



Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission
2024 ANNUAL REPORT





On the cover: The D&R Feeder Canal in Stockton on a morning in May.
Photo: Darlene J. Yubas

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This annual report was prepared in compliance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 13:113A-11(i), which directs that “... each year, the Commission shall make an annual report of its activities for the preceding calendar year to the Governor and to the Legislature.” This report provides a complete statement of the Commission’s finances and covers its operations for 2024.



From the Executive Director's Desk



Photo: Darlene J. Yubas

In 2024 the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission continued to make progress on improving its operations, enhancing the canal's natural, historic and recreational resources, and reaching out to the public in new and creative ways.

The Commission launched a YouTube channel, which features aerial drone footage of the canal, providing a unique perspective on the waterway and on the view of its historic, but often obscured, engineering features.

The Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Treasury Office of Information Technology, also produced a series of interviews with people who helped create the park.

These oral histories will soon be available to the public online.

Also, in celebration of the Commission's 50th anniversary, a restored copy of the 1974 NJN documentary "The D&R Canal" was also uploaded to the YouTube channel, offering viewers a nostalgic look at the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park.

Building on a 50-year legacy of innovation, the Commission made strides on a number of operational issues in 2024. Digitization and rationalization of the Commission's paper project files continued to advance, ensuring continuity of operations and improved open public records compliance in the future. The launch of a new GIS-based project database will improve the efficiency of the Commission staff. With the help of our volunteer partners, we created a digital database of historic photographs of the canal for the first time, which will inform application reviews and provide a usable reference source on the canal's history.

Finally, tangible steps were taken in 2024 toward our effort to update and revise the Commission's 1989 Master Plan. Although in its early stages, we are excited to embark on this process with our colleagues at the DEP, the New Jersey Water Supply Authority and the New Jersey Historic Trust and look forward to soliciting the views of the stakeholder community in the months ahead.

I hope you find this report to be informative and that it sparks a greater interest in and appreciation for this remarkable public resource. For half a century the Commission has helped to build and protect the canal. We look forward to preserving it for 50 years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Hutchison", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

John Hutchison

Message from the Vice-Chairman

On behalf of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission, I am pleased to present our 2024 annual report detailing our ongoing efforts to protect the natural, historic and recreational qualities of one of New Jersey's most precious resources – the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park.

As a daily user of the park, I know just what an incredible resource it is. I have seen eagles, mink, beaver and a myriad of beautiful birds, including Baltimore Orioles, on my walks along the canal. I walk past markers for the old Belvidere-Delaware Railroad and poles that at one time held telegraph wires. Like me, countless others also appreciate the historical significance of the bridgetender and locktender houses that still remain on the banks of the 190-year-old canal.

The canal is one of the best places in New Jersey to launch a canoe or a kayak for a peaceful, relaxing trip on the water. Every spring and autumn, fishing enthusiasts delight in casting their lines into the canal hoping to hook some impressive trout raised and stocked by our state Fish & Wildlife colleagues.

What's more, an estimated 1 million New Jerseyans depend on the D&R Canal every day for clean drinking water, and the Commission is particularly proud of our critical role in ensuring the integrity of that essential water system.

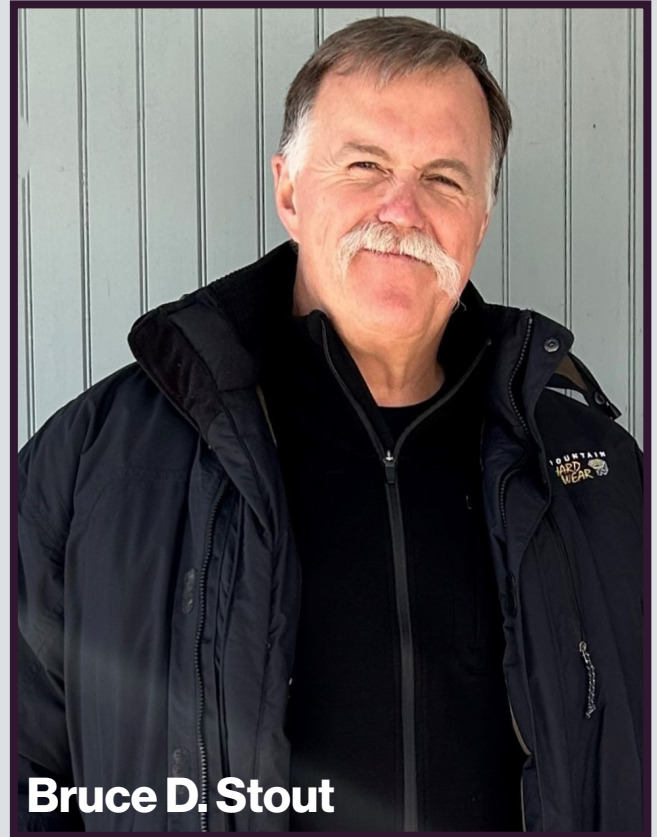
In this annual report, you can learn more about the Commission's regulatory authority and responsibilities, our finances and the scores of individual projects we have reviewed and approved during 2024. The highlights section offers a look at the various ways we celebrated our 50th anniversary and much more.

My colleagues and I take seriously our oaths to protect and preserve these vital resources for all of you today and for generations to come. We encourage you to get outdoors and enjoy the state park that we love so much in whatever way suits you.

Sincerely,



Bruce D. Stout



Bruce D. Stout

Photo: Darlene J. Yubas



About the Commission

The Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission, a state agency created by law in 1974, is responsible for preparing, adopting and implementing a master plan for the physical development of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park; reviewing state and local actions that impact on the park to ensure that these actions conform as nearly as possible to the Commission's master plan; and coordinating and supporting activities by citizens' groups to promote and preserve the park.

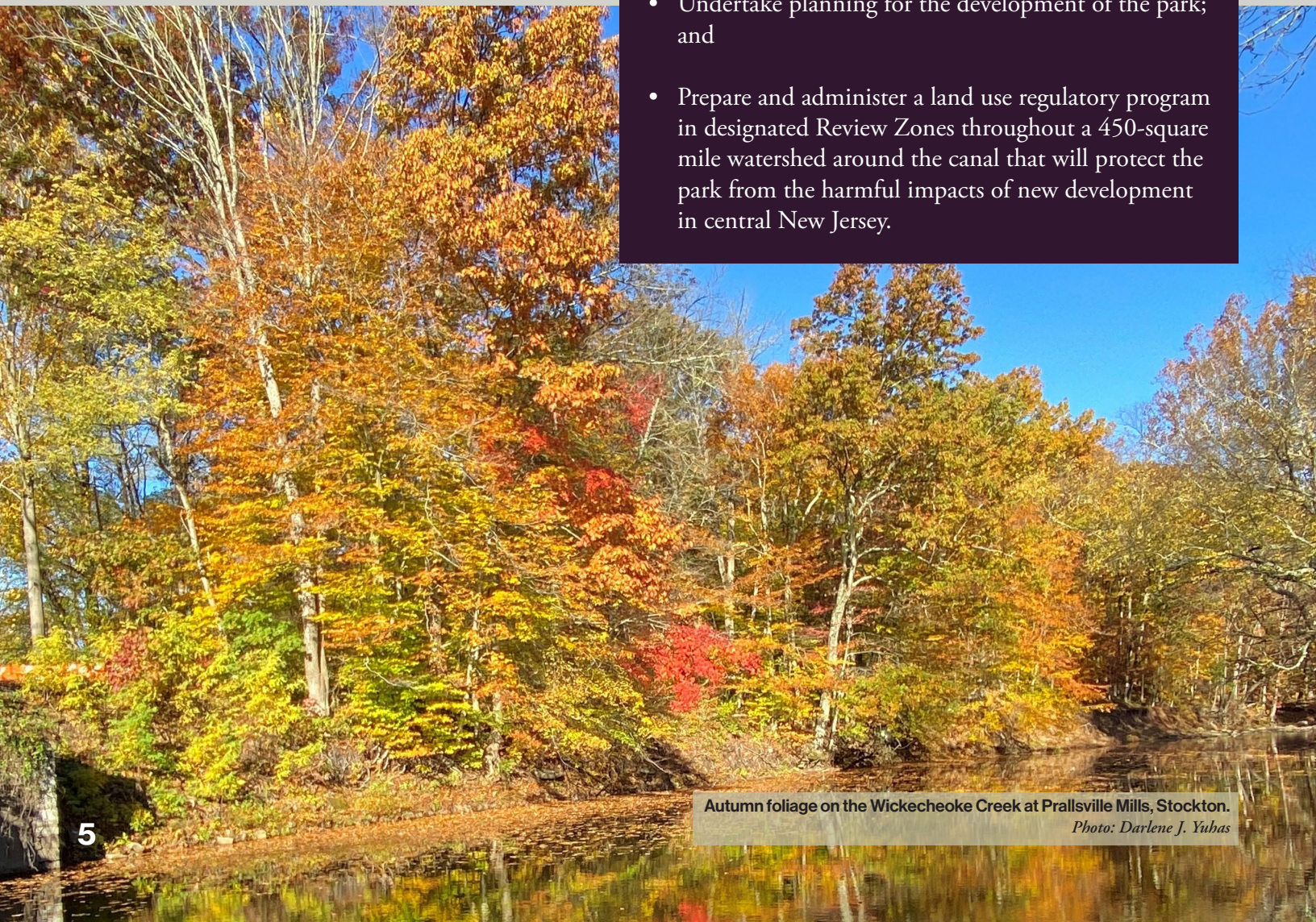
The Commission works closely with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, State Parks, Forests & Historic Sites, State Park Service, which owns and manages the Delaware and Raritan Canal as a state park.

The Commission also coordinates its activities with the New Jersey Water Supply Authority, which operates and maintains the vitally important water transmission complex elements of the canal, providing up to 100 million gallons of drinking water daily for an estimated 1 million people in central New Jersey.

Together, the three agencies ensure that the environmental, recreational, historic and water supply resources of the Delaware and Raritan Canal are protected and preserved for future generations of New Jerseyans.

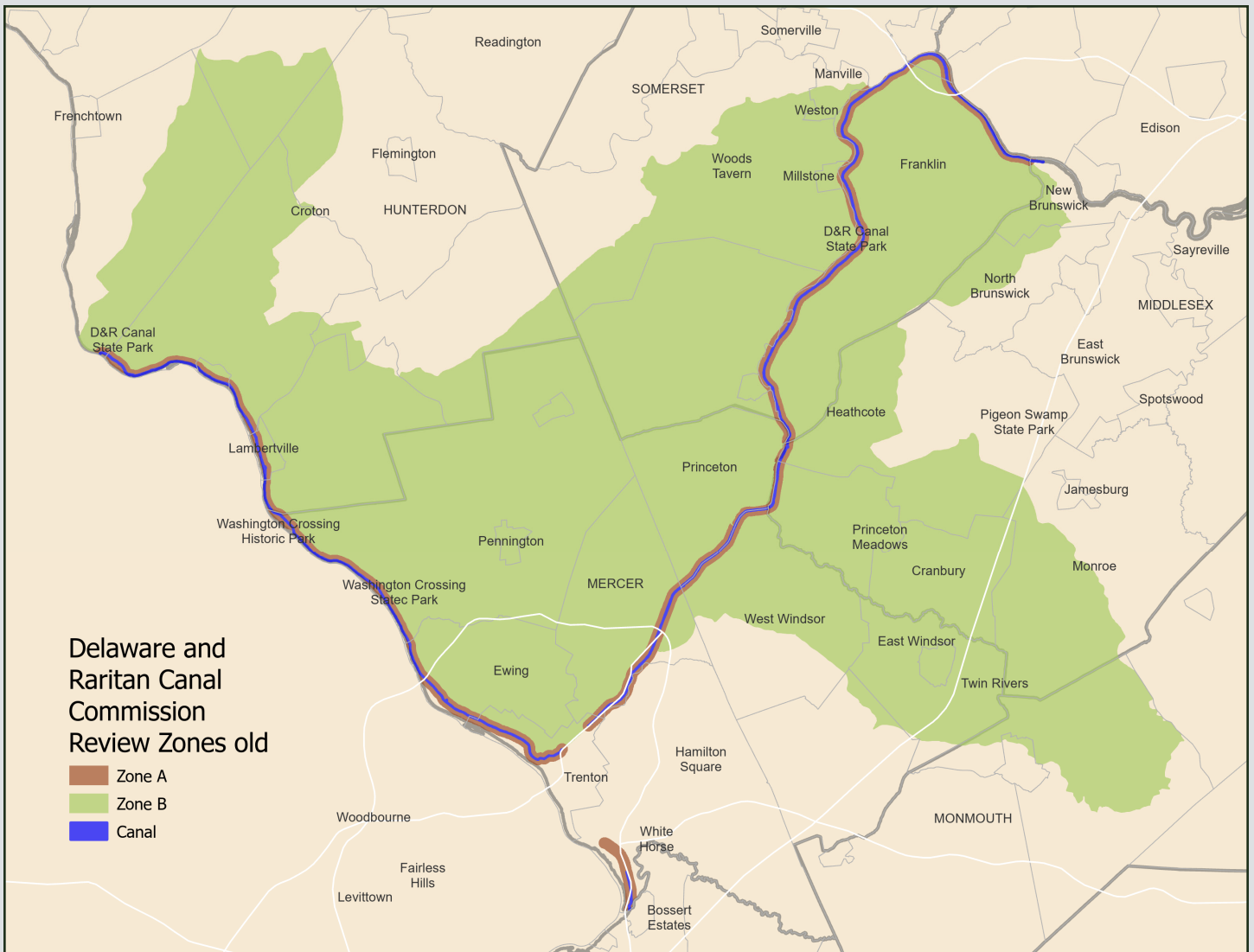
The Legislature gave the Commission the power to perform three major duties:

- Review and approve, reject or modify any action by the State in the Canal Park, or any permit for action in the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park;
- Undertake planning for the development of the park; and
- Prepare and administer a land use regulatory program in designated Review Zones throughout a 450-square mile watershed around the canal that will protect the park from the harmful impacts of new development in central New Jersey.



Autumn foliage on the Wickecheoke Creek at Prallsville Mills, Stockton.

Photo: Darlene J. Yuhas



Map: Steven Jacobus, NJ DER, Bureau of GIS

The D&R Canal Commission Review Zones comprise 5 counties and 34 municipalities.

Hunterdon County

Delaware
East Amwell
Franklin
Kingwood
Lambertville
Raritan
Stockton
West Amwell

Mercer County

East Windsor
Ewing
Hamilton
Hightstown
Hopewell Borough
Hopewell Township
Lawrence
Pennington
Princeton
Robbinsville
Trenton
West Windsor

Middlesex County

Cranbury
Monroe
New Brunswick
North Brunswick
Plainsboro
South Brunswick

Monmouth County

Millstone Township

Somerset County

Franklin
Hillsborough
Manville
Millstone Borough
Montgomery
Rocky Hill
South Bound Brook



Connecting with the Commission

Nearly everything you need to know about connecting with the Commission can easily be found on its website: nj.gov/dep/drcc/


The website features a wide array of helpful information under each drop-down tab including upcoming meeting information, meeting calendar, meeting minutes, Commission bylaws, annual reports, biographies on the Commissioners and the Executive Director, Commission regulations, fee schedule, application, agreement forms, checklists, Commission master plan, development plan, historic structures survey, canal history, historical photographs, legislation, contact information, hot issues, native tree and shrub lists and interesting facts.

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Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission

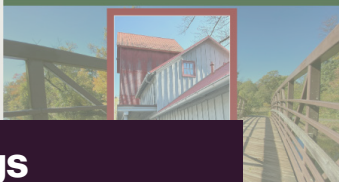
Home Meeting Information About the Commission Commissioners Regulatory Program Planning Program About the D&R Canal Contact the Commission Information & Education




Contact Us

609.397.2000

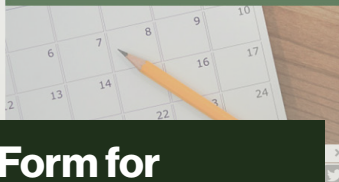
John Hutchison, Executive Director
john.hutchison@dep.nj.gov



Special Project
In celebration of its
launched a project
historic resources
[Watch it here >](#)



Our Section of Historical Photos
Compiled some interesting images from the
Commission's extensive collection of photographs
[View Photos >](#)



Application Form for Proposed Projects


For proposed projects within the Commission's Review Zones, an application form must be completed and submitted to the Commission. The application form can be found under the Regulatory Program tab. The form also provides information on the fee schedule. Also, the FAQs under the Regulatory tab offer details about application and review procedures.

Monthly Meetings

The Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission holds its meeting on the third Wednesday of every month. Information on the agenda and how to participate either in person or via an online platform is available before each meeting by clicking on: Upcoming Meeting Notice under the Meeting Information tab.

Welcome! Find it Fast Here

Related NJ State Agencies



Commissioners

Bruce D. Stout, Ph.D.

Vice-Chairman

Bruce D. Stout, Ph.D., a resident of Delaware Township, Hunterdon County, has been a public member of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission since 2013.

A daily user of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, Vice-Chairman Stout is Professor Emeritus at The College of New Jersey and has held numerous positions in government and academia. Former Chair of the Department of Criminology at The College of New Jersey, he taught at the Rutgers Graduate School of Criminal Justice and at Penn State-Abington. He also was Executive Director of the Violence Institute and the Behavioral Research and Training Institute at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, where he was a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

In government, Vice-Chairman Stout has served as Deputy Chief of Policy and Planning for Governor Christine Todd Whitman, Executive Director of the Juvenile Justice Commission, Director of the Division of Child Behavioral Health Services and Research Director for the Juvenile Delinquency Commission. He also worked for the Office of Governor Jon Corzine, where he chaired the re-entry working group that developed the re-entry component of the Governor's crime plan and where he worked with the Government Efficiency and Reform Commission on sentencing and corrections reform. He earned his doctorate at Rutgers University.



The Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission was created by the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park Law of 1974, (N.J.S.A. 13:13A-1 et seq.), passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Brendan T. Byrne. The law states that the Commission shall consist of nine members:

- The Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, who serves ex officio; or a designee of the Commissioner, who may lawfully vote in the Commissioner's absence; and
- Eight citizens of the State, appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. No more than four Commissioners shall be of the same political party. At least four of the Commissioners shall be residents of Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset counties. One Commissioner must also be a mayor of a municipality appertaining to the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park. No more than one Commissioner can be appointed from any one municipality.

Commissioners serve for terms of five years from their appointment, and until a successor has been appointed and qualified. Commissioners are uncompensated for their service. The law directs that the Governor designate one of the Commissioners, other than the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, to serve as Chairman. The position of Chairman has been vacant since November 19, 2014, and the Commission Vice-Chairman has served as Acting Chairman since that time.

The Commission meets once a month to take formal action on development applications and to make recommendations to staff about planning efforts. Commissioners appoint the Executive Director who serves at the pleasure of the Commission. The Commissioners are routinely involved with staff on many key issues.





Douglas H. Palmer

Commissioner

Douglas H. Palmer has served the public for more than 30 years, first, legislatively as a Mercer County Freeholder in the 1980s, and then, in 1990, when he became the first African American elected to lead the capital city of Trenton as Mayor and completed his fifth term in June 2010. He has developed and implemented urban policy and community development initiatives, presiding over the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the New Jersey Urban Mayors and other national and statewide organizations dedicated to data-driven problem solving and best practices.

Commissioner Palmer's achievements as Mayor included reducing crime and unemployment, dramatically increasing homeownership for working families, maintaining a high tax collection rate and balanced budgets, establishing a civilian police director and bringing to the state capital the Marriott Hotel, an anchor of downtown revitalization. He also led efforts to obtain funding for the \$75 million expansion of the Trenton Train Station. He is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, and he has been involved extensively in philanthropy and related projects.

He is President and Chief Executive Officer of Douglas H. Palmer and Associates, LLC, which specializes in intergovernmental and corporate consulting. In addition, he is a managing principal in Arete Strategic Development, LLC, and co-founder of Arete Financial where he is the manager of its public sector and infrastructure programs. He also is a partner in DSW Solutions, a government relations firm.

A graduate of Hampton University where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, he is married to Christiana Foglio-Palmer. They have a daughter, Laila.



Shawn M. LaTourette

*Commissioner of Environmental Protection,
Ex Officio*

Appointed by Governor Philip D. Murphy, Shawn M. LaTourette became New Jersey's Commissioner of Environmental Protection on June 14, 2021. He is responsible for formulating statewide environmental policy while directing programs that protect public health and ensure the quality of New Jersey's air, land, water, and natural and historic resources. A lawyer and policymaker with more than 20 years of experience in environmental protection, Commissioner LaTourette began his career defending victims of toxic exposure. He also has served in executive roles and as a trusted adviser to government, community and non-profit organizations, and leaders in industry and infrastructure, while also litigating high-stakes lawsuits involving environmental, energy and public health concerns.

Born and raised in New Jersey, he graduated magna cum laude from Rutgers University and earned his law degree summa cum laude from Rutgers Law School, where he was the class salutatorian and received multiple environmental and governance awards, and published scholarship on environmental law, natural resource damage and climate issues.



Phillip Lubitz

Commissioner

Phillip Lubitz has spent a lifetime living along the Delaware and Raritan Canal. He is a four-time mayor of Kingwood Township where he currently chairs the township Board of Adjustment and Housing Board. He has also served on Kingwood's Open Space Committee for the past 10 years.

Commissioner Lubitz earned a Bachelor of Arts from George Washington University and a master's degree in social work, with a concentration in administration and policy, from Rutgers University. He and his family are featured in the 2005 documentary *Love Without Boundaries*.



Caryl "Chris" Shoffner

Commissioner

Caryl "Chris" Shoffner is Mayor of South Bound Brook Borough and has served as a member of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission since 2020. Before becoming Mayor in 2016, she was a borough council member for nine years. Deeply committed to her community, she also has served as a volunteer with the South Bound Brook Fire Company for the past two decades.

Commissioner Shoffner earned a bachelor's degree in education from Marywood University in Scranton, Pa., and worked as a special education teacher.

A member of the Teamsters Union for more than three decades, she was employed as a driver for Entenmann's for 24 years. She also worked as a driver for UPS for a decade and served as a shop steward.



John J. Reiser

Commissioner

John Reiser is a resident of North Brunswick Township. He served as County Engineer for Middlesex County for 43 years until his retirement in 2013. Commissioner Reiser is a civil engineer with a bachelor's degree and master's degree in civil engineering from Rutgers University.

Upon graduation from Rutgers, he attended the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers School at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. In 1965, he left the Army Corps of Engineers Reserve as a Captain on the general staff of an Engineering Brigade. Subsequently, he worked for the County of Los Angeles and the City of New Brunswick. Before retiring, he was a licensed professional engineer in four states.

Commissioner Reiser has been married for 57 years to Sandra Wisniewski. They have two children, Marla, a 1991 graduate of Stanford University, and Matthew, who graduated from Georgetown University in 1993.



Staff

John Hutchison, **Executive Director**
M. Colleen Christie Maloney, **Review Zone Officer**
Erica Vavrence, **Executive Assistant**
Darlene J. Yuhas, **Communications Director**

Engineers

Joseph Ruggeri, **P.E., CFM**
Damian T. Friebe, **P.E.**
Dhruv Patel
Chingwah Liang

John Hutchison

Executive Director

John Hutchison was appointed the fourth Executive Director of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission on July 10, 2017. Prior to his appointment, he served as a Senior Policy Advisor to the Commissioner of Environmental Protection. From 2010 to 2011, Mr. Hutchison was Executive Director of the Red Tape Review Group, a bipartisan commission established to review rules promulgated by State departments and agencies and make recommendations for reforming the regulatory process in New Jersey.

Before serving in the Executive Branch, Mr. Hutchison held various staff positions with the New Jersey Legislature. He served as Director of Research for the Senate Majority Staff from 1993 to 2007. He was aide to several standing reference committees, most notably the Senate Environment Committee, where he assisted in drafting legislation to reform the State's hazardous waste cleanup laws, promote the productive reuse of brownfields sites, and establish the Garden State Preservation Trust open space acquisition program. From 1988 until 1993, he was a Research Associate with the non-partisan Office of Legislative Services. At OLS he drafted legislation on a wide range of environmental protection, natural resource, agriculture and coastal issues. He also served as aide to the Senate Coastal Resources and Tourism Committee and the Assembly Economic Growth, Agriculture and Tourism Committee.

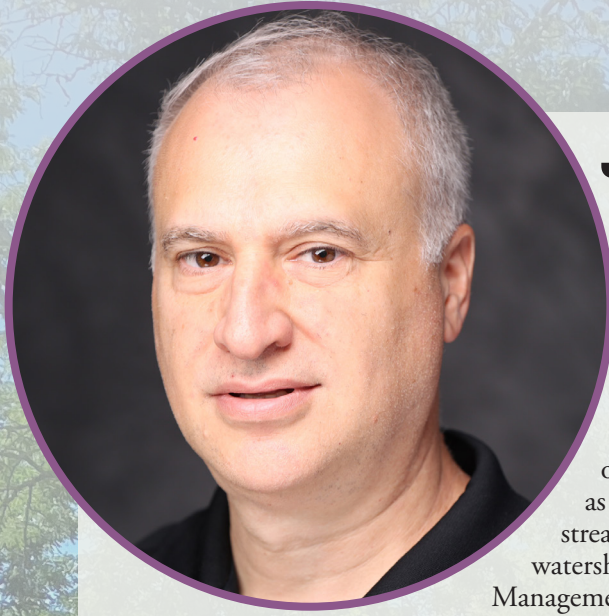
Mr. Hutchison formerly served as a member of the State Health Benefits Plan Design Committee, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, the New Jersey State Privacy Study Commission, the New Jersey Lake Restoration Study Commission, the Lambertville City Planning Board and the Lambertville Shade Tree Commission.

The Delaware & Raritan Canal Commission is advised in its actions by its Executive Director, who serves as the chief administrative officer of the Commission. The Executive Director is an employee of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, but by law is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Commission. The Executive Director oversees the operations of the professional staff based at their office at the historic Prallsville Mills complex in Stockton, New Jersey.



D&R Canal Commission office.
Photo: Darlene J. Yuhas

Engineers



Joseph Ruggeri, P.E., CFM

Joseph Ruggeri is a Supervising Environmental Engineer in the New Jersey State National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator's Office of the Department of Environmental Protection. He is a licensed professional engineer and certified floodplain manager who holds both a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the College of Engineering at Rutgers University. Reporting directly to the Executive Director of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission, Mr. Ruggeri serves as the Commission engineer performing stormwater management and stream corridor reviews for proposed development projects within the canal watershed. He is a Past Chair of the New Jersey Association for Floodplain Management and past Treasurer of the Association of State Floodplain Managers.

For the first 16-plus years of his career with the DEP, he was responsible for preparing and reviewing dam engineering studies, construction permit applications, dam removal design plans, restoration grant and loan applications, hydrologic and hydraulic studies, dam breach studies, emergency action plans, flood inundation mapping and dam operation and maintenance manuals.

During the past 18-plus years in the New Jersey State National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator's Office, Mr. Ruggeri's responsibilities have included assisting municipalities with their participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Flood Insurance Program and the Community Rating System; leading the DEP Cooperating Technical Partners program in developing Flood Risk MAP products for FEMA; coordination and assistance to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the planning, design and construction of flood mitigation projects; maintaining, amending, revising and distributing New Jersey Floodway and Flood Hazard Area Delineation Maps and their supporting data; and all work related to flood insurance, flood hazard mitigation, flood risk reduction, floodplain management and floodplain studies.

In addition, Mr. Ruggeri was highly involved in developing the New Jersey Governor Flood Task Force and the associated Report on Delaware River Flood Mitigation issued in August 2006 and the Passaic River Basin Flood Advisory Commission and associated report to the Governor in December 2010. He served as chair of the Floodplain Mapping Committee of the Delaware River Basin Interstate Flood Mitigation Task Force and as co-chair of the Delaware River Basin Floodplain Regulations Evaluation Subcommittee, and currently serves on several committees including the State Hazard Mitigation Team technical and planning committees.

Canal lock at Griggstown.
Photo: Darlene J. Yubas





Damian T. Friebel, P.E.

Damian T. Friebel, P.E., is a Section Chief with more than 24 years of experience with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Watershed and Land Management Program. In that role, Mr. Friebel supervises and manages staff engineers who perform reviews of environmental control work consisting of design calculations, plans and project specific specifications, while using laws such as the Flood Hazard Area Control Act, Waterfront Development Act, Coastal Area Facility Review Act, and Freshwater Wetland Protection Act, to issue permits intended to minimize damage to life and property from flooding caused by development within regulated areas and to preserve the quality of surface waters.

Mr. Friebel also works as a review zone officer for the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission, where his primary responsibility is to prepare engineering reports for the Commission to ensure compliance with the agency's regulations for all public and private projects located within the Commission's review zone.

He is a licensed professional engineer and graduate of the Florida Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering.



Chingwah Liang

Chingwah Liang is a Supervising Environmental Engineer in the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Watershed and Land Management Program, Division of Land Resource Protection, Bureau of Flood Hazard & Stormwater Engineering. Mr. Liang supervises staff engineers in the review of permit applications for the construction of bridges, roadways, flood control projects, streambank stabilization, channel modification, residential, and commercial development projects within southern counties of the State of New Jersey.

Application engineering reports, development plans, hydrologic and hydraulic studies, and stormwater design models, are reviewed for compliance with the Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules, Coastal Zone Management Rules, Freshwater Wetland Rules, Stormwater Management Rules, and technical guidance manuals. The purpose of the review is to minimize risks and damage to life and property from flooding caused by development activities within regulated areas and to preserve the quality of regulated surface waters. He has more than 20 years of experience with the DEP's Watershed and Land Management Program.

Mr. Liang also works as a review zone officer for the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission, conducting stormwater management and stream corridor reviews, and preparing staff engineering reports for the Commission for any development located within the Commission's review zones, for which a permit is necessary.

He is a graduate of Stevens Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of Engineering in Civil Engineering.



Dhruv Patel

Dhruv Patel is a Supervising Environmental Engineer with the Bureau of Flood Hazard & Stormwater Engineering, Division of Land Resource Protection within the Watershed and Land Management Program of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. He has more than 17 years of experience as a review engineer, analyst, regulator and researcher in the field of environmental permitting that controls development within and along the waters of New Jersey.

For the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission, Mr. Patel works as a review zone officer, performing stormwater management and stream corridor reviews for the Commission's Executive Director for all public and private projects located within the Commission's review zone.

In his role at the DEP, Mr. Patel leads and supervises the engineering reviews that include evaluation, interpretation and analysis of the project designs, plans, engineering calculations, designs of stormwater management systems, engineering specifications and engineering reports, through implementing engineering requirements of the Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules, Freshwater Wetlands Rules, Stormwater Management Rules and Coastal Rules, in relation to issuance of the permits to conduct activities within Review Zones under the program's regulations. The goal of his work is to minimize risk to the public health, safety, and welfare due to loss of life, injury, and property damage caused by flooding as well as to preserve the quality of surface waters.

He has earned both a Bachelor of Engineering in Civil Engineering and a Master of Engineering in Environmental Engineering.

Spillway on the D&R Feeder Canal near Bulls Island.
Drone photo: Steven Jacobus





On a sunny winter morning, D&R Canal Commissioner Phillip Lubitz and his wife, Barbara Schlichting enjoy a walk at historic Prallsville Mills with their Papillon, Mattie.
Photo: Darlene J. Yubas

Highlights

The following pages feature highlights of the Commission's operations and key projects that Commission staff either initiated or reviewed and approved within the D&R Canal State Park and the Commission's two Review Zones as per its regulatory authority.

Interior window, Prall House, Stockton.

Photo: Darlene J. Yuhas



D&R Canal Commission Marks Its 50th Anniversary ...



At podium, Commission Executive Director John Hutchison moderates the discussion among panelists (from left) Paul Stern, Al Payne, Marc Brooks, and James Amon.

Photos: Darlene J. Yubas



With great pride, the Commission commemorated its golden anniversary during 2024 with several special initiatives that included an oral history videotaping, a drone video project, historic photo identification, creation of a 50th anniversary logo and the launch of a YouTube channel to showcase some of the agency's ongoing work.

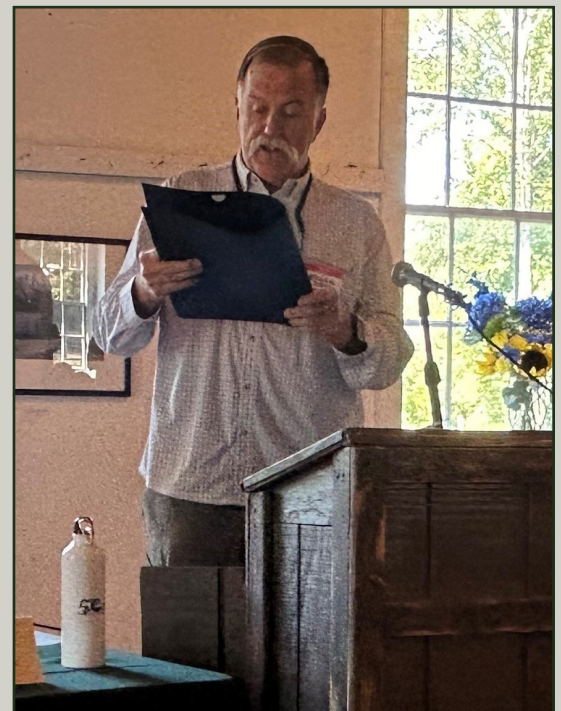
Related stories and images about these initiatives can be found throughout this annual report.

The Commission officially turned 50 years old on October 10, which was the day in 1974 when Governor Brendan T. Byrne signed

legislation, sponsored by Senators John A. Lynch, Sr. and Raymond Bateman, to establish both the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park and the Commission, authorizing it to protect and preserve the park's precious environmental, historic and recreational resources.

"Within all spheres, the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission has created a model to emulate and set a standard of excellence toward which those who aspire to uphold our natural resources might strive ..."

New Jersey Senate Resolution honoring the Commission on its milestone year.



Commission Vice-Chairman Bruce D. Stout shares details of the State Senate Resolution honoring the Commission.

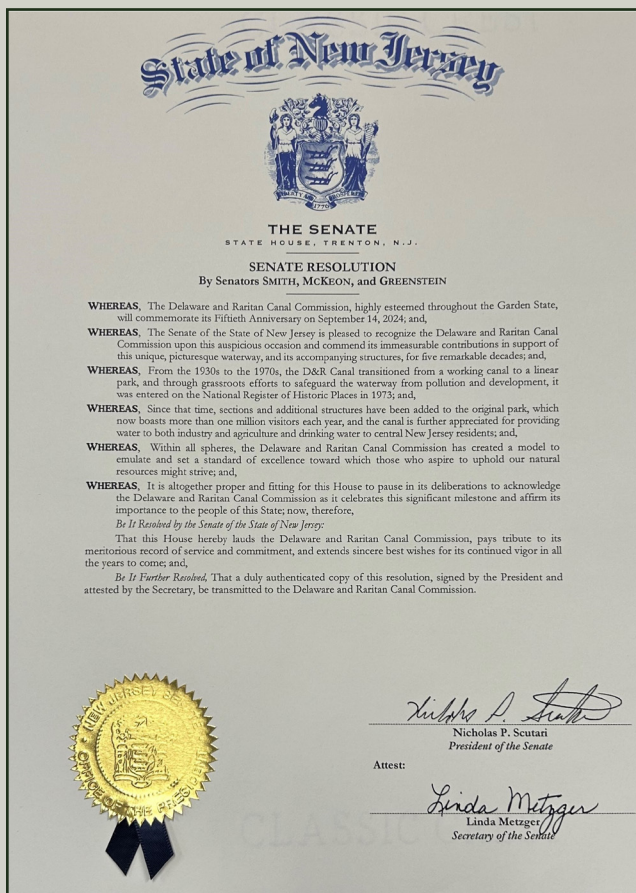
... It Was a Celebration That Lasted All Year

In September, the Commission joined with colleagues in the State Park Service for a celebratory gathering at historic Prallsville Mills that featured an invitation-only panel discussion moderated by Executive Director John Hutchison. Distinguished panelists were James Amon, the Commission's first Executive Director, who served in that role for nearly 30 years; Marc Brooks, who currently is Executive Director of the New Jersey Water Supply Authority; Al Payne, who led the Park Service's Office of Resource Development for 35 years; and Paul Stern, who was the first Superintendent of the D&R Canal State Park and served for 31 years.



Audience members at the invitation-only panel discussion included (foreground) Katherine Marcopol, Administrator of the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office.

Photos: Darlene J. Yuhas



The panelists fielded a wide range of questions about the creation of the Commission and the State Park, the challenges faced in the earliest days of their careers, significant projects they tackled, the undeniable success of the park, unfinished business, and actions necessary to ensuring the future of the park is as successful as its past.

Shortly before the panel discussion, Commission Vice-Chairman Bruce D. Stout, Ph.D., welcomed event participants and shared with them a New Jersey State Senate Resolution honoring the Commission on its milestone anniversary and lauding the agency for its work. (Continued on pages 19 and 20)



Patricia Kalleser, who served as D&R Canal State Park Superintendent for 16 years, attended the celebratory event.





“The Senate of the State of New Jersey is pleased to recognize the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission on this auspicious occasion and commend its immeasurable contributions in support of this unique, picturesque waterway, and its accompanying structures, for five remarkable decades ...

“Within all spheres, the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission has created a model to emulate and set a standard of excellence toward which those who aspire to uphold our natural resources might strive ...” Senate President Nicholas P. Scutari signed the resolution by State Senators Bob Smith, John F. McKeon and Linda R. Greenstein.

Following the panel discussion, event participants were invited to ask questions and then were treated to a light lunch, hosted by the State Park Service.

The celebration also featured outdoor festivities including live music and informational displays offered by state park friends groups and partners.

D&R Canal Watch was among partner organizations that hosted or sponsored special events throughout the year to celebrate the 50th anniversary.



Top left, Paul Stern, John Hutchison and Jim Amon.

Left center, paddling race to celebrate the 50th.

Left bottom, participants in the ‘Tour de Towpath.’

Photos: Courtesy of D&R Canal Watch

Above, Jim Amon and Robert von Zumbusch, Kingston Historical Society President.



Anniversary mugs. Photo: Courtesy of D&R Canal Watch

From commemorative coffee mugs and a canoe paddling race to the “Canal House Challenge” tours of bridgetender and locktender houses and the big finale event “Tour de Towpath” bike, walk or run, D&R Canal Watch offered New Jerseyans and others a wide variety of educational and recreational opportunities to foster greater appreciation of the canal and its history and the State Park. Event proceeds benefit projects in the state park.



Commission Vice-Chairman Stout and Executive Director Hutchison.

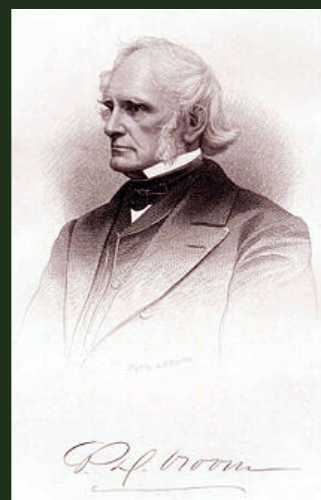
Photo: Darlene J. Yuhas

Did You Know?

Not only was 2024 a milestone year for the Commission and the State Park, it also marked the 190th anniversary of the official opening of the D&R Canal.

On June 25, 1834, New Jersey Governor Peter Dumont Vroom and other dignitaries celebrated the canal’s opening with great fanfare. According to historical accounts, the governor and others marked the occasion with a trip on the waterway.

As they traveled the entire length of the canal from Bordentown to New Brunswick, residents along the 44-mile route came out to cheer. Indeed, jubilant crowds met the governor’s barge at every lock, bridge and basin.



Upon arrival in New Brunswick, the dignitaries were greeted with a 24-gun salute and a parade and later enjoyed a sumptuous dinner.

The opening of the canal was hailed as important transportation progress; goods could now be transported between Philadelphia and New York City in only two days.





With cameras rolling, Jim Amon and John Hutchison talk about the early days of the Commission and the state park.

Photos: Darlene J. Yubas

Lights. Camera. Discussion!

Commission Initiates Unique Oral History Project, and It's 'On the Level'

The Commission's first executive director, a recognized expert on the D&R Canal and a noted New Jersey architect shared their remarkable knowledge, perspectives and experiences in videotaped oral histories now in production and expected to be publicly released during 2025.

James Amon, who served as Executive Director for nearly 30 years, and William J. "Captain Bill" McKelvey participated in lengthy interviews with the Commission's current Executive Director John Hutchison, covering a wide range of issues from the creation and growth of the D&R Canal State Park to the variety of vessels that worked the canal.



Mr. Amon and Mr. Hutchison look at a framed 1976 Canal Day Proclamation and a photo, snapped 49 years earlier, shows Amon observing the signing by then-Gov. Brendan Byrne. It hangs proudly in the Commission office.

In the third interview, conducted as this annual report was being prepared for publication, Kingston Historical Society President Robert von Zumbusch discussed his knowledge of historic canal resources and decades of experience in architecture.

The Commission embraced the opportunity to capture the perspectives of these leaders as part of a year-long celebration of its 50th anniversary.

"It's never been done before," Hutchison said of the Commission's oral histories. "People who were there at the dawn of creation of the Commission and the State Park were asked for the first time to sit down

and tell the story of how it all came into being. What we have now is a tangible record of what they did to create the state park and their involvement through the years. These stories will prove to be priceless when those who follow us will be celebrating the Commission's 100th anniversary and beyond," he said.

Executive Director Hutchison said the title of the series, "On the Level: A Conversation with ...," is especially fitting. In canal terminology, "on the level" refers to a straight, flat section of canal water between locks. As a familiar idiom, it means straightforward, honest and sincere.

The special project is a collaboration between the Commission and the New Jersey Office of Information Technology. OIT's Multimedia specialists and videographers John "Jack" Hensley, Carol McKenna and Chris Balint made available their professional camera, lighting and microphone equipment and are producing the three videotaped interviews at no additional cost to the Commission's budget.

Once production is completed, the interviews will be uploaded to the Commission's YouTube channel. (See related story page 23.)



Captain Bill McKelvey talks with Mr. Hutchison.



Mr. von Zumbusch, seated at center, and Mr. Hutchison finish the interview videotaped by NJOIT's Christopher Balint and Carol McKenna.

During a spirited 90-minute interview at the Commission's office in Stockton, Mr. Amon shared fascinating facts and recollections about his service as Executive Director, including his reasons for wanting the job and how he brought to life his vision for building the State Park as well as his greatest challenges and accomplishments.

In a videotaping at the historic Prall House in Stockton, Mr. McKelvey, who is a well-known canal and railroad historian, author, preservationist and lecturer, discussed why he became interested in the D&R Canal and

offered insight into how he amassed scores of historic photographs and embarked upon painstaking research for his four books. He also shared details about the kind of vessels that worked the canal, his exploration of other canals in the U.S. and abroad, and his recollections of talking with men who actually worked the D&R Canal.

A portion of the McKelvey interview also was videotaped at the Canal Society of New Jersey Museum at Waterloo Village, a restored 19th-century canal town in Byram Township, Sussex County, where Mr. McKelvey discussed the provenance of several of the D&R canal-related artifacts on display.

Mr. von Zumbusch's interview with Mr. Hutchison was videotaped at the Kingston Locktender House in Kingston.

Oral histories with other notable figures will be considered in the coming year.



Now Showing: Commission's New YouTube Channel Features Captivating Canal Content

Enhancing efforts to inform and educate the public about the history of the Delaware & Raritan Canal and its role in protecting treasured resources, the Commission in August unveiled its YouTube channel.

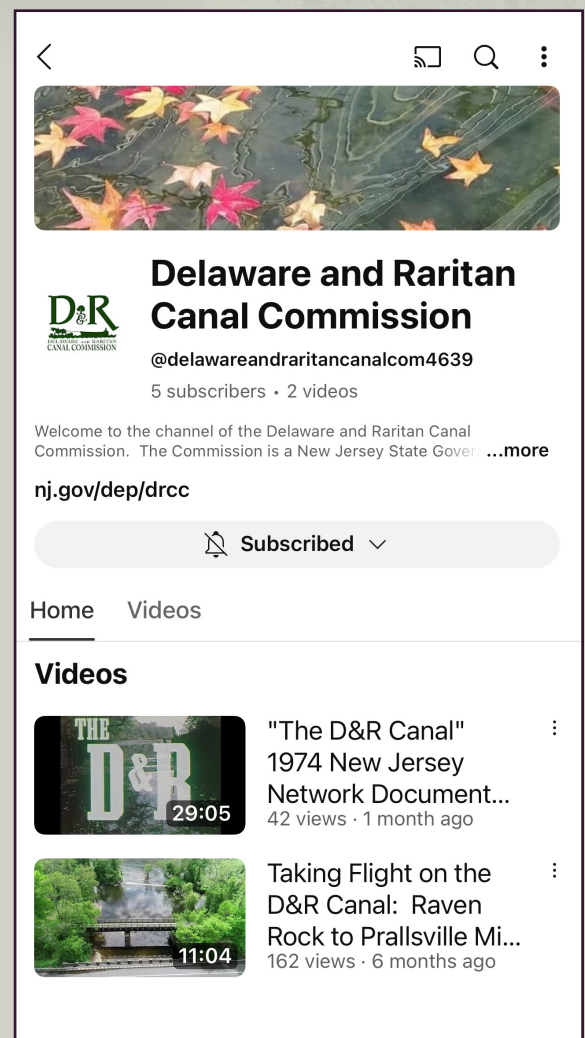
The first uploaded content was a video of the feeder canal taken by drone from the entrance of the D&R Canal at Raven Rock south to the historic Prallsville Mills complex in Stockton. The video, "Taking Flight on the D&R Canal," is the first of a series of drone videos that will offer sweeping views of the 190-year-old canal and its surroundings. The videos will document the condition of the canal's historic structures and engineering features from the air, which has not been accomplished since at least the early 1970s. (See related story page 24.)

The channel also showcases the 1974 New Jersey Network documentary, "The D&R Canal," narrated by humorist and radio and television personality Jean Shepherd, likely best known for the 1983 film, "A Christmas Story," which he narrated and co-scripted based on his own semi-autobiographical stories.

A film copy of the documentary was among items that had long been squirreled away in the Commission Office's attic. Commission staff succeeded in getting the film restored, digitized, copied to a flash drive and uploaded to YouTube.

Compared to other copies publicly available on the internet over the years, the quality of the Commission's copy is very good as is the documentary's audio.

Stay tuned; there's more to come.



Views of the D&R Canal Are Even More Amazing From Way Up High

Production of the second segment of the Commission's special drone project, "Taking Flight on the D&R Canal," was well underway in October, and canal enthusiasts and others were eagerly awaiting its release on the Commission's YouTube Channel.

The second segment picks up where the first episode left off – at historic Prallsville Mills – and continues down canal to Washington Crossing, capturing aerial footage of the canal, its engineering features and its surroundings.

The first episode, now available on YouTube, begins on the Delaware River just south of the Lumberville-Raven Rock Pedestrian Bridge and the wing dam at Bulls Island, which channels water into the mouth of the feeder canal. Viewers experience what it would be like to travel on the waterway in a canoe, kayak, paddleboard or small, nonmotorized boat and see first-hand the canal's engineering elements, historic structures and abundant natural resources.



Drone Team Members:
David DuMont, William Smith,
Steven Jacobus and Amanda Shoemaker.
Drone photo: Steven Jacobus



The drone episodes offer many images that are not visible from the canal park multiuse trail.

The drone episodes offer many images that are not visible from the canal park multiuse trail.

The project aims to visually document the entire length of the 70-mile canal during each of the four seasons. It is a collaboration between the Commission and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Unit within the department's Office of Information Technology. GIS Unit Section Chief Steven Jacobus is the program manager and Chief Pilot responsible for overseeing the integration and development of small, unmanned aircraft systems, commonly known as drones, into the DEP's workflow.

Mr. Jacobus is leading the four-person drone team who during autumn 2024 flew the drone above the canal, capturing impressive aerial views of Stockton Borough and the City of Lambertville and key engineering features and natural resources along the way. Drone team members working in the field with Mr. Jacobus are DEP colleagues David DuMont, William Smith and Amanda Shoemaker.

The drone footage is especially significant because the Commission does not currently possess modern images of all canal resources or video of the D&R Canal in its present condition. The only aerial film footage now in the Commission's possession was taken from a fixed wing aircraft circa 1974. Further, the footage will support the Commission's implementation of its land use regulatory program as well as the update to its Master Plan. (See related story on page 27.)





Executive Director John Hutchison
 Photos: Darlene J. Yubas

Collaborative Effort Opens Windows to Canal's Priceless Past

Armed with a couple magnifying glasses, three pairs of sharp eyes and an impressive supply of knowledge, two D&R Canal experts and Commission staff collaborated during several work sessions in 2024 to identify and label the Commission's archive of historical photographs.

D&R Canal Watch's Robert Barth and Linda Barth and Commission Executive Director John Hutchison rolled up their sleeves and closely examined and identified dozens of images that had been shelved for decades in plastic sleeve binders.

In October, following only a few two-hour sessions, the Commission sent more than 130 historic images of the Delaware and Raritan Canal and surroundings to a photo-scanning specialist to be converted into high-quality digital images.

By year's end, more than 200 images had been labeled. During each photo-identification session, descriptive information on every image was logged on an Excel spreadsheet, which can be sorted and searched in the future.

Many of the images will be made available on the Commission's website, which currently features a historical photo section. The conversion to digital images is expected to serve the Commission, other organizations and the public for decades to come.



Linda Barth



Robert Barth

Work to Digitize Irreplaceable Documents Now Way Ahead of Schedule

The Commission's ambitious effort to preserve an estimated 1 million pages of essential agency documents moved faster and more efficiently than expected during 2024 and was heading for the halfway mark as the year drew to a close.

For months, Commission staffer Megan Black pulled thousands of pages from file boxes, sorted the documents, organized them and then guided them through a large document scanner.

The document digitizing initiative marks the first time in the Commission's 50-year history that it has instituted a records retention and storage policy that complies with state regulations and creates a permanent electronic library of the Commission's project documents. Commission staff members now have at their disposal electronic records of previous projects, which – given the need to assess impervious surface cumulative to 1980 – are indispensable in determining Commission jurisdiction and the scope of review of future projects.

"We're doing better than I could have ever hoped," Executive Director John Hutchison said of the project, which is one of the most significant the Commission has ever undertaken.

The work was initially expected to take four years to complete, but the Commission's strategic move to rent the large document scanner and hire temporary staff is substantially cutting time and costs. "Nearly 40 percent of the project has been completed in the first year alone," he said.

A total of 526 boxes of Commission documents had been stored at the Department of Environmental Protection's Central Warehouse in Trenton. Before being warehoused, most of the records were kept in dozens of old filing cabinets at the Commission's flood-prone office at Stockton's historic Prallsville Mills and, earlier, in an adjacent grain silo circa 1890 where the papers were not stored in a climate-controlled environment.

The electronic records library now enables Commission staff to respond quickly to Open Public Records Act (OPRA) requests related to past Commission projects and ensures the continuity of government and of Commission operations.



Commission Staffer Megan Black unrolls a set of site plans from a box of Commission records and will guide them through a large document scanner, at left.

Photo: Darlene J. Yubas





Aerial, Lambertville locktender house in City of Lambertville.

Drone photo: Steven Jacobus

Update of D&R Canal State Park Master Plan Moves Forward

Throughout 2024, the Commission made important progress on its challenging and long-awaited initiative to update and revise its master plan for the D&R Canal State Park and fully expected a consultant to be on board by the early months of 2025.

Working with the DEP's Office of Resource Development and the Department of Treasury, a request for proposal – commonly called an RFP – was made publicly available to solicit qualified consulting firms as this annual report was being prepared for publication.

“The master plan update and the historic structures survey is a strategic and critically important initiative,” Executive Director John Hutchison said. “It will shape the future of the canal state park for the next 25 years. We are very close to hiring a consultant to do this work, and the Commission is beyond excited about our progress so far.”

The comprehensive update and revision of the master plan is made possible through a \$550,000 grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust. The project's centerpiece is a historic structures survey that will focus on documenting the canal state park's historic resources and determining their condition. The last historic structures survey was conducted in 1982.

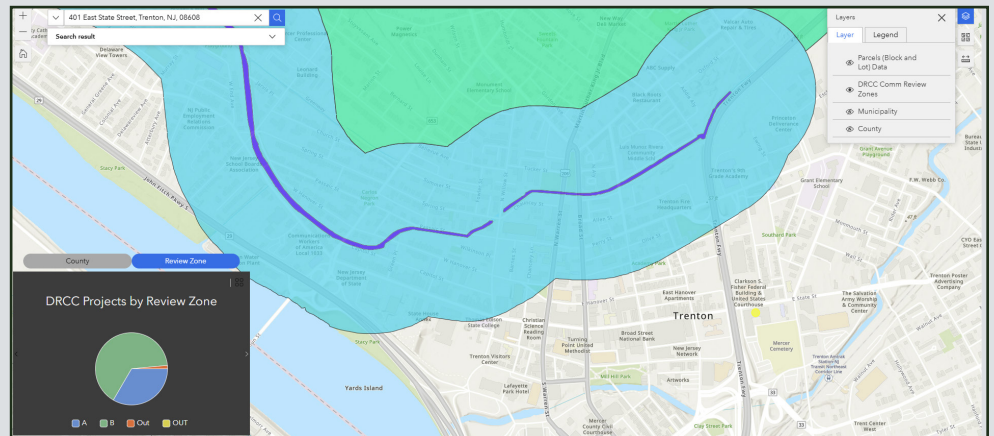
The current master plan, last updated in 1989, has guided the physical development of the park and informed the implementation of the Commission's land use regulatory program to protect the canal's historic, environmental and water supply resources.

During the past three decades, however, central New Jersey has undergone significant environmental, economic and demographic changes. And while the master plan continues to be an important document, it no longer accurately reflects the “truth on the ground” in the 450 square miles of the Commission's jurisdiction. An updated master plan would provide current and comprehensive data, analysis, strategies and recommendations on guiding the physical development and future growth of the canal park and maximizing the potential of its myriad resources.

New Project Database Up and Running, Bringing Big Benefits to Commission's Work

Working closely with colleagues in the DEP's Bureau of Geographic Information Systems, the Commission finished testing and fine-tuning a new project database that will bring myriad benefits to the agency's work.

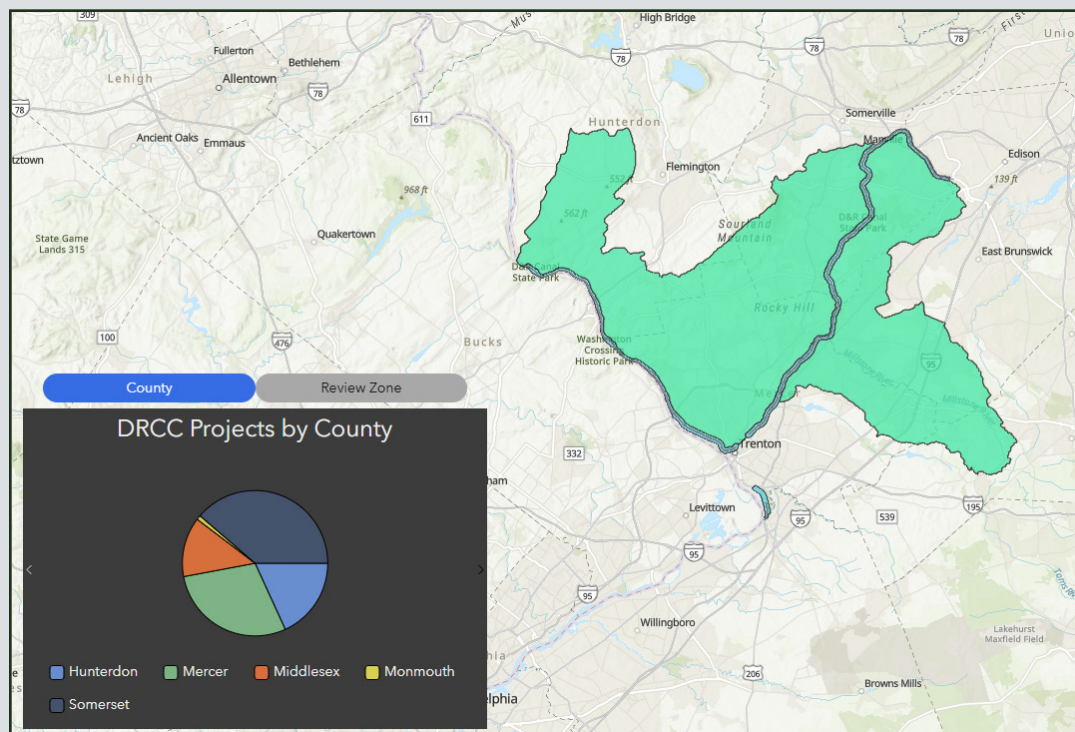
Executive Director John Hutchison said that the design, functionality, and reliability of the new GIS-based desktop database is a major improvement over the obsolete and now-retired MS Access database.



GIS database images.

In addition to the obvious continuity of operations benefits, he said, the new database allows Commission staff to search projects using several search criteria, including aerial image overlays, parcel information (Block and Lot), applicant or engineer name, and type of permit document issued.

Further, staff can now aggregate completed project information and determine how many projects were undertaken in each zone, county, municipality, etc. as well as measure distances and calculate areas.



GIS database images.

“The work done by our colleagues at the Bureau of GIS has exceeded my expectations in every respect,” he said of the new database now in use.

Commission staff can map and view projects as a GIS layer, which can be linked to the agency's internal project files. The new database will ultimately support the future creation of a GIS layer for the Commission's preserved stream corridors, which will enhance project review and will in the future offer a data inventory useful to the regulated community, state and municipal officials and the public.



New Roofs Planned for Historic Rockingham Children's Museum, Two Other Structures in State Park



Rockingham Children's Museum.

Photo: Courtesy of Rockingham State Historic Site and NJ State Parks, Forests & Historic Sites

Key improvements are in the offing for a trio of buildings within the D&R Canal State Park and Washington Crossing State Park, managed by the Department of Environmental Protection, State Parks, Forests & Historic Sites, as supported by Governor Murphy's \$25 million investment in New Jersey's historic sites in preparation for the United States' Semiquincentennial to be celebrated in 2026.

The Commission granted permits for new roofs on the Rockingham State Historic Site's Children's Museum in Franklin Township, Somerset County, and Washington Crossing State Park restroom buildings at the Greene Grove Day Use Area and at the River Parking Lot, both located in Hopewell Township, Mercer County.

be constructed atop the children's museum, also known as the Wash House. It was originally located in the Kendall Park section of South Brunswick Township and was transported to its current location in 2001.

The Rockingham site features a historic residence, a barn, and associated agricultural outbuildings, parking areas, and access drives. General George Washington made the residence his headquarters from August 23, 1783, to November 10, 1783. The site was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1970 in recognition of its significance to the nation's military and social history.

The Green Grove Day Use Area consists of a pavilion and parking area in addition to the restroom building located generally in the center of the state park. That area is named after Major General Nathanael Greene (1742-1786), an American military officer who served in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War and is regarded as one of George Washington's most talented and dependable officers.



River Parking Lot structure.

Photo: John Hutchison

The roof replacement at the River Parking Lot structure will include the removal of dome skylights and the installation of new skylights. Washington Crossing State Park marks the site where General George Washington and a 2,400-man detachment of Continental Army troops crossed the river overnight on December 25, 1776, and into the morning of December 26, 1776, to make a surprise attack on the Hessian garrison at Trenton, an engagement that would prove to be a turning point in the American Revolutionary War. The site is listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

Both Rockingham and Washington Crossing State Park are located within the boundaries of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Historic District.



Greene Grove Day Use Area restroom.

Photo: John Hutchison



The Shaky Bridge, which spans the Perdicaris Waste Weir.
Source: Ilene Grossman-Bailey

Perdicaris Waste Weir Project Exemplifies Commission's Commitment to Historic Preservation

Demonstrating its resolve to preserving the D&R Canal's historic resources, the Commission in August approved a critical repair to the Perdicaris Waste Weir beneath the so-called Shaky Bridge alongside Route 29 in Trenton after requiring the restoration work to be historically appropriate.

The Commission granted a permit for the repair to the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), which had initially proposed to remove an existing concrete apron and the underlying dry-laid stone of the waste weir and install an articulated concrete block apron.

But the Commission deemed the proposed repair inconsistent with the historic engineering feature of the canal, spurring the NJDOT to agree to replace the concrete apron in-kind, which preserves the underlying dry-laid stone.

The Perdicaris Waste Weir, constructed in 1834, is an original engineering feature of the D&R Canal. The waste weir flows from the vicinity of State Street to the Delaware River. It consists of laid stonework for much of its length, and a concrete apron spans the area from the end of the existing NJDOT structure, constructed when Route 29 was built in 1953, to the confluence of the weir with the Delaware River.

The Shaky Bridge was constructed in 1908 as part of the Mahlon Stacy Park by the John A. Roebling's Sons Co. It is a short suspension bridge that spans the Perdicaris Waste Weir. The bridge is believed to have been modeled after an early Roebling bridge over the Niagara River.

Working with the State Historic Preservation Office, Executive Director John Hutchison determined that NJDOT's proposed use of articulated concrete block for the repair resembled neither the historic stone apron of the waste weir nor the circa 1953 smooth concrete lining. The modern material is incompatible with the historic Perdicaris Waste Weir and the setting of the Shaky Bridge, he said. The proposed material did not harmonize with the surrounding man-made and natural materials of the canal.

"It is my hope that this permit will be seen as an example of how the Commission staff is consistently aware of and seeks to preserve the canal's historic resources," Director Hutchison said.





Tossing a net full of trout into the feeder canal in Stockton is Fred Orsita, a seasonal employee with the state Fish & Wildlife's Bureau of Land Management.

Wet a Line, the Fishing's Fine in the D&R Canal

Colleagues at the DEP's Division of Fish & Wildlife made a special effort to accommodate the Commission's request for photos of the spring rainbow trout stocking in the Delaware and Raritan Canal.

While observing the stocking in May at the lock at Stockton, Executive Director John Hutchison conveyed his appreciation to Fish & Wildlife staff for enabling the Commission to highlight the role the canal plays in recreational fishing.

After explaining their work to release trout into the canal and other waters during spring and autumn every year, Fish & Wildlife staff handed Director Hutchison a net full so he could experience stocking for himself.



Mr. Hutchison tries his hand at spring trout stocking.

Photos: Darlene J. Yubas

Informative Talk, Drone Video Earns Applause at Kingston Historical Society

Members of the Kingston Historical Society learned more about the creation of the D&R Canal Commission, and its operations, roles and responsibilities during a special presentation by Executive Director John Hutchison in November.

**Kingston
Historical
Society
Annual
Meeting**

November 12, 2024



Kingston Historical Society President Robert von Zumbusch invited the Director to serve as the featured speaker during the organization's annual meeting.

The presentation focused on the ways in which the Commission protects the environmental, recreational and historic resources of the canal and its 450-square mile watershed. Topics covered during the talk included the makeup of the agency and its regulatory authority, review zones, regulatory program, mitigation projects, stream corridor preservation, planning program, and its initiative to update and revise its master plan.

The pièce de résistance, however, was the showing of the Commission's newly released drone video "Taking Flight on the D&R Canal." The video, now available on the Commission's YouTube channel, features aerial imagery of the canal, historic engineering features and the waterway's surroundings.

"The response to the video was overwhelmingly positive," Mr. Hutchison said, "Meeting participants said they are excited to see the next installment." (See related story on Page 24.)

Preserving the Past is a Priority; Commission Concludes Remarkable Restoration



Office floor resurfacing.
Photo: John Hutchison

When it comes to historic preservation, Executive Director John Hutchison's philosophy is pretty straightforward: Taking proper care of a historic structure is key to ensuring it survives.

So, it's no wonder that throughout his nearly eight-year tenure, he made it a mission to restore the Commission's headquarters, originally a wagon shed circa 1850 and one of the canal's historic structures. The

building is located on the grounds of Stockton's Prallsville Mills, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

"If we're going to talk the talk, we have to walk the walk," he says.



New metal roof.

In May, Mr. Hutchison announced the completion of the last of the major physical plant repairs and much-needed improvements that he identified when he first walked through the office doors in 2017.

The final project was the resurfacing of the office floor in an epoxy coating, which will resist the hydrostatic pressure from the nearby Wickecheoke Creek that had caused paint to lift from the underlying concrete. The new floor, which has a 15-year warranty, covers the conference room, a small hallway and a portion of the office at the entrance. It has already proven to be more resilient and easier to clean.

The floor resurfacing capped a series of significant preservation projects undertaken and, slowly but

surely, completed successfully. Those projects include a new metal roof; removal and repair of damaged exterior siding; replacement of old, faulty windows and drafty doors; repairs to the distinctive sliding barn doors at the entrance of the main office and the conference room; protective staining of the wooden exterior; installation of a new furnace; and restoration of the stone foundation by replacing mortar damaged during repeated flooding of the Wickecheoke Creek.

Fee-based program budget monies funded the projects.



Windows and door replacement included these at the building's entrance.

Photos: Darlene J. Yuhas



Restoration of stone foundation.





Foreground, the former Belvidere-Delaware Railroad bridge and behind it, the pedestrian bridge over the Alexauken Creek aqueduct.

Drone photo: Steven Jacobus

Regulatory program

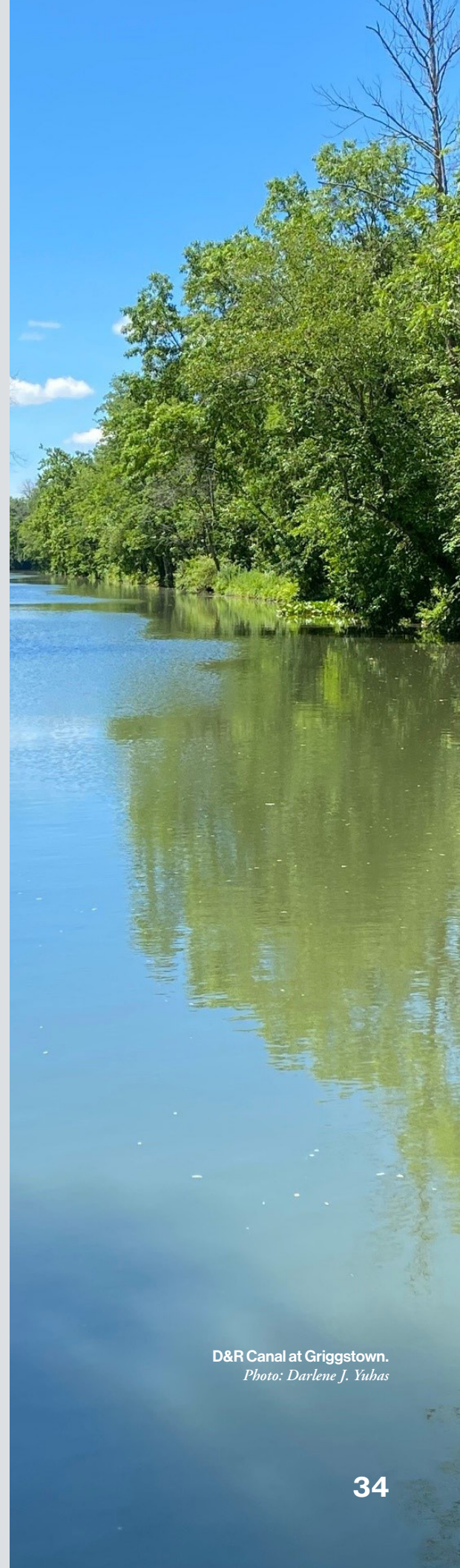
The “Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park Law of 1974” directs the Commission to preserve and protect the Delaware and Raritan Canal as a historic and natural resource as well as a water supply system for much of central New Jersey. To advance this statutory mandate, the Commission was given regulatory authority to protect the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park from new development that “may cause an adverse impact on the park including drainage, esthetic and ecological factors.” To that end, the Commission reviews development projects within a designated “Review Zone” established by administrative regulations promulgated at N.J.A.C. 7:45 for their impact on the following:

- Stormwater drainage and water quality;
- Stream corridors;
- Visual, historic and natural quality; and
- Traffic.

The Review Zone is further divided into two subzones. Review Zone “A” is the area within 1,000 feet on either side of the center line of the canal, except in the Municipality of Princeton, where the west bank of Carnegie Lake shall be the boundary of Zone A and where the Raritan River is within 1,000 feet, its farthest bank being the boundary. Review Zone “B” is based upon sub-watersheds in central New Jersey that impact the Delaware and Raritan Canal. The Commission’s regulatory jurisdiction encompasses approximately 400 square miles of land area in central New Jersey.


Developments that are defined as “major” projects under the Commission’s regulations – projects that involve the cumulative coverage since January 11, 1980, of one-quarter acre or more of impervious surface, or the disturbance of one acre of land – must meet the Commission’s standards for managing stormwater runoff quantity and quality. In addition, a project of any size that is proposed in Zone A is reviewed for its visual, historic and natural quality impact upon the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park. The Commission also reviews certain projects that are within one mile of the park for their traffic impact. The Commission also requires the preservation of corridors along the major streams that enter the park.

Through its regulatory program, the Commission holds conservation easements on more than 5,300 acres of land that provide flood storage, improve water quality of major streams that enter the canal and provide habitat for wildlife.



D&R Canal at Griggstown.
Photo: Darlene J. Yubas





The Commission staff, consisting of four full-time employees and four part-time employees, reviewed a total of 522 projects during calendar year 2024. Of these reviews, 78 were deemed complete by staff and presented to the Commission for formal action; 81 were General Permit Authorizations issued by the Executive Director in accordance with Subchapter 5 of N.J.A.C. 7:45; 95 were jurisdictional determinations; and 68 were certificates of approval. In addition, 200 staff reports were determined to be technically or administratively deficient, and staff issued reports recommending that the necessary additional information be submitted to determine completeness. Commission staff also engaged in many informal reviews and 121 preapplication meetings with the regulated community to provide guidance on proposed and pending projects.

Conservation Easement Acreage Preserved

Stream corridors are critical to improving and maintaining water quality entering the Delaware and Raritan Canal and the canal park; they allow these areas to store and mitigate stormwater that may contribute to flooding. N.J.A.C. 7:45-9.5 directs applicants for individual permits that impact upon a Commission-regulated stream corridor to take whatever measures are necessary to ensure that those corridors will be preserved and to prevent future encroachments in the stream corridor.

The Commission's regulations also provide that, at a minimum, such measures shall include easements, deed restrictions or other measures satisfactory to the Commission. To further this regulatory mandate, the Commission requires conservation easements on stream corridors for approved projects.

The easements along stream corridors that flow into the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park generally stipulate the landowner's responsibility to not develop the land, often require the planting of native vegetation, and often impose "no mowing" and other landscape maintenance restrictions. Easement documents are filed with the clerk of the county in which the permitted project is located and run with the land, meaning that the environmental protections automatically transfer with the property when it is transferred to a different owner.

The Commission's stream corridor protections and easement program has resulted in one of the largest protected riparian corridors in New Jersey. More than 5,300 acres of stream corridor have been preserved, and hundreds of acres of native plant restorations have been undertaken under the Commission's direction to date – an accomplishment reached at no cost to the taxpayers.

In 2024 the Commission executed easements that added an estimated 133 acres of stream corridor to those that have been preserved since the inception of the Commission's regulatory program in 1980.

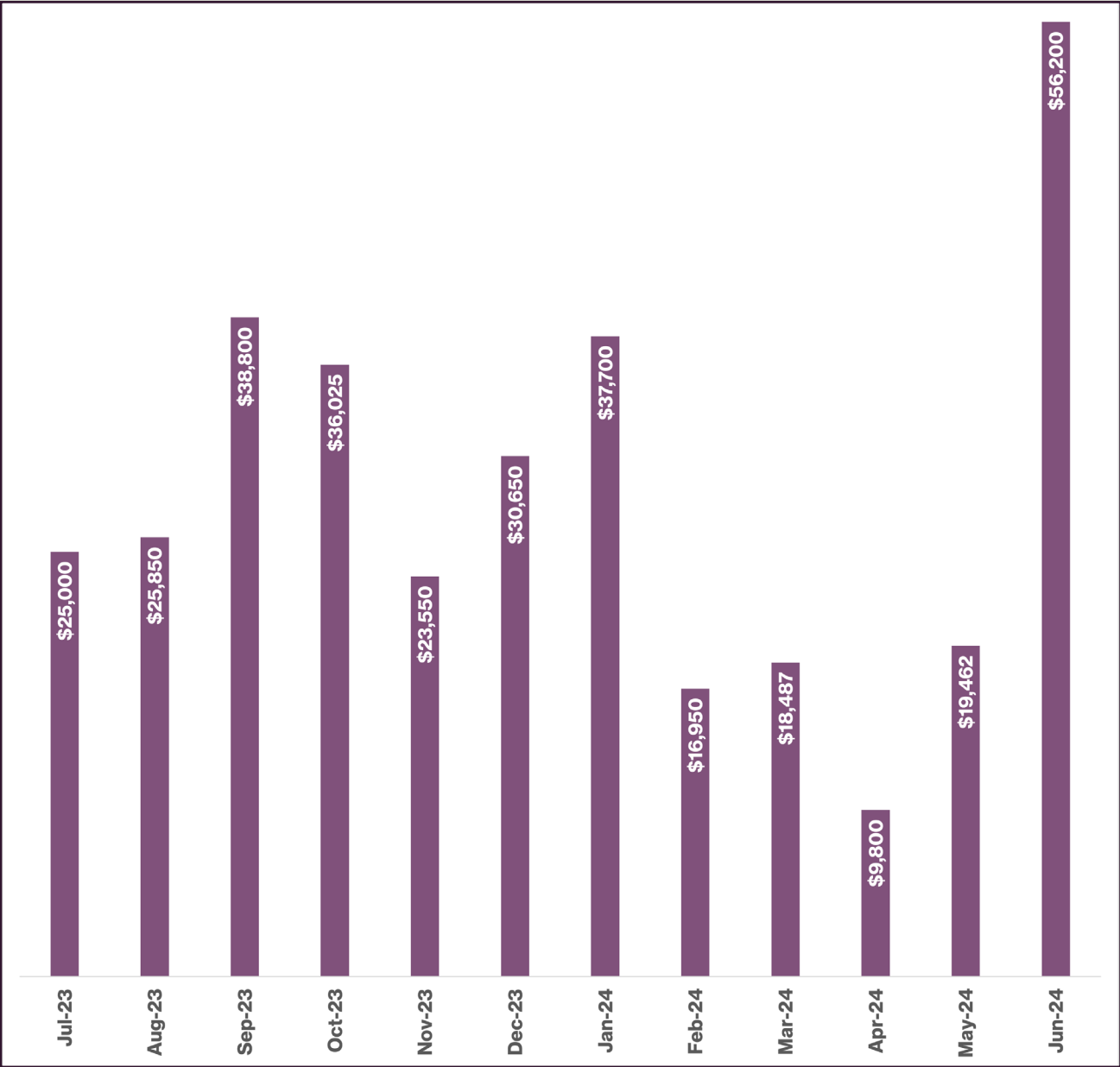
Finances 2024

The Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission derives its revenue solely through fees; the agency receives no General Fund appropriation. Commission fees are predominantly collected for stormwater and stream corridor impact reviews, but also include the review of visual, historic and natural quality impacts of proposed projects, traffic impact, jurisdictional determinations, general permits and subdivisions.

Annual expenditures are earmarked primarily for personnel/salaries and operating costs.

Operating expenses for the Commission generally encompass such basic needs as office supplies, OPRA compliance costs, and building and grounds maintenance.

Fiscal Year 2024 Monthly Fee Collections



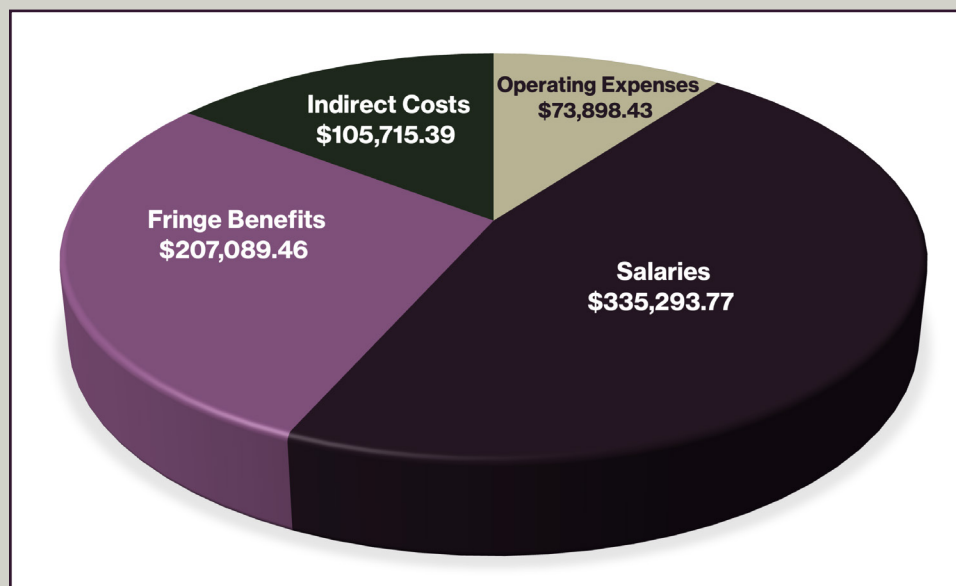
Fee Categories

The following table provides a detailed breakdown of application fees collected pursuant to the various subchapters of the Commission's regulations.

Fee Category	Amount Collected
Jurisdictional Determinations, N.J.A.C. 7:45-13.2(a)	\$4,550
General Permit No. 1, N.J.A.C. 7:45-13.2(b)	\$2,800
General Permit No. 2, N.J.A.C. 7:45-13.2(c)	\$1,500
Subdivision Review (lot line review only), N.J.A.C. 7:45-13.2(i)	\$225
Stormwater Runoff & Water Quality Impact, N.J.A.C. 7:45-13.2	\$255,625
Stream Corridor Impact, N.J.A.C. 7:45-13.2(g)	\$53,500
Visual, Historic & Natural Quality Impact Review, N.J.A.C. 7:45-13.2(d)&(e)	\$13,200
Other (primarily 'major modifications'), N.J.A.C. 7:45-13.2 (k)	\$7,075
TOTAL	\$338,475

Commission Expenditures

The Commission expended a total of \$721,997.05 in FY2024. Those expenditures are broken down into operating costs, salaries, fringe benefits and indirect costs as depicted in the following chart:



Fringe and Indirect Costs

When the fee schedule was devised in 2009, two significant charges against the Commission budget were not included in the schedule:

Fringe costs: The annual appropriations act requires the Department of the Treasury, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to credit/transfer to the General Fund “such sums are a necessary” to cover the State’s costs for employee fringe benefits (pension contribution, healthcare, workers compensation, employer share of FICA, unemployment insurance, temporary disability, unused sick leave).

The fringe rate is imposed on annual salary expenditure for the three full-time Commission employees, plus the amounts budgeted for the part-time engineering staff paid under the special project overtime blanket.

Employee salary costs typically represent about 80% of total annual expenditures and have risen over the past five fiscal years, and will rise by 3.5 percent annually through June 2027 as union-negotiated contractual increases take effect:

Fiscal Year	Salary Expenditure
2018	\$198,953
2019	\$202,483
2020	\$227,892
2021	\$240,761
2022	\$240,761
2023	\$312,771.16
2024	\$335,293.77

The fringe rate is set in an OMB Circular Letter issued each fiscal year. Fringe costs have increased from 35.15% in FY 2011 to 77.15% of salary expenditures and represent 29% of the Commission’s total expenditures for FY 2024.

The fringe cost is \$207,089.46 for FY 2024.

Indirect costs: Indirect costs are the charges for management and administrative costs (utilities, IT, building rent and lease costs) as well as the Commission’s share of Statewide indirect costs as allocated by the OMB.

Indirect cost rate is calculated based on salaries and fringe, including the part-time engineering staff. The indirect rate has remained stable over the past decade; 20.29% in FY 2011 to 19.5% in FY 2024. Indirect costs represented 15% of the Commission’s total expenditures in FY 2024.

Prior to FY 2011, indirect costs were paid out of the Division of Parks and Forestry budget. Starting in FY 2011, indirect costs were charged until FY 2018. The Commission had obtained an exemption from indirect costs since 2018, which the OMB denied in FY 2023 and again in FY 2024.

The indirect cost is \$105,715.39 for FY 2024.



A detailed itemization of the \$73,898.43 in Commission Operating Expenses for FY 2024 is provided in the following table:

Expenditure Detail	Total Amount Expended
Office Supplies	\$571.86
Scanning Services	\$1,823.12
State Print Shop Services	\$356.80
Photocopier & Large Scale Scanner Rental	\$5,390.85
Household/Security	\$1,686.43
Telephone	\$2,572.01
Postage	\$2,029.31
NJOIT Website Administration	\$139.21
Internet Provider	\$1,863.14
Custodial Services & Pest Control	\$7,957.73
Temporary Employee Services	\$18,892.05
Office of the Attorney General Services	\$21,463.86
Vehicle Maintenance & Fuel	\$229.66
Rent – Other	\$377.97
Buildings & Grounds Improvements	\$9,258.74
Computer Hardware & Peripheral Purchases	\$285.69
FY 2024 Total Operating Expenses	\$73,898.43



The pedestrian footbridge that carries the D&R Canal State Park multiuse trail over the Alexauken Creek aqueduct, Lambertville.

Photo: Jay Garrison





Approved Individual Projects 2024

JANUARY

ZONE A

None.

ZONE B

#18-3377A	Montgomery Promenade -- Retail/Residential Development (Montgomery Township)
#23-5821A	Paul Robeson Charter School (Trenton City/Ewing Township)
#22-5946	315 Davidson Avenue -- Driveway Access (Franklin Township)
#23-6011A	311 Enterprise Drive -- Loading Dock (Plainsboro Township)
#23-6012A	315 Enterprise Drive -- Loading Dock (Plainsboro Township)

FEBRUARY

ZONE A

#23-5295C	39 Bridge Street -- Exterior Lighting (Lambertville City)
#23-6005	1212 Edgewood Avenue -- HomeWorks After-School Residential Program Building Renovation (Trenton City)

ZONE B

#22-4802A	40 Kildee Road -- Proposed Residence (Montgomery Township)
#22-4813A	Silvia Street/Parkway Avenue -- Mixed Use Development (Ewing Township)
#21-5728	161 Cedar Grove Lane -- Proposed Minor Subdivision (Franklin Township)
#22-5926	837 Somerset Street -- Mixed-Use Building (Franklin Township)
#23-6077	200 Livingston Avenue -- Apartment Building (New Brunswick City)

MARCH

ZONE A

#23-3723B	17 Wilson Street -- Duplex Residential Development (Lambertville City)
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ZONE B

#22-4156D	159 Princeton Hightstown Road -- Site Improvements (East Windsor Township)
#24-4815D	55-57 White Oak Drive -- Major Modification (Municipality of Princeton)
#23-5010E	4 and 9 Farrington Boulevard -- Proposed Warehouse (Millstone Township)
#22-5951	195-215 Davidson Avenue -- Proposed Warehouse (Franklin Township)
#23-6087	176-188 Bayard Lane -- Residential Subdivision (Municipality of Princeton)



APRIL

ZONE A

#22-2654B	400-600 Atrium Drive -- Office Complex Demolition -- Warehouse Construction (Franklin Township)
#24-3673C	The Stockton Inn -- Renovations (Stockton Borough)
#24-4725C	17 Mill Street -- Dog Run Fence -- Major Modification (Stockton Borough)
#24-5509B	769 Millstone River Road -- Major Modification (Montgomery Township)

ZONE B

#22-2015B	Amwell Road-Mill Lane -- Subdivision/Single-Family Residences (Hillsborough Township)
#22-3599C	The Pennington School -- Additions and Improvements (Pennington Borough)
#24-5384B	Princeton Plasma Innovation Center -- Building Expansion (Plainsboro Township)

MAY

ZONE A

None.

ZONE B

#21-2119C	The Enclave at Royce Brook -- Residential Development (Hillsborough Township)
#23-2294O	The Lawrenceville School -- Campus Drive West (Lawrence Township)
#22-3738B	Avalon Assisted Living -- Apartment Building (Hillsborough Township)
#23-3800E	Hackensack Meridian Carrier Clinic -- Adolescent Patient Unit (Montgomery Township)
#21-4833A	Aurobindo Pharmaceutical Facility -- Phase 2 (East Windsor Township)
#24-5515B	619 Somerset Street -- Urgent Care Facility (Franklin Township)
#24-5658A	BREIT Industrial Canyon Warehouse -- Major Modification (Franklin Township)
#24-5661B	Hopewell Parc -- Major Modification (Hopewell Township)
23-6004	2500 Pennington Road -- Townhome/Apartment Development (Hopewell Township)
23-6009	703 Jersey Avenue -- Proposed Container Storage Facility (New Brunswick City)
23-6052	2201 Scenic Drive -- Proposed Apartment Building Addition (Ewing Township)

JUNE

ZONE A

#24-6095	113 Clinton Street -- Renovations (South Bound Brook)
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ZONE B

#24-2441FFF	Princeton University -- Lewis Thomas Laboratory Loading Dock Renovations (Municipality of Princeton)
#24-2441GGG	Princeton University -- Eric and Wendy Schmidt Hall (Municipality of Princeton)
#24-2441HHH	Princeton University -- Poe-Pardee Field Walkways (Municipality of Princeton)
#24-3154E	Shiseido America -- Training Classroom Building (East Windsor Township)
#23-5010F	Millstone Indoor Recreation Center (Millstone Township)

JULY

ZONE A

#21-5780
#24-6138

600 Atrium Drive -- Proposed Warehouse (Franklin Township)
Ewing-Lawrence Sewerage Authority -- Force Main Upgrades --
(Ewing Township/Lawrence Township)

ZONE B

#22-5931

24 Model Avenue -- Townhouse Development (Hopewell Borough)

AUGUST

ZONE A

#24-2902H
#24-3602E

Lambertville Station -- Shed Demolition/Fence Installation (Lambertville City)
Rockingham Historic Site -- ADA Compliant Pathways (Franklin Township)

ZONE B

#24-5380A

Improvements to Prospect Plains Road -- Stonaker Drive to Applegarth Road
(Cranbury Township/Monroe Township)

#21-5788
#23-6008

115 Spring Garden Avenue -- Warehouse and Storage Facility (Ewing Township)
982 Georgetown Franklin Turnpike -- Day School/Child Care Center
(Montgomery Township)

#24-6111
#24-6123

Juvenile Justice Commission -- Rehabilitation Facility (Ewing Township)
66 Valley Road -- Proposed Residence (Hopewell Township)

SEPTEMBER

ZONE A

#24-6159

15 Swan Street -- Proposed Deck (Lambertville City)

ZONE B

#21-0471C
#23-3019C
#24-4951A
#23-5521A

Montgomery Township -- Age-Restricted Affordable Housing (Montgomery Township)
322 & 326 Cranbury-Half Acre Road -- Proposed Warehouse (Cranbury Township)
967 Croton Road -- Solar Array Phase 2 (Franklin Township)
East Windsor Municipal Utilities Authority -- Administrative Building and Maintenance
Garage (East Windsor Township)

#24-6124

67 Pleasant Valley Road -- Addition (Hopewell Township)



OCTOBER

ZONE A

- #24-2349G 243 North Union Street -- Exterior Alterations (Lambertville City)
#24-6169 54 River Drive -- Addition/Patio (Hopewell Township)

ZONE B

- #24-2435D Scotch Road -- Sanitary Sewer Manhole Access Drive (Hopewell Township)
#24-2441III Princeton University -- Quantum Institute Geo-Exchange (Municipality of Princeton)
#24-3025C Roycefield Road -- Somerset County Multiuse Building (Hillsborough Township)

NOVEMBER

ZONE A

- #24-1856D St. George Church -- Former Church Building Demolition (Hopewell Township)
#24-3709C Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park -- Soil Boring and Monitoring Well Installation (Trenton City)
#24-4224A 8-12 South Union Street -- Condominium Conversion (Lambertville City)
#24-4594B 80 Wilson Street -- Proposed Townhomes (Lambertville City)
#24-5029A 45 Clinton Street -- Solar Array Installation (Lambertville City)

ZONE B

- #23-3481D Friendship Road-Route 130 -- Residential Development (South Brunswick Township)
#24-6143 321 Barbertown-Point Breeze Road -- Residential Development (Kingwood Township)
#24-6171 375-377 Terhune Road -- Multi-Family Residential Development (Municipality of Princeton)

DECEMBER

ZONE A

- #24-2397D Janssen Pharmaceuticals -- FDC Fire Service Upgrade (Franklin Township)
#24-3755I 287 South Main Street -- Sign Replacement (Lambertville City)
#22-5834 545 Weston Canal Road -- Proposed Warehouse (Franklin Township)

ZONE B

- #23-2717A 1 Meadow Road -- Office Building (West Windsor Township)
#24-3341O PMPHCC Cancer Center and Imaging Center (Plainsboro Township)
#23-6055 1219-1225 Lower Ferry Road -- Proposed Residences (Ewing Township)
#24-6106A 301 Roycefield Road -- Addition/Parking (Hillsborough Township)

Acknowledgments

The Commission extends gratitude to our colleagues for their hard work and shared commitment to protecting and enhancing the environmental, historic, recreational, and water supply resources of New Jersey's treasured Delaware and Raritan Canal and the canal state park.

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

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Jay Garrison

Autumn leaves in the D&R Canal.
Photo: Darlene J. Yubas

