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Press kit (includes photos available for use): <https://bit.ly/nywatershed>

Delaware River Watershed Celebrated in New York with Roadside Signage *Congressman Delgado, Senator Metzger, Assemblywoman Gunther, and Coalition* *Announce New York as First Watershed State to Erect Signage*

TRENTON, N.J. – Congressman Antonio Delgado (NY-19), Senator Jen Metzger (NY-42), Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther (NY-100), the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed, Friends of the Upper Delaware River, the Upper Delaware Council, and the Delaware River Basin Commission hailed the placement of fourteen signs in Broome, Delaware, and Sullivan County by the New York State Department of Transportation. For the first time in New York's history, signage has been erected to highlight the boundaries of the [Delaware River Watershed](#), a significant region that is home to 8 million residents and provides drinking water to 13.3 million people in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.

"The Delaware River headwaters originate in the Catskill Mountains, creating the beginning of a four-state watershed essential for drinking water, wildlife habitat, and jobs," said **Congressman Antonio Delgado (NY-19)**. "I am pleased to see the Delaware River Watershed signs installed by the Department of Transportation because they will bring attention to residents and visitors that they're entering a region of significant natural and recreational value. I will keep fighting for the protection and maintenance of this environmental gem to grow our economy and support good paying jobs here in upstate New York."

The Delaware River Watershed [encompasses 2390-square miles of New York land area](#) in the Southeastern portion of the state, including most of Sullivan and Delaware Counties; portions of western Orange, Ulster, and eastern Broome Counties, and small parts of Greene, Schoharie and Chenango Counties. In total, the Delaware River is fed by over 2,000 tributaries, including 216 major ones. Larger, well-known Delaware River tributaries in New York include the East Branch Delaware River, West Branch Delaware River, Neversink River, and Mongaup River. The watershed consists of all the land and water sources within a 13,539-square mile region in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, where all the water drains into the Delaware River.

"We're appreciative of the New York State Department of Transportation and all of our partners who were part of this collaborative signage process. By bringing awareness of the watershed to residents and visitors, we are creating opportunities for educating and activating people to be stewards of our natural resources," stated **Sandra Meola, Director, [Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed](#)**. "Our goal with the Delaware River Watershed signage project is to foster a sense of place and deeper connection to others living within our four-state watershed. We will continue on with this watershed-wide project in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware in a collaborative cross-state manner."

"The Delaware River watershed sustains our region in so many ways—economically, recreationally, and ecologically—and the new signage marking its boundaries will raise awareness of its immense value and promote good stewardship practices among residents and visitors alike," said **Senator Jen Metzger (NY-42)**. "I commend the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed, Friends of the Upper Delaware, the New York State Department of Transportation, and all the partners involved in making these signs a reality."

The Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed began New York stakeholder meetings in June 2019 with partners Friends of the Upper Delaware River, the Upper Delaware Council, and the Delaware River Basin Commission. Offices of tourism, municipalities, and state agencies involved with conservation and environmental protection, as well as economic and community development agencies, were also invited to



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weigh in. Through coordination with the New York State Department of Transportation, fourteen signs were installed in late April, coincidentally about the same time the Delaware River was named [American River's River of the Year](#) for 2020.

"The Delaware River Watershed begins in New York State with the pristine headwaters providing irreplaceable resources for New Yorkers and everyone downstream. These fourteen new signs will act not only as a gateway to the Delaware River Watershed, but also as a gateway for people to learn about the watershed. The signs are meant to educate, and to foster a sense of appreciation and a sense of place," added **Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther (NY-100)**.

"The Delaware River is the lifeblood for many New Yorkers, directly employing [32,171 people](#) in our state tied to river-related economic activities such as tourism and natural resource-based businesses. The Upper Delaware River is also a world-renowned wild trout fishery that attracts anglers from across the country, and we're excited that there will now be signs celebrating and welcoming them to the Delaware River Watershed," said **Jeff Skelding, Executive Director, Friends of the Upper Delaware River**. "We're grateful to the New York State Department of Transportation for making New York the first state to install roadside signage that will promote the watershed's irreplaceable resources, like clean water, wildlife habitat, and working landscapes."

The least developed section of the Delaware River Watershed is in New York and it provides vital habitat for a rich variety of fish and wildlife species. Its heavily forested landscapes and outstanding water quality provide ideal habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife species, including at least [fifty species of mammals](#). New York's portion of the watershed provides critical habitat for the bald eagle, hosting one of the largest populations of wintering bald eagles in the Northeast, which rely on the river for food. The river supports year-round and seasonal fish populations, including the American shad, Striped bass, and the endangered Shortnose and Atlantic sturgeon.

"These Delaware River Watershed signs in New York State will not only bring attention to the entire watershed, but also to the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, a true national treasure," added **Laurie Ramie, Executive Director, Upper Delaware Council**. "The signs will promote a watershed-wide identity and as people become more aware of the watershed, we would like to see increased environmental stewardship. While much improvement has been made to the Delaware River in recent years, challenges like development, flooding, and invasive species persist."

The main stem of the Delaware River is the longest undammed river east of the Mississippi, traveling 300 miles from its headwaters to the Delaware Estuary and Bay. The Watershed spans New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware through one of the most densely populated areas of the mid-Atlantic region. Significant ecological and recreational assets include the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (one of the country's most visited national parks) and six National Wildlife Refuges. From Trenton, New Jersey, 200 miles north to its headwaters in New York, the river is characterized by clean, high quality waters.

"Water basin boundaries do not typically show up on road maps or navigation systems; these new roadway signs will connect residents and visitors to their location in the Delaware River Watershed as they travel through New York," said **Steve Tambini, Executive Director, Delaware River Basin Commission**. "We are excited to see this project implemented in the other three basin states, highlighting the vast connection between our watershed communities and evoking a sense of place that will drive more people to care about our shared water resources."

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The Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed is a network of over 150 non-governmental organizations located in NY, NJ, PA, and DE dedicated to protecting and restoring the natural resources of the Delaware River Watershed. For more information, visit www.DelRiverWatershed.org.



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