

The Delaware River and watershed are important for many reasons:

Nearly 15 million people (about 5% of the nation's population) rely on the waters of the Basin for drinking water which includes about 7 million people in New York City and northern New Jersey who live outside the Basin.

World's largest freshwater port complex and one of the Nation's largest oil/container ports. Hundreds of oil tankers ferry about 1 million barrels of oil to the six large refineries along or near the bay and river each year. Some ride too deep in the water to safely negotiate the river's 40-foot main shipping channel without first offloading oil, a process called lightering.

One the world's largest freshwater tidal estuaries with more than 405,000 acres of wetlands.

Three-quarters of the non-tidal river (about 150 miles or 241 kilometers) has been included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The watershed is home to more than 200 fish species including important anadromous and euryhaline fishes such as the American shad, striped bass, and sturgeon.

The watershed provides habitat for federally protected endangered species such as dwarf wedgemussel, short-nose sturgeon, bald eagles, and bog turtles.

The officially recognized mouth is Liston Point, DE: Lat: 38° 50' N      Long: 75° 00' W

Total Length of the River is 370 miles

Ranks 17th among 135 US Rivers that are over 100 miles long

Tidal influence begins 85 miles above the mouth.

Drainage Area: 12,765 square miles (includes parts of DE, MD, NJ, PA and NY)

Average Rainfall: 44 inches per year

Water use:

Residential      More than 6.5 million people use about 850 million gallons of ground and surface water each day.

Industrial      7 billion gallons (mostly surface) per day