



Town of
Tusten
an Upper Delaware River Community

WELCOME

**Natural Resource Inventory,
Open Space and Recreation Plan**

OPEN HOUSE

December 4, 2024 7:00 – 8:30 PM



Overview



Town of
Tusten
an Upper Delaware River Community



Photo Source: MJ

About the Project

The Town of Tusten has undertaken an effort to develop a Town-wide Natural Resources Inventory (NRI), Open Space and Recreation Plan. The NRI will identify key environmental and open space resources within the Town including wetlands, wildlife habitats, flood zones, forests and more. The Open Space and Recreation Plan will build upon the NRI and establish a vision for a Town-wide network of open spaces.

This project is being led by the Town of Tusten and guided by the Town's Conservation Advisory Council. The planning process will be facilitated by Town staff with technical assistance from MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.

This project is funded, in part, through a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund 2023 and the Upper Delaware Council.

Conservation Advisory Council

The Natural Resources Inventory and Open Space & Recreation Plan will be guided by the **Conservation Advisory Council**:

- Jane Luchinger (Chair) - Tusten Deputy Supervisor
- Spencer Branch
- Cathleen Breen
- Bernnie Lohman
- Donovan Sylvest

The planning process will be facilitated by Town staff with technical assistance from MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.

Additional Project Partners

Peter Manning (Genius Loci) will serve as the project liaison and will be responsible for aiding project facilitation and communication among project partners.

Additional support and technical assistance will be provided by Sullivan County Planning and Real Property Services Departments and the Delaware Highlands Conservancy.

Did you know?

The Town of Tusten boasts nearly 14 miles of Delaware River shoreline, containing significant habitats for birds, fish and wildlife. The Delaware River is designated by the National Parks Service as a Scenic and Recreational River and is managed through State and Federal partnerships by the Upper Delaware Council.



Photo Source: MJ





Photo Source: MJ

What is a Natural Resources Inventory?

As part of this effort, the Town will undertake a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) to identify environmental resources and constraints within the Town. This includes water resources, wildlife habitats, flood zones, forests and more. The NRI will update the 2011 Natural Resources and Open Space Inventory.

The “Why?”

This update will expand on the 2011 inventory to include more recent data as well as addition resources recommended by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation such as geology, soils, watershed boundaries, etc.

The NRI can be used to inform the community of what resources exist within the Town and why they are important. The NRI will also be used as a resource for the Town Board and Planning board. Finally, the identification of these key features will also help to inform the Open Space & Recreation Plan.

What is an Open Space and Recreation Plan?

An Open Space and Recreation Plan establishes a vision for a Town-wide network of open spaces. The plan will create a roadmap to ensure an appropriate balance of open space, public access, natural resources and public recreational opportunities. The plan will also enable the Town to identify priorities for open space protection.

The “Why?”

The development of the Open Space and Recreation Plan furthers two key goals of the 2021 Comprehensive Plan:

"Balance protection of the Town's water quality, open spaces, and animal and plant habitats with encouraging economic activities that help conserve the Town's scenic and rural character."

"Work to create new opportunities for public access to lands and waters to increase recreational and educational options for residents and visitors."

This work will set the stage for future implementation of conservation projects and new recreational opportunities. Through active public involvement, this process will create community consensus on recreation and conservation priorities as well as appropriate methods (such as regulations, voluntary incentives, and perhaps public funding) for completing such projects.



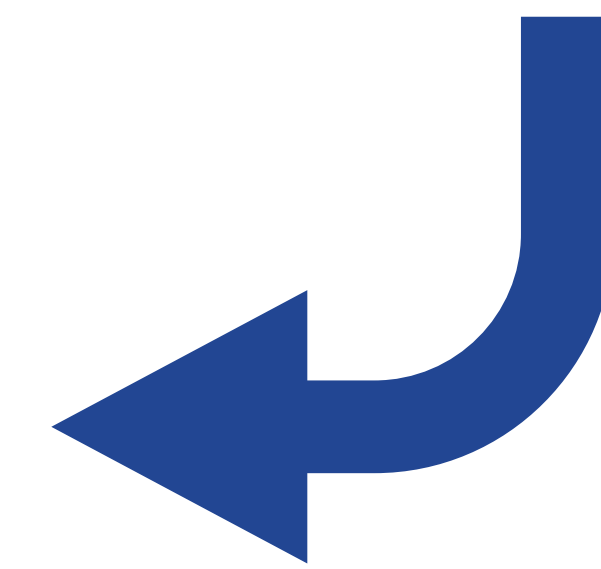
Opportunities for Public Engagement

Active community involvement is critical to the planning process! Three public meetings will be held through the duration of the project as well as stakeholder meetings and a Community Visioning Survey. A Public Engagement Plan was developed which details the anticipated engagement activities for the project. Read the Public Engagement Plan on the project website at www.TustenOpenSpaceRecreation.com

Want to stay in the know? Sign up to receive emails about upcoming public engagement through the contact page on project website or by scanning the QR Code!



Scan me with your
mobile device to sign
up to receive updates!



Anticipated Project Schedule

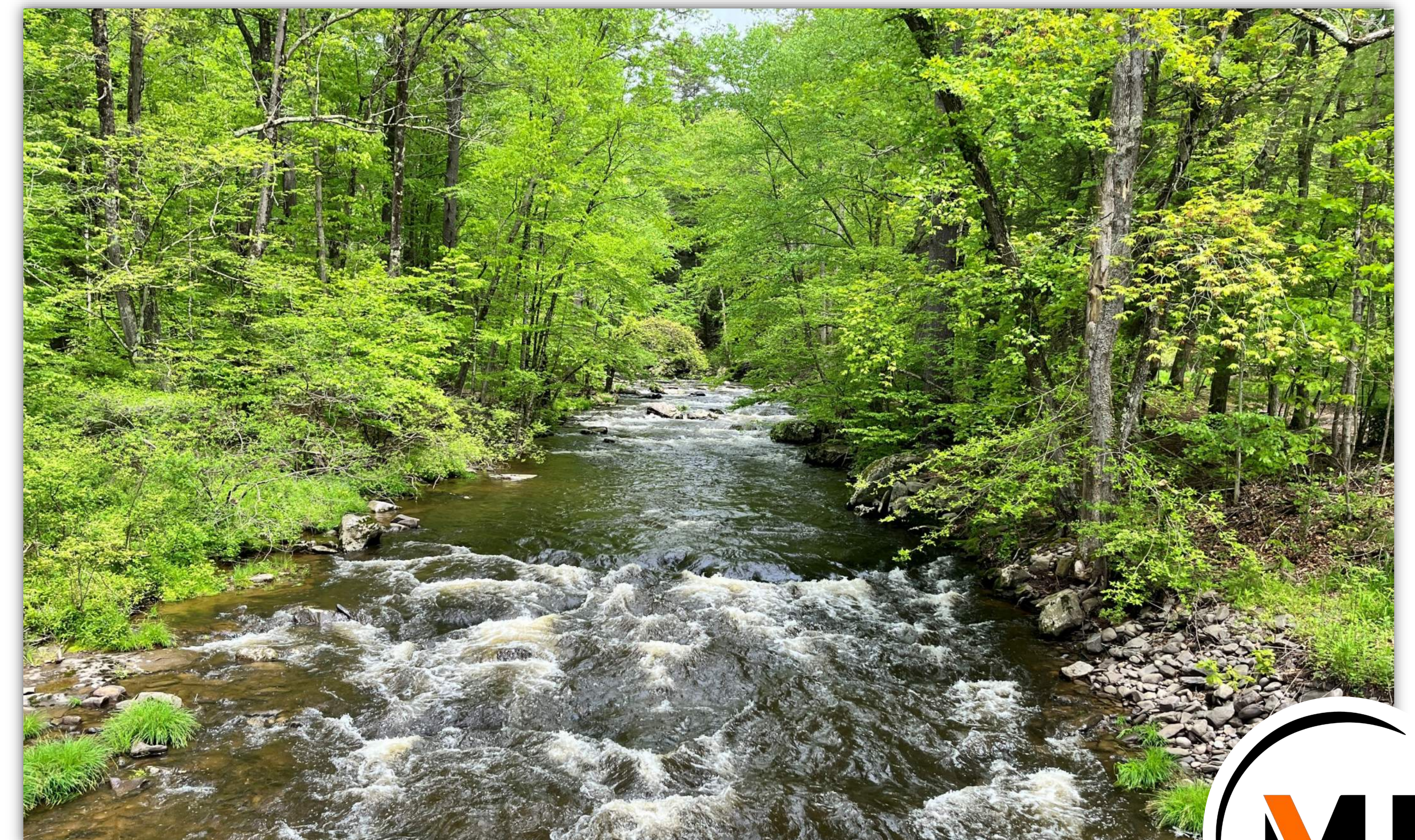
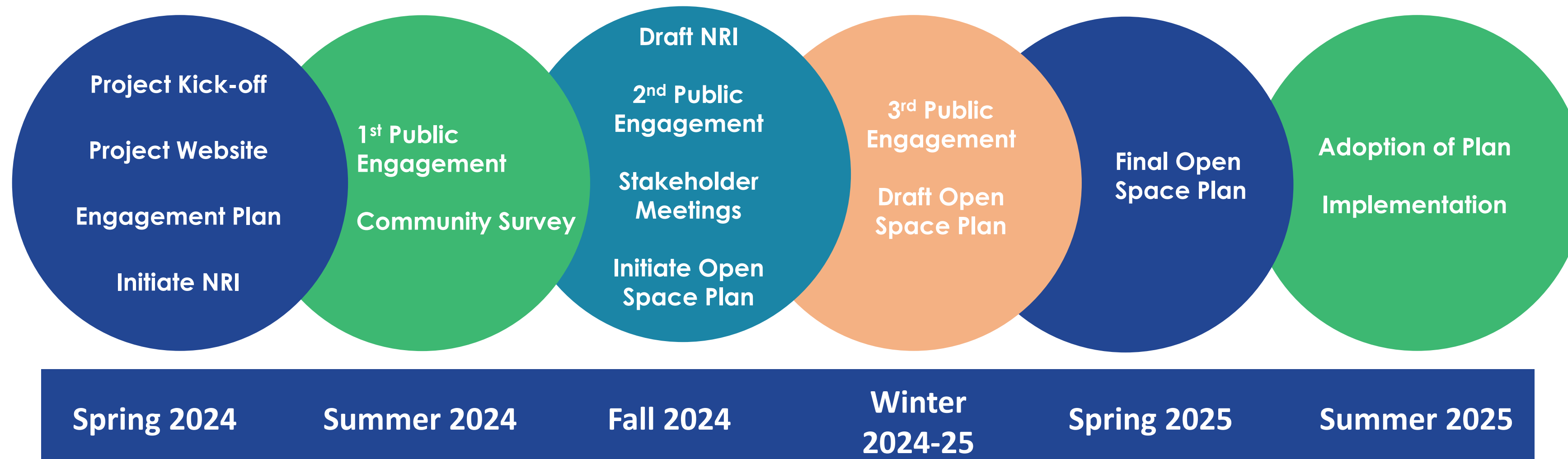
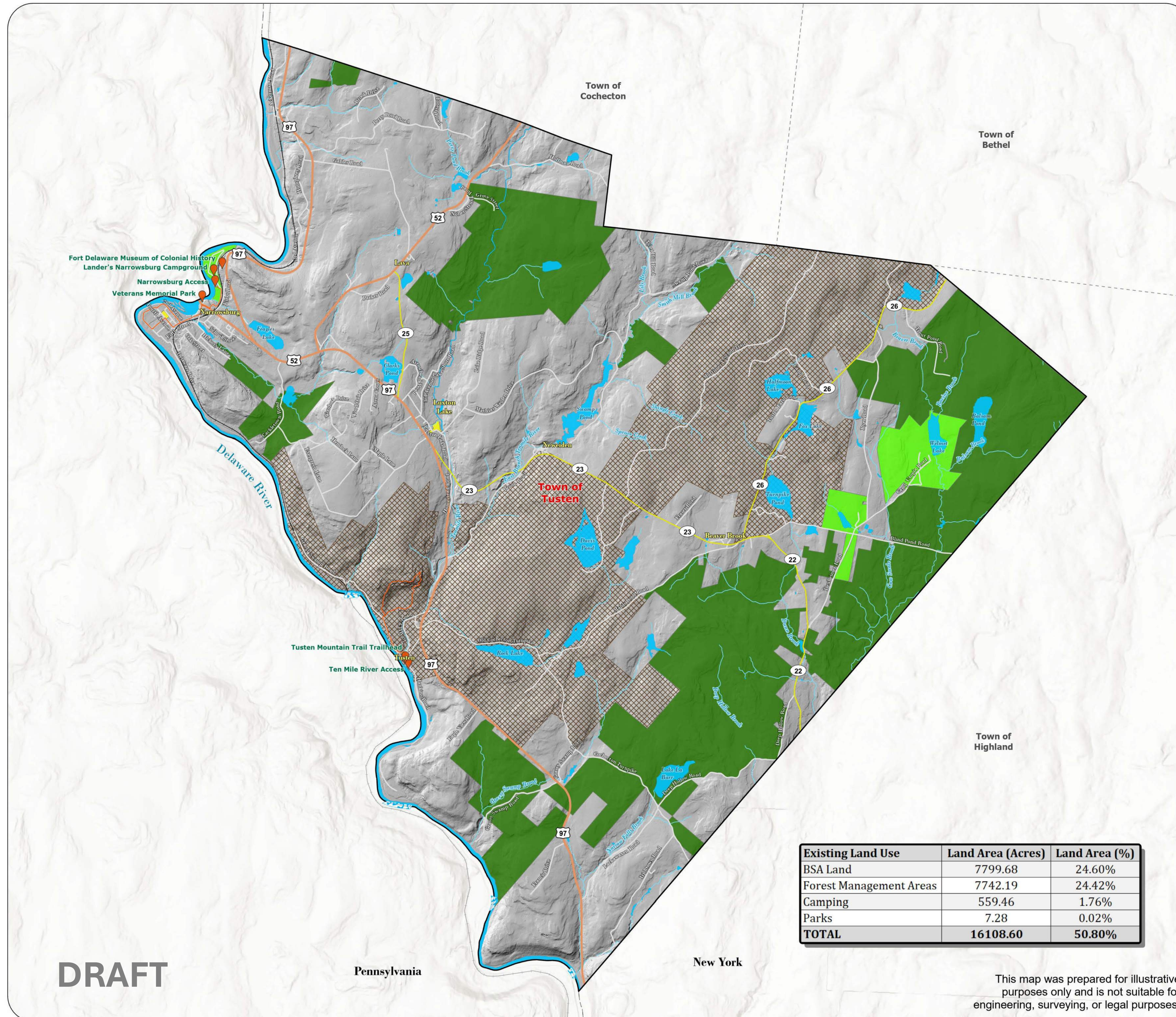


Photo Source: MJ



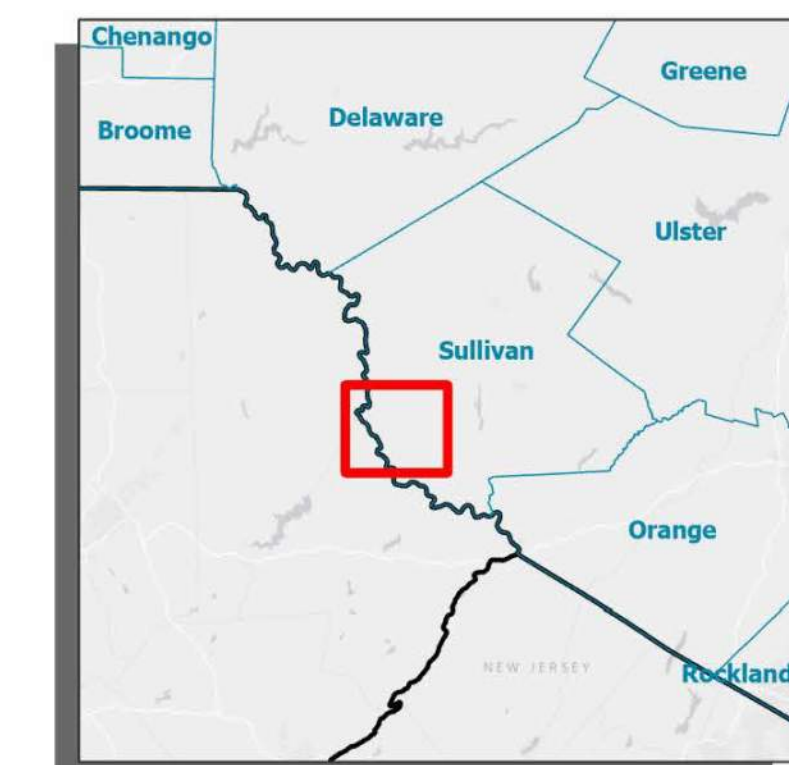


Parks, Recreation & Open Space



LEGEND

- Town of Tusten
- Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- River / Stream
- Waterbody
- River Rapids
- Hiking Trail
- Points of Interest
- BSA Land
- Camping
- Forest Management Areas (Private)
- Parks



Existing Land Use	Land Area (Acres)	Land Area (%)
BSA Land	7799.68	24.60%
Forest Management Areas	7742.19	24.42%
Camping	559.46	1.76%
Parks	7.28	0.02%
TOTAL	16108.60	50.80%

DRAFT

This map was prepared for illustrative purposes only and is not suitable for engineering, surveying, or legal purposes.



Sources:
Esri, NYS ITS, NYDEC, NPS
Sullivan County, Town of Tusten

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Miles



Tusten's Unique Location on the Delaware River

The Town of Tusten shares 14 miles of shoreline with the Delaware River along its western boundary. The river and shoreline area is a National Recreational and Scenic River stretching for 73 miles from Hancock to Port Jervis. The area is managed by the National Parks Service and the Upper Delaware Council.

What does it mean to be a Recreational River Area?

Recreational River areas indicate areas where the shoreline is more developed and easier for public access.

What does it mean to be a Scenic River Area?

Scenic river areas indicate areas of primarily undeveloped shoreline.

The Delaware River is an important habitat for wildlife such as Bald Eagles, Great Blue Herons, otters, white-tailed deer, salamanders and Timber Rattlesnakes.

Recreation within the Town is also influenced by the Delaware River. Locals and seasonal visitors have access to kayaking, canoeing, rafting, bird watching, fishing and other activities along the scenic shoreline.



NYSDEC Boat Launch in Narrowsburg along the Delaware River.



Delaware River Access near the Ten Mile River.

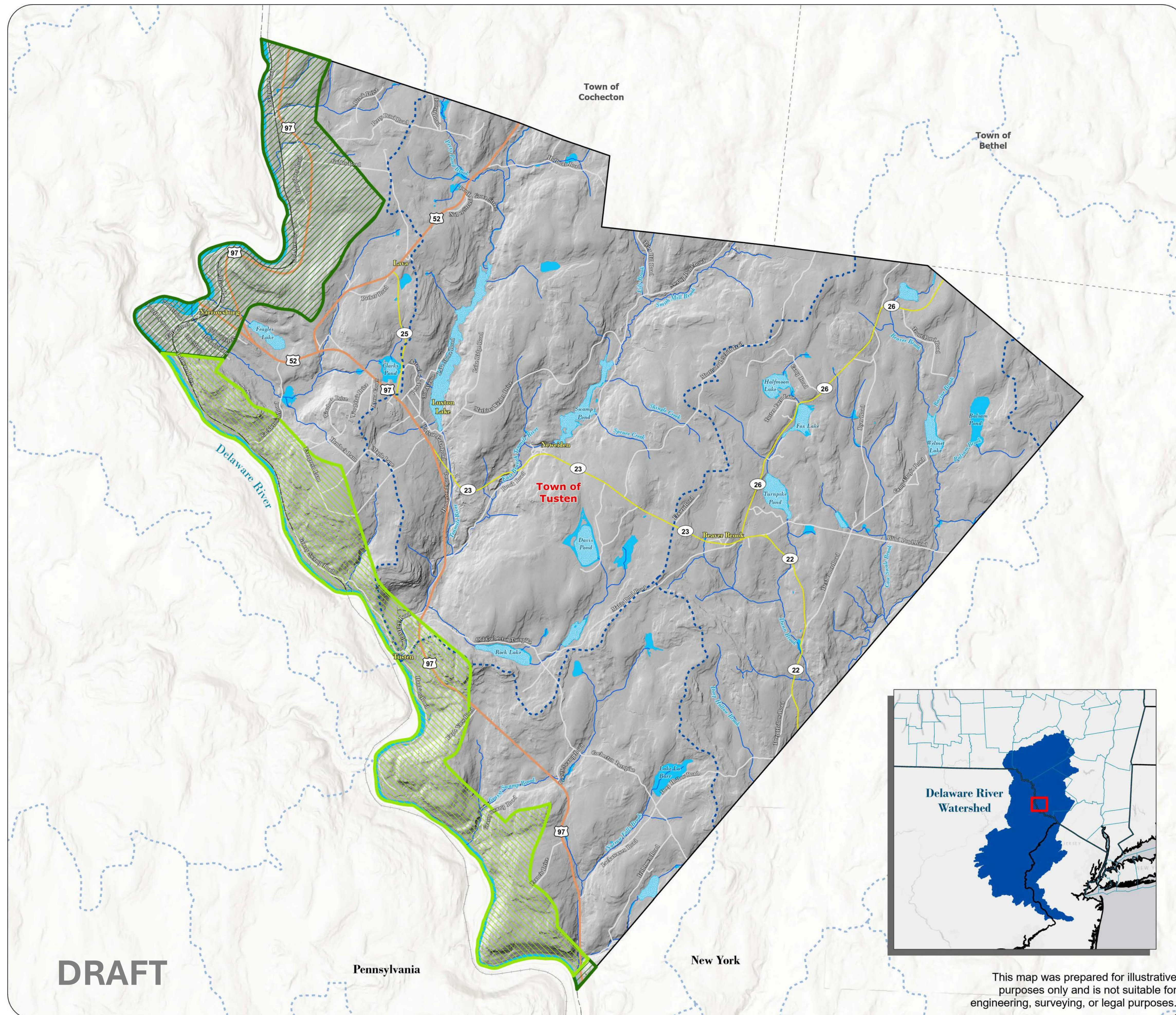


The Delaware River shoreline is an important winter habitat for the Bald Eagle.





Delaware Riverbank & Hydrology

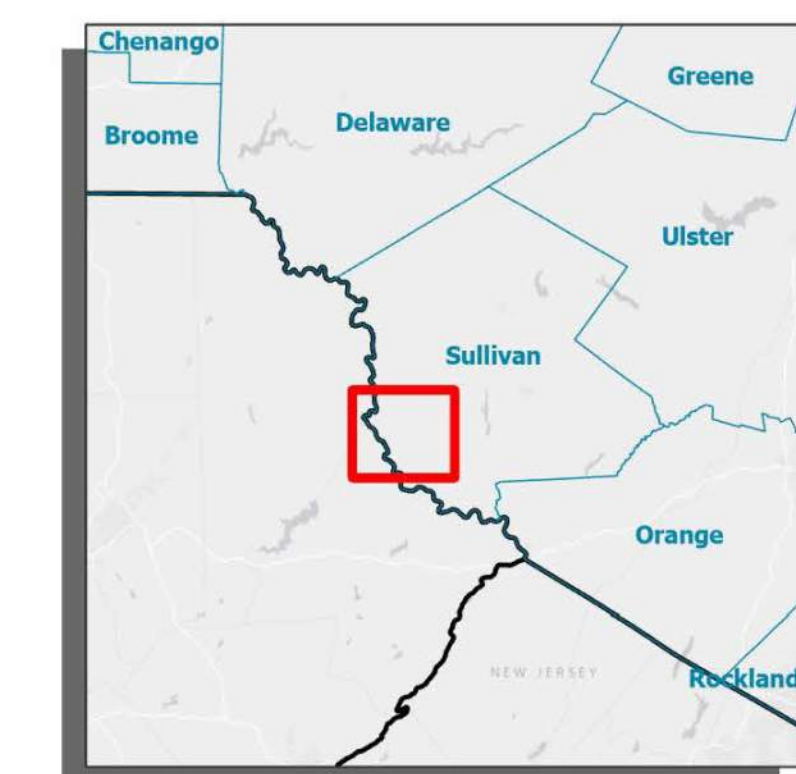
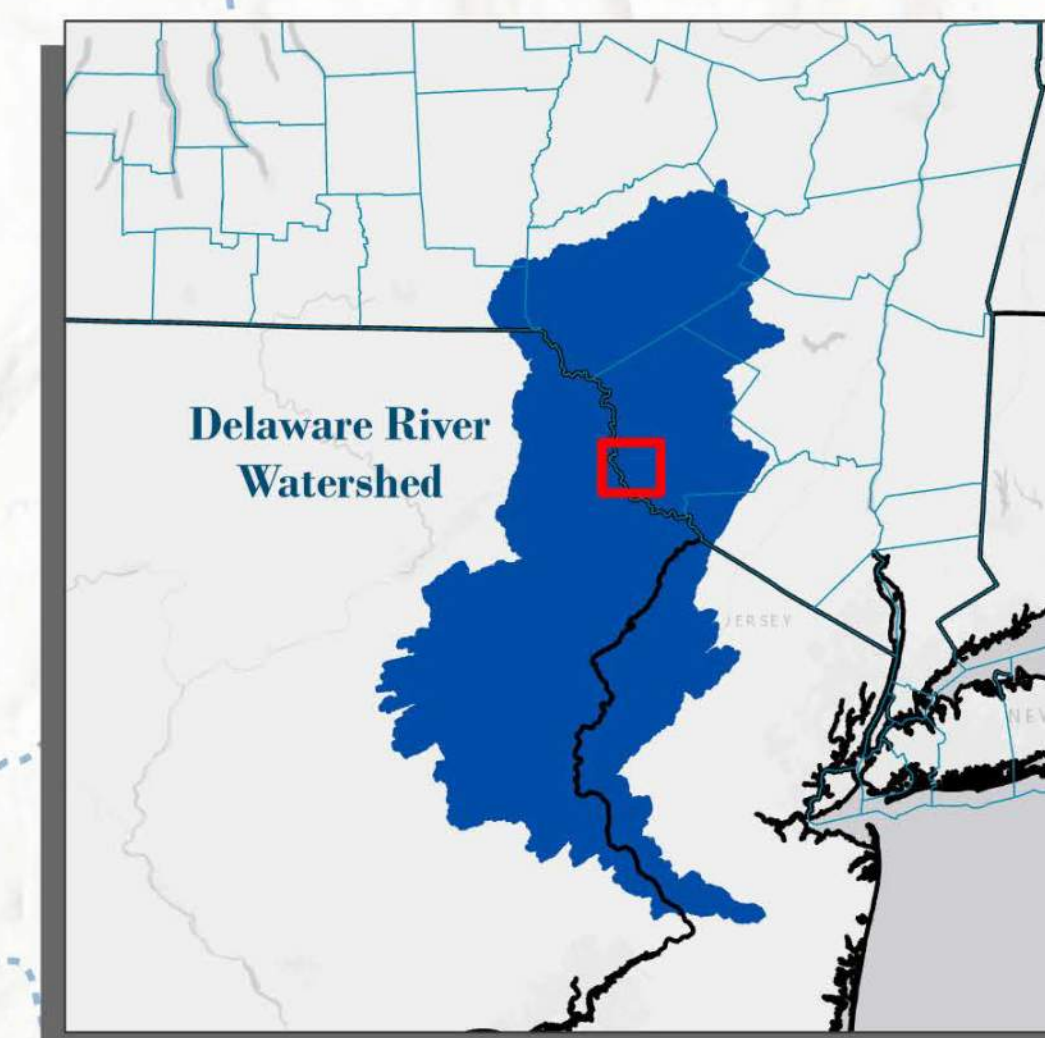


LEGEND

- Town of Tusten
- Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- DEC Streams
- DEC Lakes
- Watershed Boundary
- Waterbody

Upper Delaware River Administrative Boundary Type

- Recreational
- Scenic



Sources:
Esri, NYS ITS, NYDEC, NPS
Sullivan County, Town of Tusten

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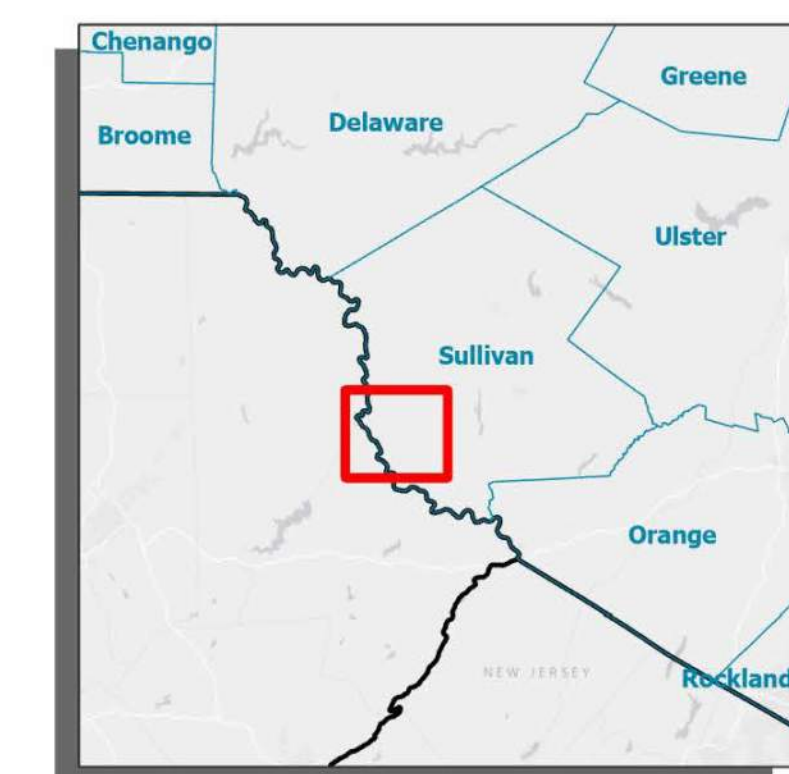
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Known Wetlands

LEGEND

- Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- NYSDEC Wetlands
- NWI Federal Wetlands
- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Riverine



NWI Federal Wetlands	Land Area (Acres)	Land Area (%)
Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	992.8	3.1%
Riverine	584.7	1.8%
Lake	451.7	1.4%
Freshwater Emergent Wetland	271.4	0.9%
Freshwater Pond	192.0	0.6%
TOTAL (Federal)	2492.6	7.9%
NYSDEC Wetlands	1168.7	3.7%

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Pennsylvania

New York

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Sources:
Esri, NYS ITS, NYDEC, NPS
Sullivan County, Town of Tusten

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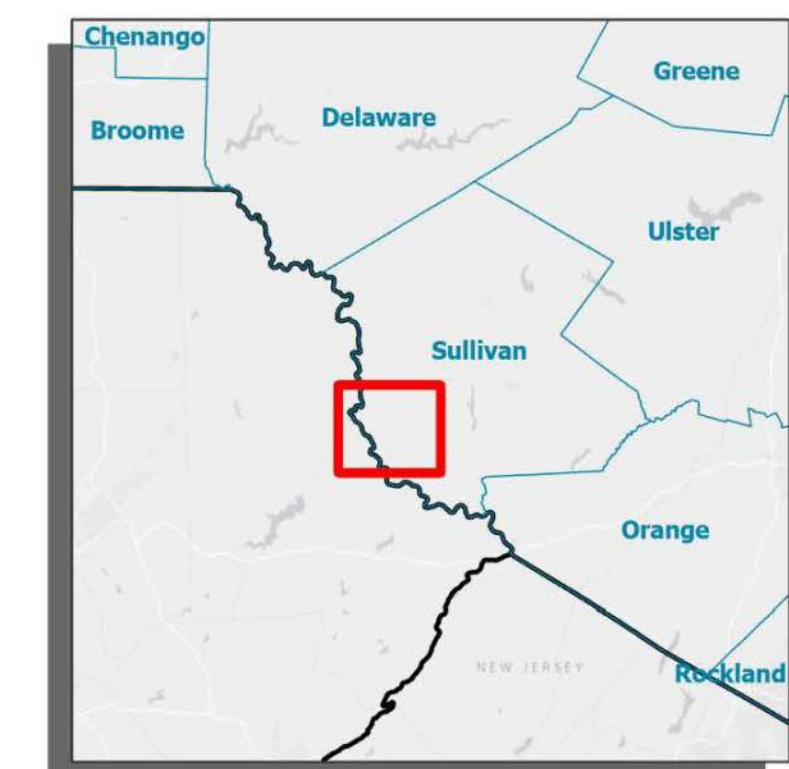




Habitats, Biodiversity & Ecological Communities

LEGEND

- Town of Tusten
- Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- River / Stream
- Significant Natural Communities
- Aquatic Animals
- Terrestrial Animals
- State Regulated Freshwater Wetlands
- Important Bird Areas
- Rare Plants and Animals



Sources:
Esri, NYS ITS, NYDEC, NYNHP,
NPS, National Audubon Society,
Sullivan County, Town of Tusten



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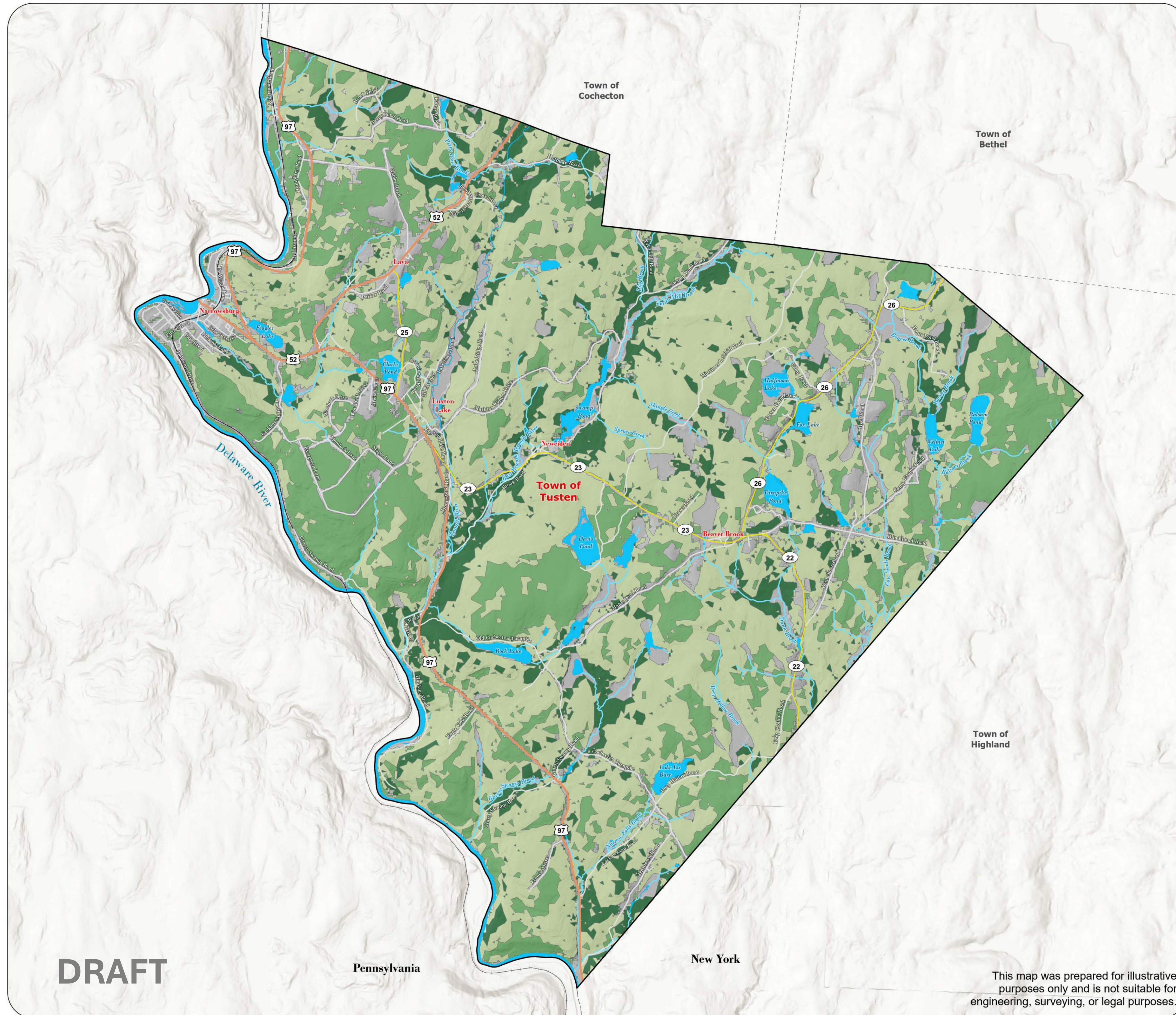
Pennsylvania

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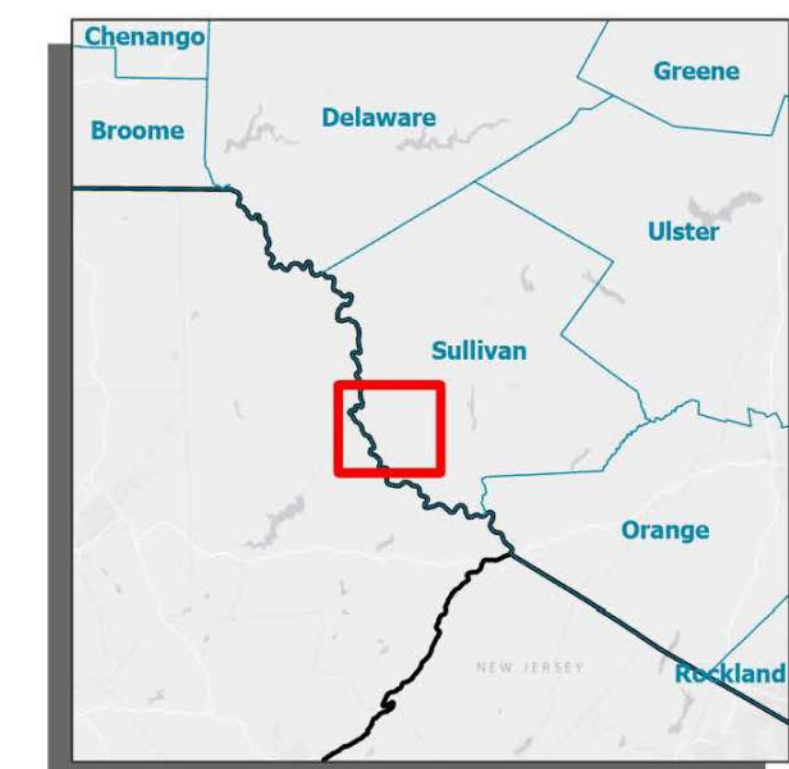
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Forested Areas



- Town of Tusten
- Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Waterbody
- River / Stream
- Deciduous Forest
- Evergreen Forest
- Mixed Forest



DRAFT

Pennsylvania

New York

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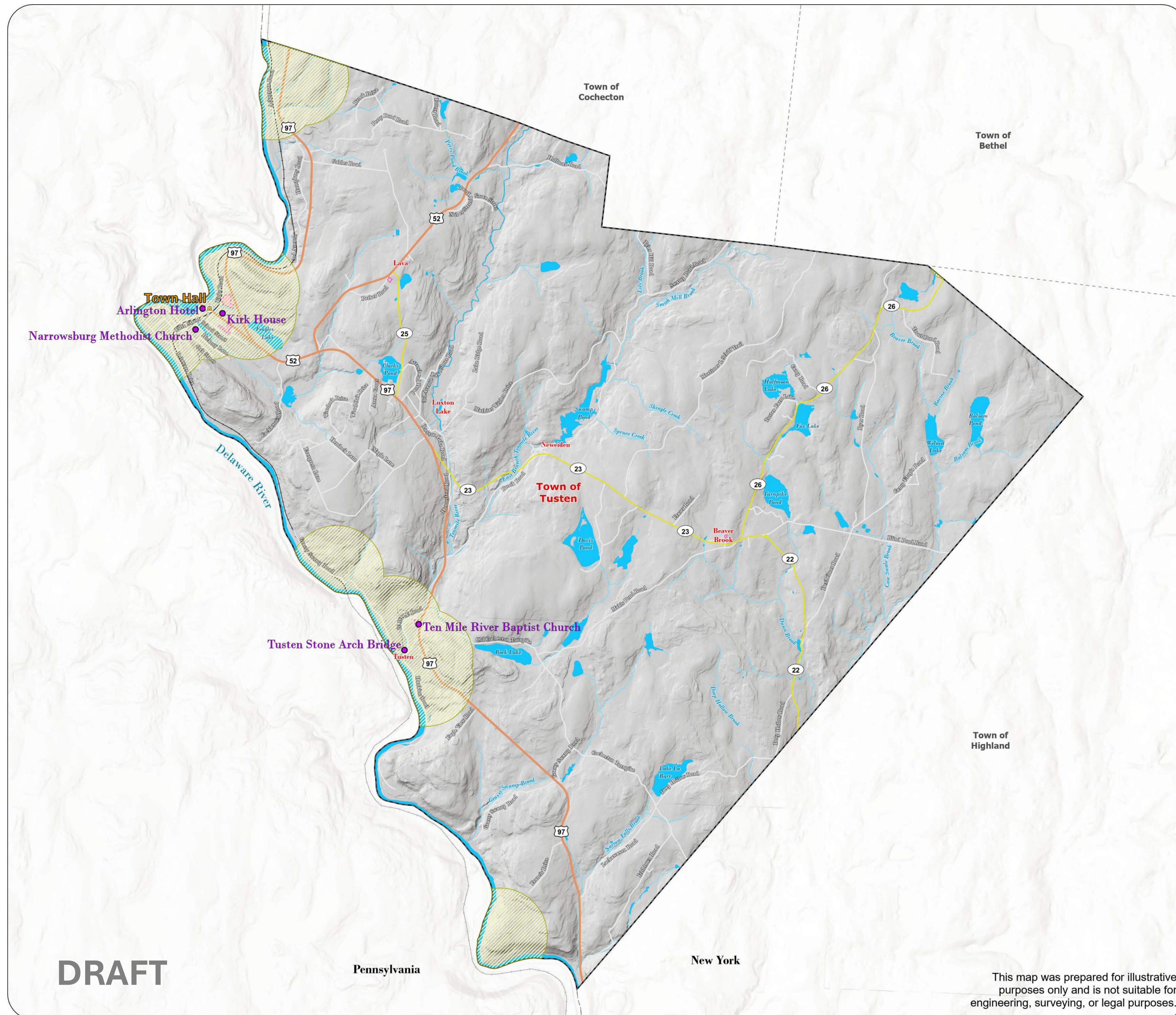
Sources:
Esri, NYS ITS, NYDEC, NPS,
USDA, NLCD, Sullivan County,
Town of Tusten

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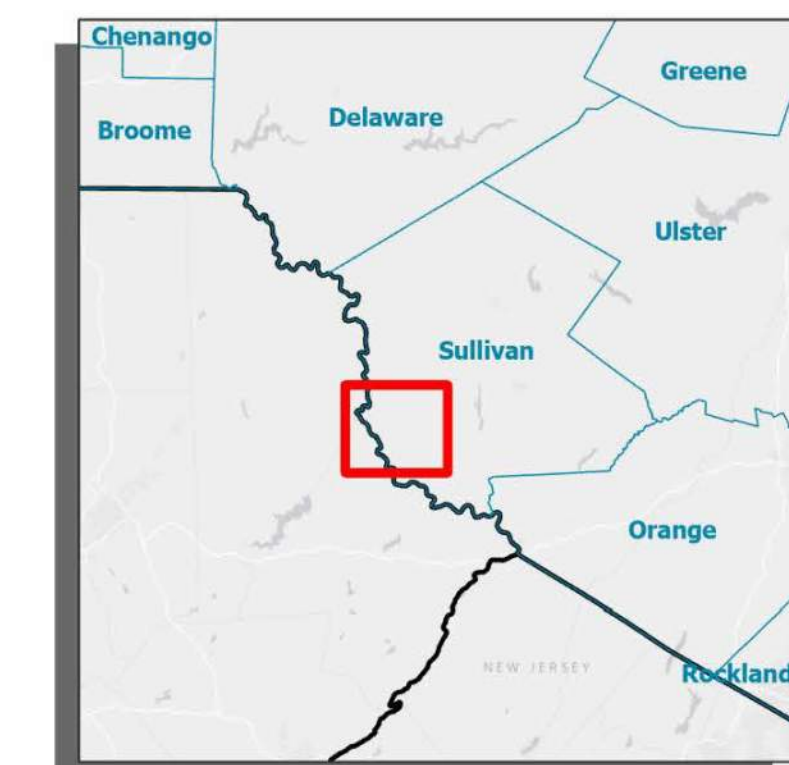


Cultural & Historic Sites



LEGEND

- Town of Tusten
- Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- River / Stream
- Waterbody
- Cemeteries
- Library
- Archaeological Buffer Areas
- National Register of Historic Places
- Tusten Town Hall



DRAFT

Pennsylvania

New York

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Sources:
Esri, NYS ITS, NYDEC, NPS,
Sullivan County, Town of Tusten

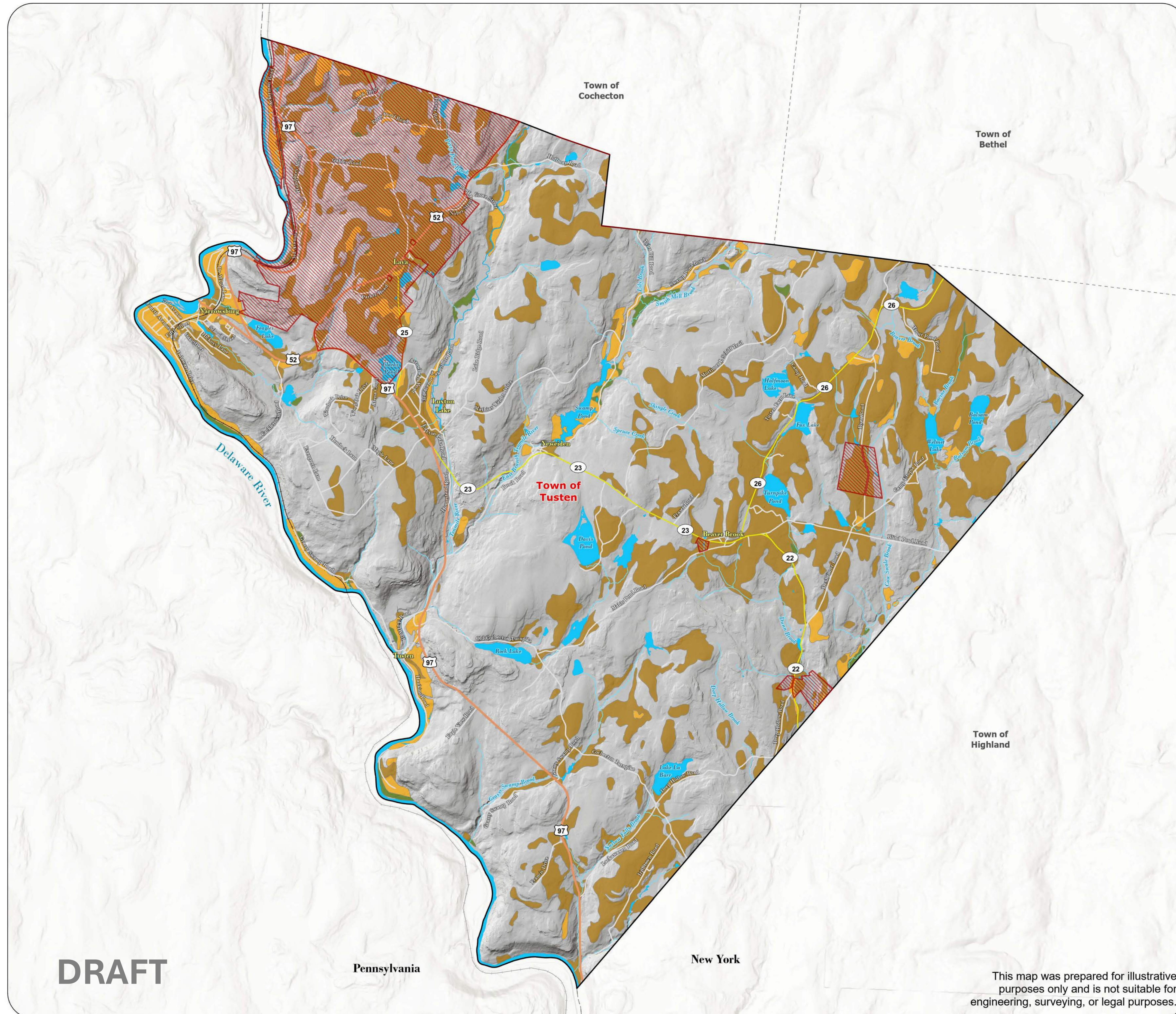
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Engineering
Architecture
Landscape Architecture
and Land Surveying, P.C.

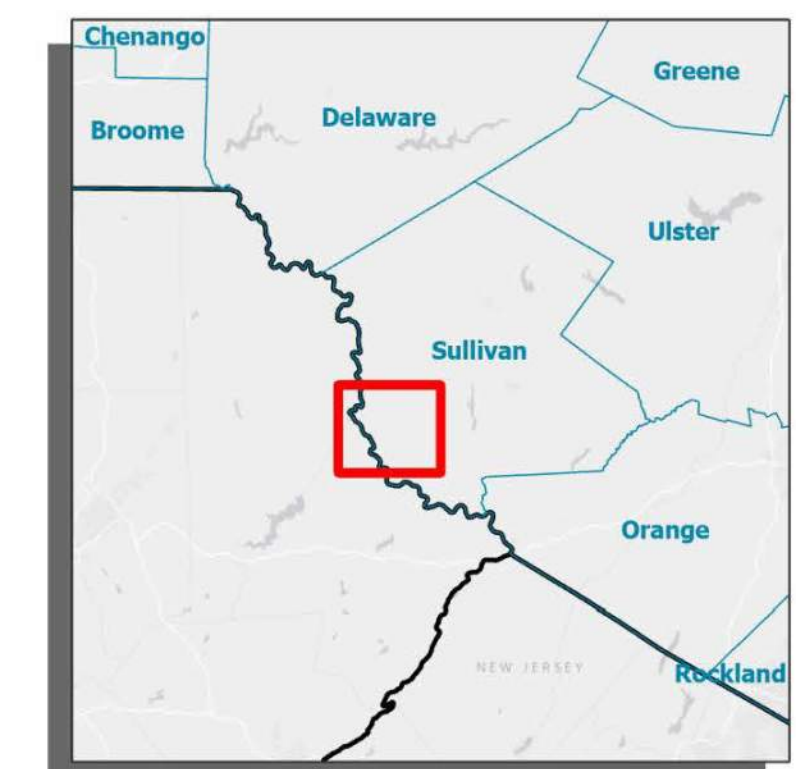


Agricultural Resources



LEGEND

- Town of Tusten
- Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- River / Stream
- Waterbody
- County Agricultural District # 1
- Prime Farmland Soils
- Prime Farmland Soils if Drained
- Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance



Sources:
Esri, NYS ITS, NYS Museum,
NYDEC, USDA, NPS, Sullivan
County, Town of Tusten



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Open Space Vision



DRAFT Open Space & Recreation Vision

The Town of Tusten is a rural Upper Delaware River community that thrives alongside nature, where residents and visitors can enjoy natural beauty and clean water while respecting and preserving the ecosystems that define it. Development within the Town is balanced, ensuring growth is in harmony with its environmental and historical heritage. Community supported enhancements to a range of recreational opportunities connect people of all ages to the river and nature while leaving the fewest footprints.

What key words resonate most with you?

Post-It Notes Here



What is Open Space?

From the 2016 New York State Open Space and Conservation Plan:

“Open space is **public or private land not intensively developed** for residential, commercial, industrial or institutional use. It includes farms and forests, coastal and estuarine lands, scenic lands, parks and preserves. It also includes water bodies, such as lakes and bays. **Open space is defined partly by its surroundings.** A vacant lot or small marsh can be open space in a city. A narrow pathway for walking or bicycling is open space, even though surrounded by developed areas. “

Some examples of what open space in Tusten may include:

- ❖ Parks
- ❖ Former Boy Scout Lands
- ❖ Trails (Tusten Mountain Trail, The Flats trail)
- ❖ Delaware River, Ten Mile River
- ❖ Smaller Brooks and streams
- ❖ Lakes and waterbodies
- ❖ Wildlife habitats
- ❖ Forests and Forest Management Areas
- ❖ Historic sites



What does Open Space mean to you?

Post-It Notes Here



Community Survey Overview

The results of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan survey highlighted the desire for more recreation opportunities and the preservation of land within the Town. Building on those responses, the purpose of the Community Survey for the NRI, Open Space and Recreation Plan was to identify specific needs and priorities for conservation and public recreation.

The Community Survey was created and distributed using the Survey Monkey web platform and was launched at the first Open House on August 1st, 2024. Paper copies were mailed to all residents and could be returned to the Tusten Town Hall. The survey remained open until September 30th, 2024. A total of 178 responses were received!



Survey Flyer

**178
Responses!**



Project Card

The survey was advertised on the project website, through press releases, and publicity pushes from the Town and Committee Members. Flyers and survey cards were also distributed which included a Quick Response (QR) code so respondents could access the survey directly on a mobile device.

91%

Said Open Space and scenery is “Very Important”



When asked what three types of open space were most crucial to preserve, top responses were:

- Forests (71%)
- Delaware Riverfront (58%)
- Areas around lakes, waterways (56%)
- Wildlife Habitats (54%)

When asked what they value most about natural resources and open space in Tusten, some key themes included:

- ❖ **Natural Beauty, Scenic Views** – Including river access and untouched landscapes.
- ❖ **Peacefulness and Serenity** – Peace and quiet, can disconnect from urban life, quiet reflection.
- ❖ **Wildlife and Habitat Preservation** - Protecting wildlife, preserving forests, wetlands and open spaces that foster biodiversity.
- ❖ **Sustainable Access and Recreation** - Such as hiking, fishing, and swimming.
- ❖ **Environmental Health and Cleanliness** - Importance of clean air, and water, ensuring the natural landscape remains undisturbed.

89%

Said increasing public access, developing recreation opportunities was “Very Important” or “Somewhat Important”.



When asked what types of new public recreation they would like to see in Tusten (select all that apply), top responses included:

- Additional walking/hiking trails (54%)
- New Picnic Areas/Public Gathering spaces (38%)
- New Swimming opportunities (37%)
- Bicycling (35%)

When asked what types of improvements to Tusten’s parks and open spaces would make the community a better place to live, some key themes included:

- ❖ **Expanded and Improved Trails** – More walking, hiking, and biking trails, more accessible paths.
- ❖ **Improved Access, Amenities, Gathering Spaces** – Expanding river access, picnic areas, restrooms, etc.
- ❖ **Focus on Wildlife, Nature, and Conservation** - Preserving natural habitats, promoting native plantings, balance wildlife with recreation.
- ❖ **Community Recreation and Activities** - Suggestions for outdoor exercise equipment, playground enhancements, swimming areas, sports leagues, areas for multi-generational use and more community events.

Open Space Priorities



Photo Source: Community Survey

What are Open Space and Recreation Priorities?

Open space and recreation priorities are the communities' desires for the future. Priorities can be specific – such as improvements to a specific park. Priorities can also be broad – such as the protection of stream corridors or areas of high wildlife value.

Priorities can be short term or longer term. For instance, a short-term priority could be expanding a particular trail. They can also be longer term – such as the development of connections from neighborhoods to the waterfront or public recreation areas.

The identification of priorities will help to inform future recommendations and voluntary tools for conservation.



Photo Source: Community Survey

How are Open Space and Recreation Priorities Identified?

- ❖ **Public Input** – Through the many public engagement activities such as the community survey, stakeholder meetings and the open houses.
- ❖ **Town and CAC input** – Through meeting with the Town and CAC throughout the planning process. Also, through existing Town planning documents, such as the 2021 Comprehensive Plan.
- ❖ **Mapping Natural Resources** – Another way to identify broader areas of priority is to map the existing natural resources within the Town!

How can we visualize what's important in Tusten?

One way to visualize this is through the Natural Resource Inventory mapping! The NRI is collection of many maps which identify a range of natural resources throughout the Town – from waterways and wetlands, to wildlife habitats and forests. Together these maps tell a story about the natural environment in the Town.

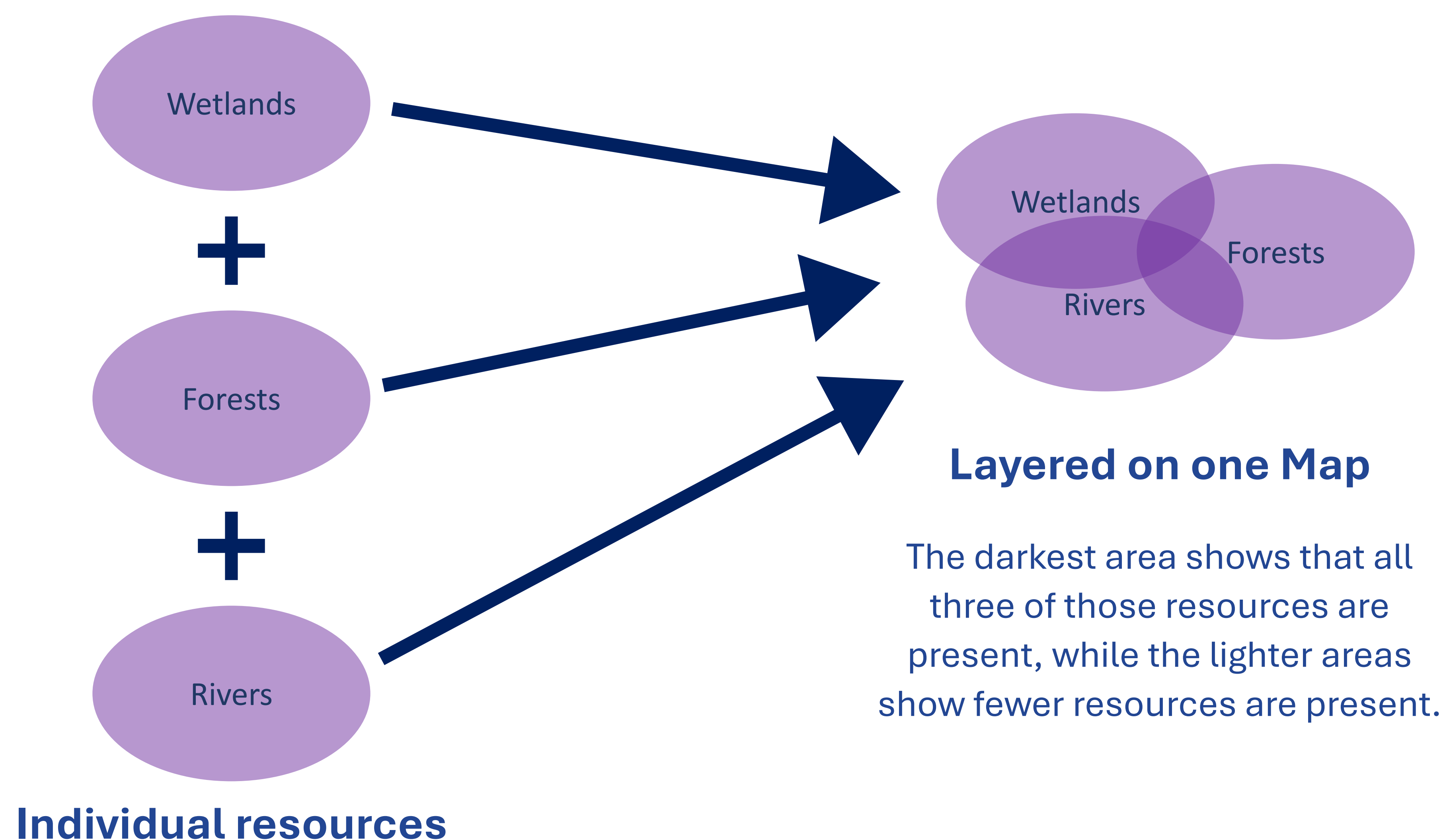
Information from these maps can be combined into one map to help illustrate where the greatest concentration of these resources are! The resulting map can assist the Town in the future when a landowner expresses interest in conservation or when an application for development is before the Town.



LAYERING NATURAL RESOURCES

The map on the table shows many natural resources from the NRI – all on one map! Each natural resource is shown in the same color with a transparency – or opacity. This means that when the resources are “layered” or stacked on top of each other, the areas will appear darker. This produces a visual example of the concentration of natural resources throughout the Town!

EXAMPLE:



MAPPING EXERCISE:

Use the map on the table and the sticky notes or markers provided to identify what areas are important to you – or what surprised you most!



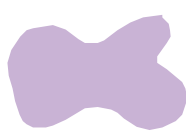
Layering Natural Resources

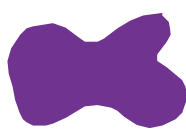
Natural Resources Illustrated

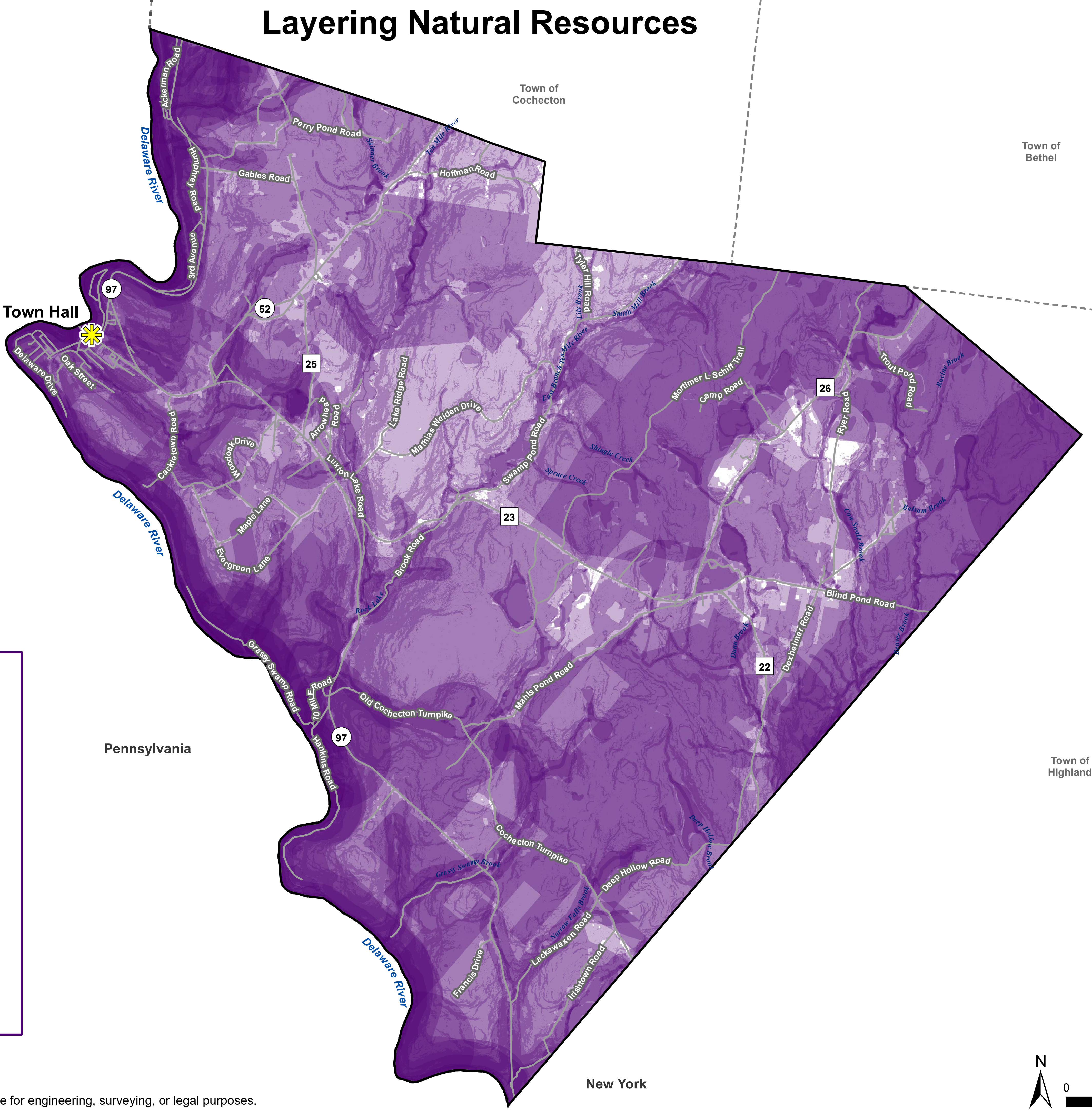
- * Rivers and Streams
- * Lakes
- * Federal Wetlands
- * State Regulated Wetlands
- * Flood Zones
- * Forested Areas
- * Significant Natural Communities
- * Aquatic Animal Habitats
- * Terrestrial Animal Habitats
- * Important Bird Areas
- * Rare Plants and Animals
- * Trails
- * Parks
- * Boy Scout Lands
- * Forest Management Lands
- * Agricultural Districts
- * Prime Farmland Soils
- * Steep Slopes
- * Archeological Areas

How to View the Map

Each natural resource is shown in the same color with a transparency. This means that when many resources are "layered" - or stacked on top of each other, the areas will appear darker. This produces a visual example of the concentration of natural resources throughout the Town!

 Lighter colors on the map indicate that few natural resources are present.

 Darker colors on the map indicate that many natural resources are present.

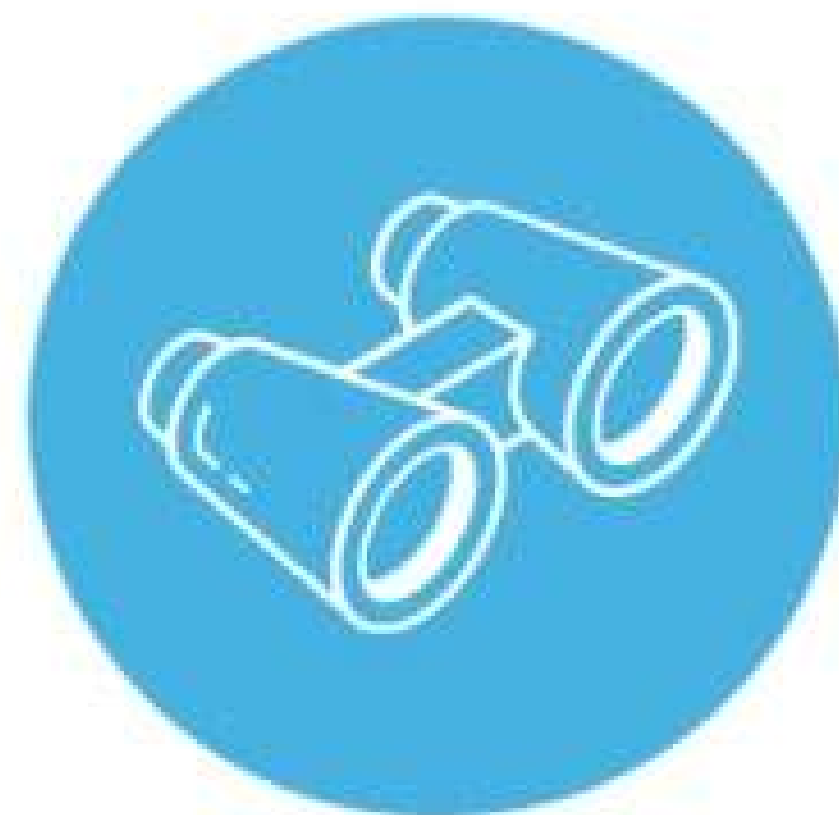
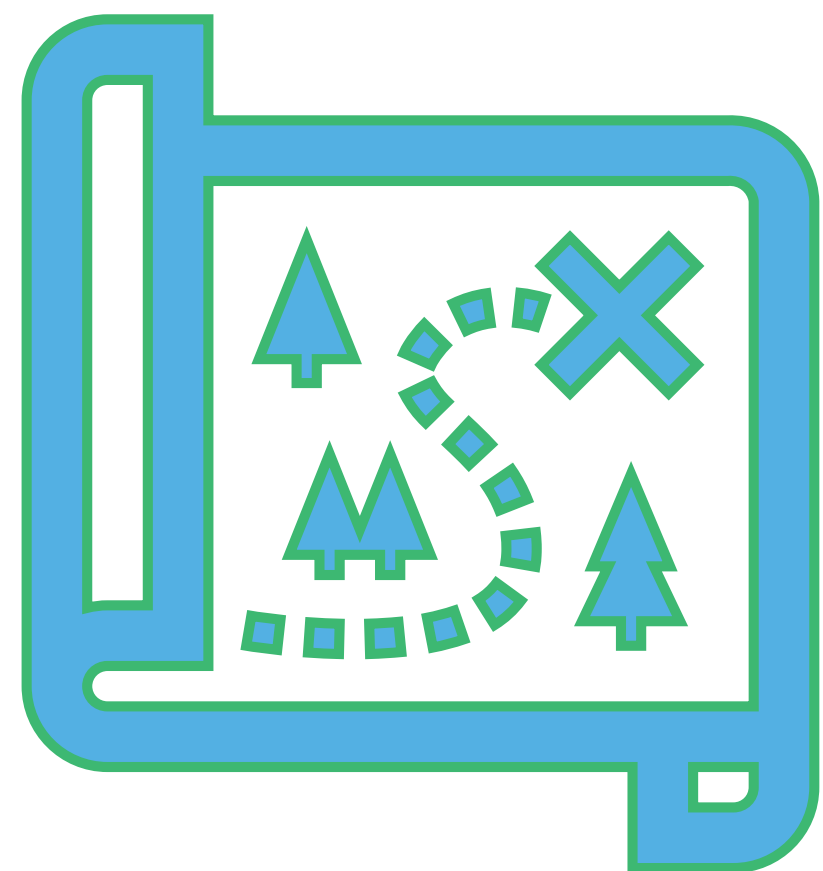


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MAPPING EXERCISE:

Use the markers to draw where you would like to see future connections in your town!

Use the stickers provided to show your favorite viewsheds in the Town!



What are the most important resources to you in the categories listed below?

Water Resources	Wildlife Resources & Habitats
Recreational Resources	Land and Agricultural Resources
Other Comments	

Community Photo Board



Town of
Tusten
an Upper Delaware River Community

Place your photos of your favorite open spaces here!

Tape Photos Here

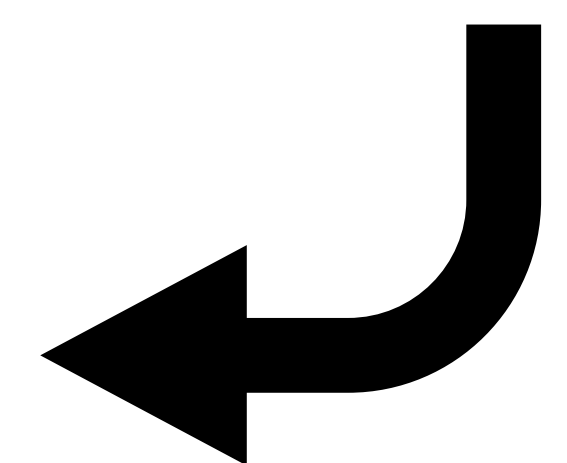
Tape Photos Here

**Share a photo from your
mobile device**

Add your photo by scanning the
QR code below with your
mobile device.



**Scan me with your
mobile device**



**The photos shared will be placed in an online photo gallery on the project
website and may be featured in the Open Space and Recreation Plan!**



Other Thoughts & Ideas



Town of
Tusten
an Upper Delaware River Community

**Share any additional thoughts or ideas you have about Natural Resources,
Open Space or Recreation for the Town of Tusten here!**

Post-It Notes Here

Post-It Notes Here

