along the designated segments appoint representatives*
 - 15 in designated segment
 - Other upstream municipalities may join
- *Counties – four voting*
- *NJDEP – one vote*
- *Non-governmental organizations*
 - Musconetcong Watershed Assoc.
 - North Jersey RC&D
 - Trout Unlimited

Non-voting (varies)

- *Regional Commission*
- *NJDEP Agencies (Parks, Wildlife, etc.)*
- *Ramapough Culture & Land Foundation*

■ The Public

- *Council publicly advertises meetings*
- *Open attendance*



MUSCONETCONG
River Management Council

The River Management Council: Operations

■ Administration

- *Paid Administrator (facilitator) and Supporting staff to implement Management Plan*

■ Council

- *Volunteers – Usually Township Committee Members, Environmental Commissioners, Open Space Committee Members, Planning Board*
- *Meetings 6 times/year - occasional field meetings*
- *4 Resource-Specific Standing Committees, meet ad hoc*

■ Actions

- *Resolutions of Support*
- *Public Comment Letters*
- *Advisory Letters*

■ Funder

- *National Park Service – provides Technical Assistance – non-voting*

How?

Working in partnerships....

- Advisory role
- Facilitating information exchange and resource coordination
- Promoting & educating about resources
- Providing a venue for collective action and conflict resolution



The River Management Council: Advisory Role

River Management Council

- Gathers and shares information on projects with impact to the River
- Works with local governments to have zoning, open space plans, and bridge projects that maintain or enhance the river's values

- Venue to share information

Cooperating Partner

- Assesses projects for potential impact (negative or beneficial) or benefit to water, scenic, historical, recreational and other values
 - *Conducts public records requests*
 - *Shares with NPS*
 - *Shares with River Management Council*
 - *Prepares and submits comments*
- Invites speakers/presenters



STOP The New Zealand Mudsnail In the Musconetcong River!

1st NEW JERSEY RECORD

A tiny invasive snail spreads to rivers by hitchhiking on waders, boats and fishing gear. Stop it getting into nearby streams.

40,000,000 SNAILS AT ONE SITE AFTER 3 YEARS FROM ONE FEMALE SNAIL

CLEAN YOUR WADERS TO PROTECT NJ TROUT STREAMS

INSPECT	TREAT	DRY
your gear carefully Snails hide in treads & socks	Remove debris Rinse with potable water	waders completely

Avoid using felt soled waders See website for best treatment options Dry for 72 hours before using in other streams

MUSCONETCONG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION Visit www.musconetcong.org for information about the New Zealand Mudsnail in our watershed

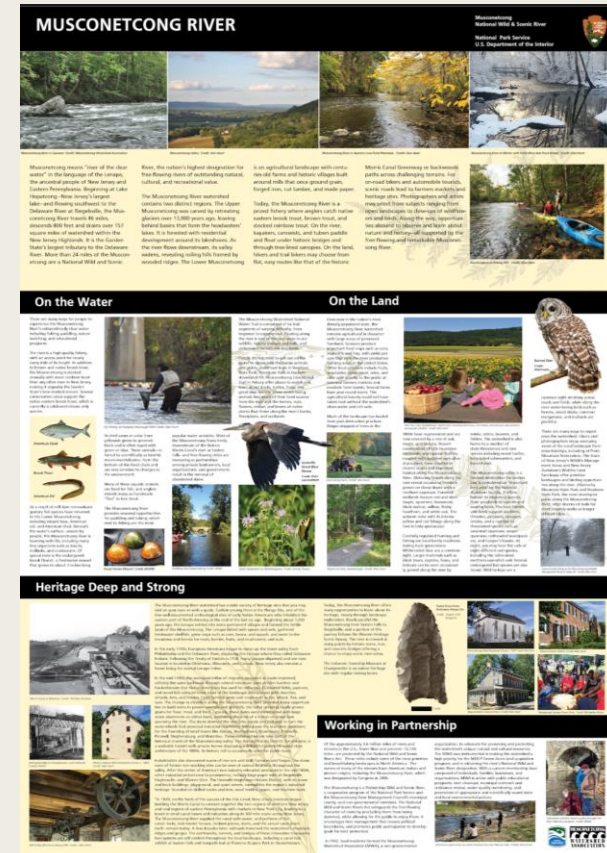
The River Management Council: Information Exchange and Resource Coordination

River Management Council

- Share and coordinate resources
- Support for funding applications through demonstrating community support
 - Resolutions
 - Letters of support
 - Pre-existing relationships with municipal and county officials

Cooperating Partner

- Coordinate resources between River Management Council members and other external partners
 - *Example: Musconetcong National Water Trail application*
- Ability to access NPS funding opportunities
 - Recreation, Trail, and Conservation Assistance Program
 - NPS Challenge Cost Share
 - National Park Foundation grants



Example: Zoning Analysis

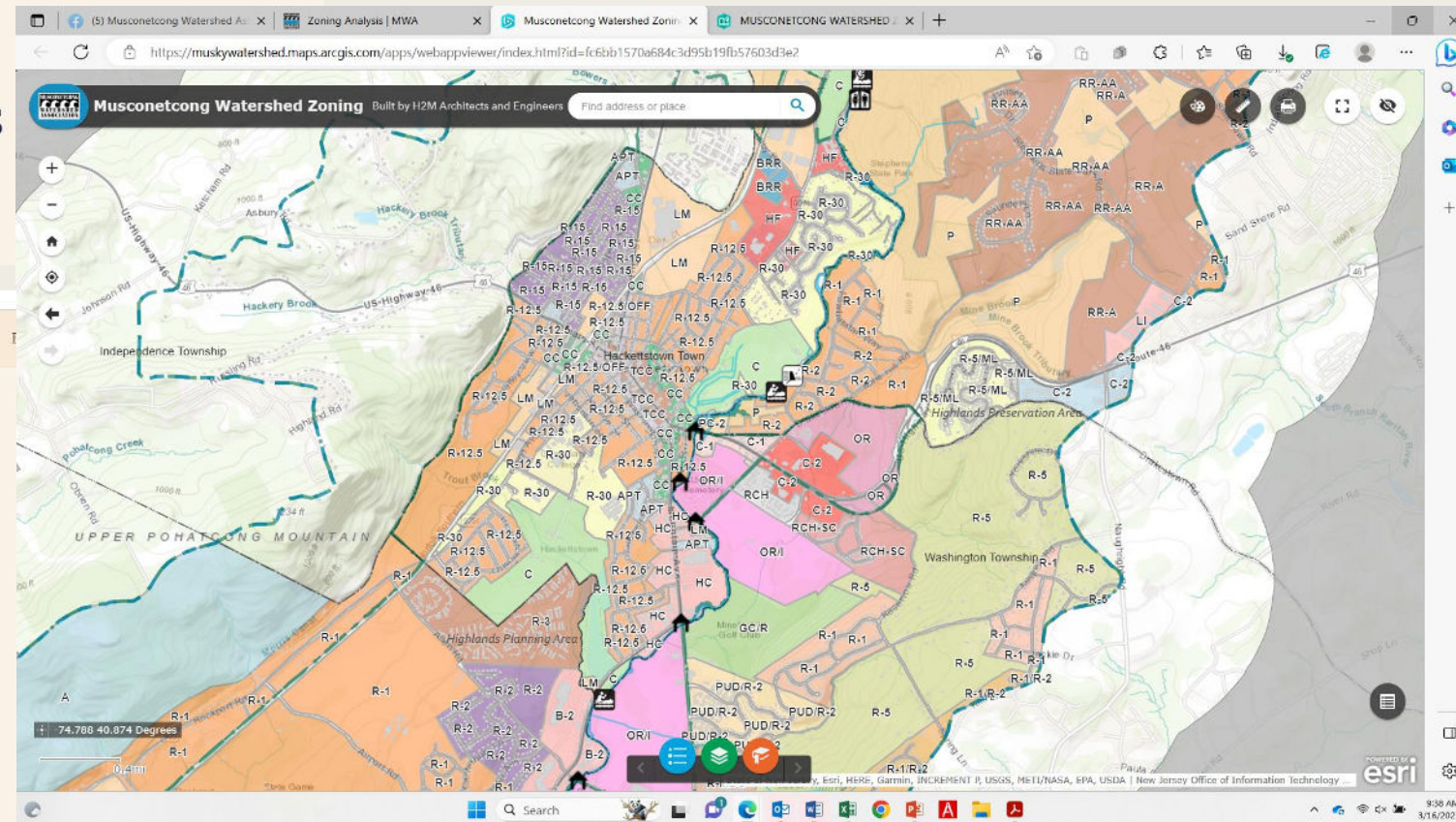


MUSCONETCONG WATERSHED ZONING AND PLANNING ANALYSIS

A look into the performance of the zoning and planning of the communities in the watershed.

March 15, 2021

Zoning Update Zoning and Master Planning Per... Allamuchy Township Bethlehem Township Bloomsbury Borough



9:38 AM
3/16/2023

The River Management Council: Promotion & Education

River Management Council

- Promote recreation and river conservation within the community
- Share information to educate public on resource concerns
 - e.g. *Invasive New Zealand Mud Snail decontamination techniques*

Cooperating Partner

- Promotes the Wild & Scenic River
 - *Media outreach*
 - *Signage*
 - *Provides Information on Recreational Access & Private Property*
- Education and Outreach Programming
 - *In-school education*
 - *Talks, hikes, paddles*
 - *etc.*



The River Management Council: Forum for Collective Action & Conflict Resolution

River Management Council

- Forum to address recreational access management:
 - *Identify opportunities to expand access*
 - *Respond to overuse or negative use*
 - *Ensure private property rights are protected*
- Protect and Enhance Water Quality

Cooperating Partner

- Planning: Provides input to Plans for Open Space, Recreation, and Economic Development
- Protect and Enhance Water Quality
 - *Water Quality Monitoring*
 - *River Restoration*



The River Management Council: What Works & Doesn't?

Benefits

- River is seen as important and a resource
- Builds local volunteer capacity
- Validates MWA & partner work
- Forum to raise awareness
- Forums to identify conflicts

Challenges

- Voluntary – non-participants
- Unclear interaction Councilors have with their governments
- Big geography at the edge of a big metro region - Too much, too fast for the capacity available
- Bench not deep enough - not enough outreach, handholding, or professional depth to protect from degradation
- Managing turnover



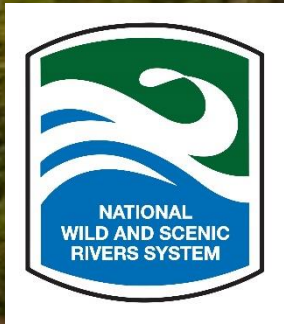
What's necessary for a Council to work?

- Legal grounding
- Professional Staffing
- Funding
- Participation!
- Vision – Goals
- Best Practices Promotion (Voluntary)
- Outcome Measures

What's needed for Effective Watershed Mngmt.?

- Legal **authority**
- Professional Staffing
- Funding
- Participation!
- Vision – Master Planning
- Best Practices Promotion (Voluntary)
- **Expectation-setting (e.g. zoning, plans, rules, etc.)**
- **Decision-making processes with public input**
- Outcomes measures
- **Enforcement**

Questions & More Information



Partnership Wild & Scenic River Toolkit

Great Waters NJ – Council of Governments Fact Sheet



River Talk (4/4/23, 7pm) - Glaciers, Mountains, Gorges, and Mud: The Human Geography of the Musconetcong Watershed

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Main citation: Hunt AR, et al. Picking Up Where the TMDL Leaves Off: Using the Partnership Wild and Scenic River Framework for Collaborative River Restoration. *Sustainability*. 2021; 13(4):1878. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13041878>