



## THE MUSCONETCONG RIVER



THE MUSCONETCONG RIVER IS A PART OF THE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SYSTEM

### IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Musconetcong Watershed Association  
908-537-7060  
www.musconetcong.org

New Jersey State Chapter of Trout Unlimited  
www.njtu.org

New Jersey Fish and Wildlife  
908-637-4125  
www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw

New Jersey DEP Pollution Hotline  
877-WARN-DEP  
state.nj.us/dep/warndep.htm

Lake Hopatcong Foundation  
973-663-2500  
lakehopatcongfoundation.org

Mohawk Canoe Club  
www.mohawkc canoeclub.org

Appalachian Mountain Club Paddlers  
www.paddlenow.com

Hackensack River Canoe & Kayak Club  
www.hrckc.org

Lehigh Valley Kayak Club  
lehighvalleycanoecub.org

This National Water Trail Guide was developed by the Musconetcong Watershed Association (MWA), a non-profit organization based in Asbury, New Jersey. Funding for 2019 revisions was provided by the Mohawk Canoe Club and Lake Hopatcong Foundation. We are grateful for the partnerships that made this possible including with the Musconetcong River Management Council, Warren County Department of Planning, and volunteers: John Brunner and Christopher Meyers.

For print copies, corrections, and additional information, contact: Musconetcong Watershed Association  
PO Box 113, Asbury, NJ 08802  
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A digital version of this map, which offers more details and additional launch sites, is available online. Use your smartphone to access the website here, or visit www.musconetcong.org.



MUSCONETCONG River Management Council



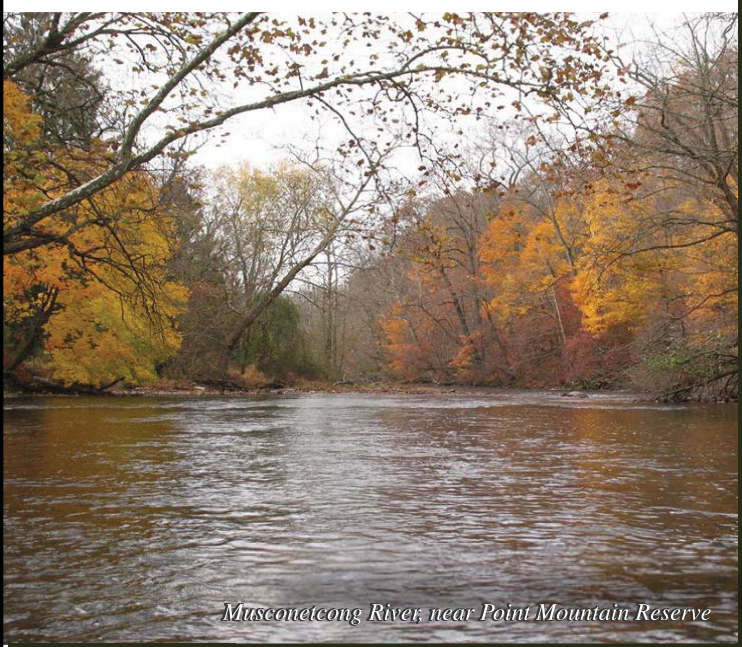
## TRAIL GUIDE

MUSCONETCONG WATERWAY



www.musconetcong.org

## THE MUSCONETCONG WATER TRAILS



### PADDLING ETIQUETTE

Thanks to state, county and local preservation efforts, public access to the Musconetcong River continues to increase, and public land along the river is generally well marked. However, much of the land along the river and almost all land along the lakes are private property, some of which is not posted.

The MWA asks recreational users to respect the rights of private property owners. Unless it is absolutely necessary, please do not enter private land, especially if posted "No Trespassing".

The Musconetcong is one of the most popular trout streams in New Jersey, so be conscious of paddling during trout-fishing season, especially on weekends. Information on trout season (which normally begins in early April) can be obtained from New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife. Lake Hopatcong is popular for all boating activities, including motorboats, and is busiest on summer weekends.

### RIVER HAZARDS & SAFETY

Always consider your current skill level when planning a paddling trip.

- Check river and weather conditions before your trip.
- All paddlers should wear properly fitted life vests, (PFDs), at all times regardless of skill level or degree of difficulty.

### HAZARDS

**Dams:** There are several dams along the Musconetcong River, and most are potential killers, so approach each with caution. Broken remains of mill dams and the small weirs built by anglers should be approached with caution.

**Strainers:** Strainers are fallen trees or debris piles that block all or a portion of the river. Be alert for strainers, especially where the river narrows or creates and island, and around sharp bends. Scout the situation, and if in doubt, carry the boat around on the safest shore.

**Bridges:** Bridge piers are a common collecting point for strainers and often become completely blocked after a flood event. Some Musconetcong bridges have very low clearance and present a moderate to severe hazard depending on the water level.

### LAKE TIPS & WARNINGS

Lake Hopatcong has many places where kayaks and canoes can be launched, but parking can be limited. Some businesses around the lake rent kayaks, including Lake's End Marina in Landing and Lakeview Marina in Lake Hopatcong, which also have launching sites. Lake conditions present different challenges and risks than river paddling – notably the wakes of motorized boats, wind, and the potential for exposure to rapidly changing weather conditions.

- Be prepared for significantly more boat traffic and water turbulence on warm summer weekends.
- Consider wearing bright colors and always wear a life jacket.
- Wear or display a light when kayaking on the lake at night.
- Be mindful of the weather. If dangerous conditions arise, consider seeking refuge at a dock until the weather passes.
- Respect private property and do not trespass on private land unless you are seeking help.
- Roughly a third of the homes and businesses display dock numbers which are important location markers listed in the 911 Call Center, just like house numbers. If you need help, take note of the nearest dock number. The numbers are written in white on blue placards, displayed on docks, bulkheads, and boat houses.
- No Wake buoys are placed in certain areas of the lake, based on geography, hazards, and safety.
- If you choose to anchor, do not do so in an area that impedes navigation for others.
- Remember that the lake is used for a variety of recreational purposes, including fishing (from boats and from shore), cruising, sailing, waterskiing, wakeboarding, wake surfing, windsurfing, and more.

### WATER TRAILS

Trips are numbered, from upstream to downstream

- Some trips, especially the river trips, can be combined into longer trips.
- Sometimes there are additional public access points in-between recommended starting points.
- Please note that the terms "river-left" and "river-right" assume a view of the river that faces downstream.

### MUSCONETCONG RIVER SCALE OF DIFFICULTY

It is useful to note that the degree of difficulty when paddling the Musconetcong River, like most upland, swift flowing streams, changes in direct relation to the water level.

- Check the flow before you go:USGS Bloomsbury Gage: <https://on.doi.gov/2NQeLHz>
- Ideal paddling conditions: River depth on the Bloomsbury USGS Gage is between 2' and 2.5'
- Tip: A difference of .25' above or below the ideal range for much of the river can change the difficulty rating from Easy Moving Water to Intermediate/Advanced Moving Water

#### Flatwater:

- Current is slow to moderate
- Passages are easily navigated and obstacles like strainers and dams are easily avoided

#### Easy Moving Water:

- Current moves at moderate pace
- Small riffles and rocky areas are easily navigated with clear, obvious channels
- Basic boat handling skills required to avoid rocks, strainers and other obstacles

#### Intermediate Moving Water:

- Current moves at moderate to swift pace
- Intermediate boat handling and river reading skills required to identify and navigate through rocky rapids and weirs, and navigate around broken dams, strainers and other obstacles
- Increased risk of getting caught on rocks and swept into or under strainers
- Some deadfall and strainers may require squeezing under, climbing over, or carrying around

#### Advanced Moving Water/Whitewater:

- Not generally applicable to the Musconetcong River.



# MUSCONETCONG WATER TRAILS

## LEGEND



Boat Access



Restrooms



Bridge



Hiking



Dam



Camping



Strainers



Playground



Danger

Roads

Musconetcong River

Lake Hopatcong

## LAKE WATER TRAILS

### 1. LAKE HOPATCONG STATE PARK

Beginner friendly paddling & beach

#### Launch Site/ Take Out:

Lake Hopatcong State Park, 260 Lakeside Boulevard, Landing, NJ offers public parking, restrooms, picnic grounds, swimming.

**Fees:** Summer \$6 parking fee for NJ residents and \$10 for non-residents; off season \$12 launch fee for NJ residents and \$20 for non-residents.

#### Highlights:

- Travel south to the no-wake zone in Landing Channel
- Abundant wildlife to view, including a Bald Eagle's nest

### 2. LEE'S COUNTY MARINA

Near restaurants and attractions

#### Launch Site/ Take Out:

Lee's County Park and Marina, 443 Howard Boulevard, Mt. Arlington, NJ offers ample parking and restrooms available in-season.

**Fees:** \$15 launch fee

#### Highlights:

- Travel through the middle (and busiest) section of Lake Hopatcong
- South to view historic homes and structures
- North to visit lakeside businesses, particularly on and around Nolan's Point

### 3. ASHLEY COVE

Beginner friendly no wake paddling

#### Launch Site/ Take Out:

Corner of Espanong Road and Ripplewood Dr., Jefferson Township, NJ, 40.963717 N 74.610669 W, limited street parking (observe No Parking signs).

**Fees:** No Fees

#### Highlights:

- Travel into Jefferson Canals toward Lake Shawnee
- Or travel across the no-wake channel to explore the natural preserve area along the west shore and around Liffy Island

### 4. MOUNTAIN INLET SANCTUARY

Popular coves near Raccoon and Halsey Islands

#### Launch Site/ Take Out:

Roland and May Eves Mountain Inlet Sanctuary, Lakeside Avenue, Hopatcong, NJ, 40.970846 N 74.640349 W, offers 10-15 parking spots, hiking trails.

**Fees:** No Fees

#### Highlights:

- Travel straight to Raccoon and Halsey Islands
- Turn left to go north into Henderson Cove
- Turn right to explore around the small islands and into Byram Cove

### 5. LAKE MUSCONETCONG BOAT RAMP

Fishing on a small lake

#### Launch Site/ Take Out:

Allen Street and Dell Street (behind Growing Stage Theater), Netcong, NJ, 40.900834 N 74.703881 W, limited parking, portable toilet available.

**Fees:** No Fees

#### Highlights:

- Stocked fishing lake; observe fish advisories
- Can be circumnavigated in an hour
- Morris Canal towpath runs along the shore

## RIVER WATER TRAILS

### 6. RIVERSIDE PARK TO SAXTON FALLS

Follow the Morris Canal through a mountainous gap (6.7 miles)

#### Launch Site:

Riverside Park (Byram Township) located at the Musconetcong River/Lubbers Run confluence on River Rd. next to Rt. 604 Bridge, 40.920929 N 74.730392 W, about a 45 yard carry from parking lot to put-in, parking, portable toilet.

#### Take Out:

Easy take-out at Waterloo Village, 525 Waterloo Rd., Stanhope, NJ, on river right just above the Saxton Falls dam, ample parking, pit toilets.

#### Degree of Difficulty:

Flatwater up to Intermediate Moving Water

#### Highlights:

- Uppermost stretch of the river - begins with a mile of Class II rapids
- Ends in slow water by Waterloo Village Historic District
- Saxton Falls Dam and Morris Canal

### 7. SAXTON FALLS TO HACKETTSTOWN

Mountain scenery ending in a small town (5.6 miles)

#### Launch Site:

Waterloo Village, 525 Waterloo Rd., Stanhope, NJ, just below Saxton Falls Dam, boats can be slid or carried down a steep bank with some difficulty, ample parking, pit toilets.

#### Take Out:

Fish and Wildlife access on State Route 57 below Schooleys Mountain Avenue bridge and 1/10 mile below overhead power line at river right, 40.834204 N 74.824323 W, 2-3 parking spots.

#### Degree of Difficulty:

Intermediate Moving Water to Advanced Moving Water/ Whitewater

#### Highlights:

- Most suitable for paddlers who can negotiate Class II (+) rapids
- Upper portion passes through Stephens State Park and mountain scenery
- Highlands Trail on river left
- Overnight camping available at Stephens State Parking (only camping area on the Musconetcong)

### 8. KINGS HIGHWAY TO HAMPTON BOROUGH PARK

Historic bridges & hamlets (12 miles)

#### Launch Site:

Immediately below the Kings Highway Road Bridge on river left, 40.812911 N 74.841653 W, parking for 4 or 5 vehicles.

#### Take Out:

Hampton Borough Park and Playground, 40.711050 N 74.967874 W, ample parking, portable toilet, picnic pavilion, interpretive sign on Native American history

#### Degree of Difficulty:

Intermediate Moving Water, brief portage at Penwell Mill Dam

#### Highlights:

- Brief stretches of Class II rapids (Point Mountain Park and between Changewater and Hampton)
- Avoid rapids by launching at Point Mountain Road Bridge
- Four historic hamlets, Beattystown, Penwell, New Hampton, and Imlaydale
- Historic bridges: Stephensburg Stone Arch Bridge, New Hampton Pony Truss Bridge, and stone railroad bridge piers at Changewater, and more

### 9. HAMPTON BOROUGH PARK TO BLOOMSBURY

Best for beginners (9 miles)

#### Launch Site:

Hampton Borough Park and Playground, 40.711050 N 74.967874 W, parking, portable toilet.

#### Take Out:

Bloombsbury, river-right above the Rt. 173 bridge and just downstream of the Rt. 78 overpass, 40.659038 N 75.080737 W, limited parking, additional parking under near I-78 overpasses.

#### Degree of Difficulty:

Intermediate Moving Water, river right portage at Asbury Mill Dam across bridge

#### Highlights:

- Mostly agricultural landscape or private land
- Most suitable segment for those with limited river-paddling experience
- Musky Trout Hatchery on river-right near the Route 78 bridge at river right
- Musconetcong Watershed Association native plant garden
- Asbury Historic District and Mill



### 10. BLOOMSBURY TO HUGHESVILLE

Advanced whitewater in the Musconetcong Gorge (4.5 miles)

#### Launch Site:

Bloombsbury, river-right above the Rt. 173 bridge and just downstream of the Rt. 78 overpass, 40.659038 N 75.080737 W, limited parking, additional parking under near I-78 overpasses.

#### Take Out:

Hughesville Fishing Access, (across from Hughesville Fire House), 40.629667 N 75.144111 W, limited parking (3-4 spots).

#### Degree of Difficulty:

Intermediate to Advanced Moving Water/Whitewater (aka class I-II+), portage river left at 39' tall Warren Mill Dam, path to river about 200' below dam.

#### Highlights:

- The Musconetcong's only true whitewater
- Two sets of stone portals under railway crossings
- View of the former Warren Paper Mill at the Route 519 bridge
- Three constructed riffles downstream of former Paper Mill

### 11. HUGHESVILLE TO DELAWARE RIVER

Restored river with early industrial heritage (4.1 miles)

#### Launch Site:

Hughesville Fishing Access, (across from Hughesville Fire House), 40.629667 N 75.144111W, limited parking (3-4 spots).

#### Take Out:

Riegelsville Boat Ramp on the Delaware River, 15 Old River Rd., Milford, NJ, 40.591993 N 75.188208 W, ample parking, portable toilets

#### Degree of Difficulty:

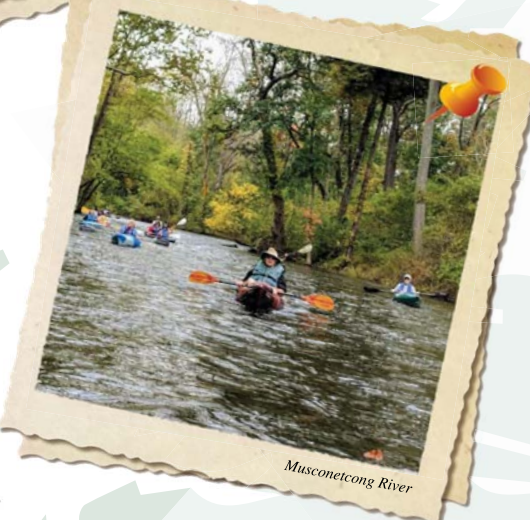
Intermediate Moving Water, watch out for strainers

#### Highlights:

- Reflects natural ecosystems being restored from heavy industrial usage
- Meanders through dense forest, under truss bridges, past old mills, and through historic districts
- Riegelsville Bridge on the Delaware River by the take out



Finesville Historic District



Musconetcong River

0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles

