

NJ's

Rancocas State Park

Self-Paced Paddle

Guide



RANCOCAS STATE PARK BLUEWATER TRAIL

**Enhanced Public Access, Promotes Multi-Use
Outdoor Recreation, High-lights exemplary
waypoints of heritage and Featuring unspoiled
natural features and ecosystems.**

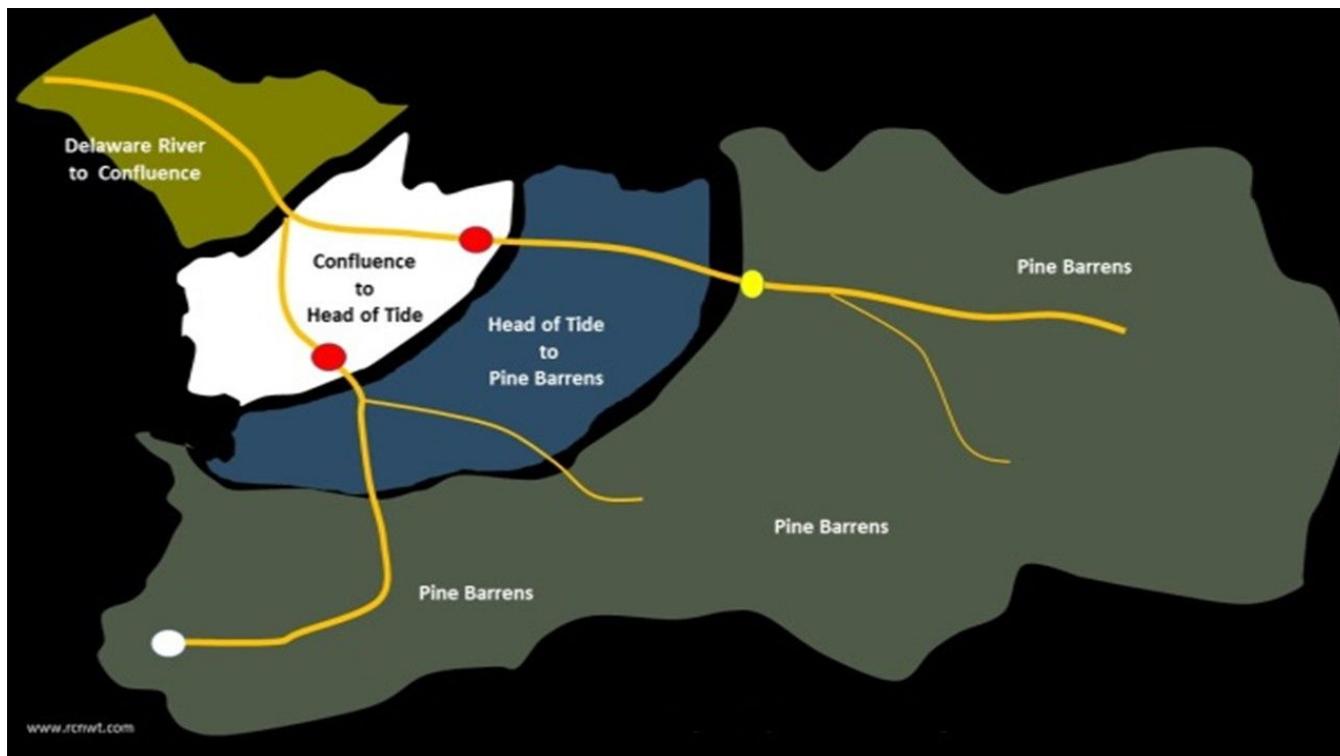
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Rancocas Creek Watershed

The Rancocas Creek watershed is 360 square miles divided into the North, South and Southwest Branches. The Creek runs 30 some miles from the Delaware River out into the Pine Barren headwaters. As it passes by 33 different communities the Rancocas character as both tidal and non-tidal is exposed. At the confluence sits the Rancocas State Park, jointly maintained by the State of NJ and Burlington County Parks. The State Park Bluewater Trail connects to Timbuctoo, Mt. Holly, Lumberton and the main stem. 6 to 10 miles in length depending on the tide the Bluewater trail is the apex of enhanced public access.

The objective of the guide is for paddlers and others to gain a greater appreciation of the heritage and conservation of the Rancocas Creek. This self-guided Rancocas State Park Bluewater Trail guide corresponds to numbered stops along the creek front. Zap back any questions and or issues to Rancocas Pathways. www.rcnwt.com

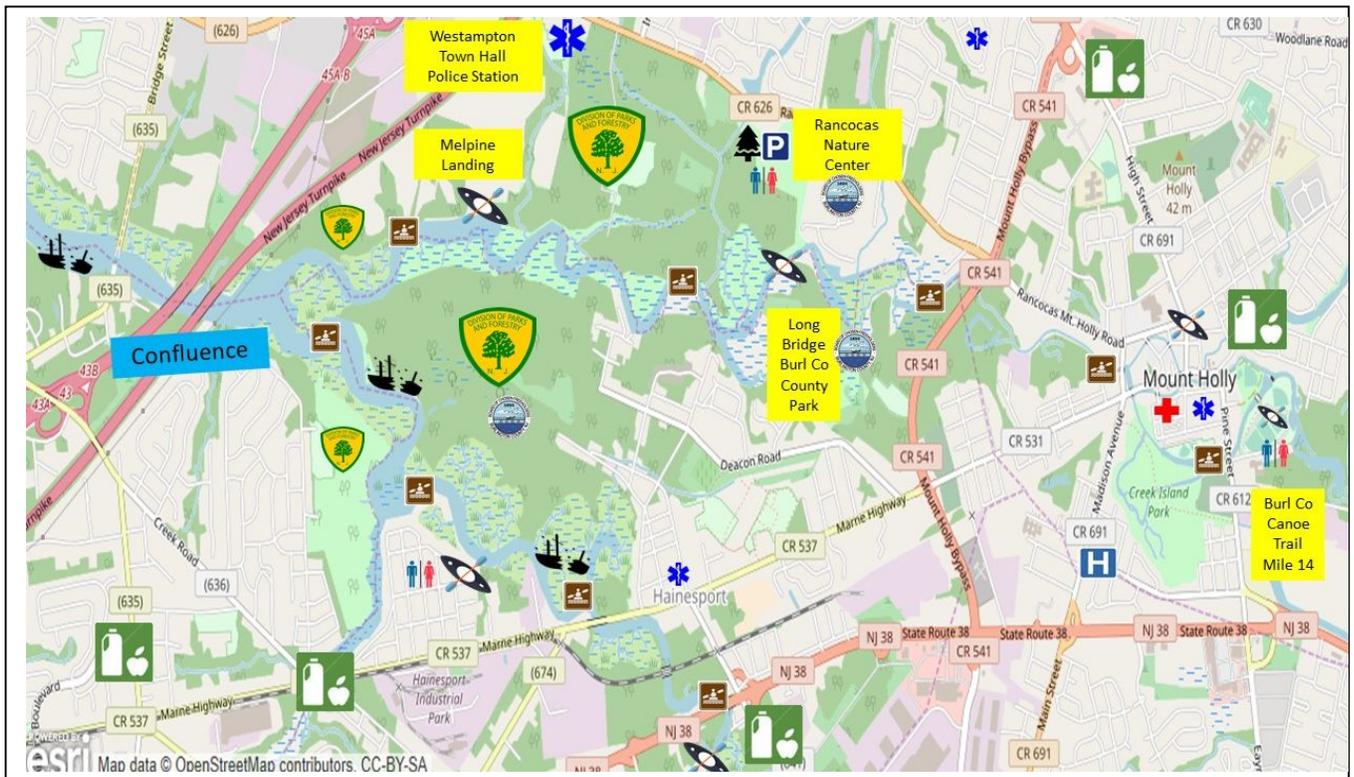


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Rancocas State Park Bluewater Trail Overview

Rancocas State Park is found near the center of the watershed at the confluence of the Rancocas Creek North and the South Branch. The State Park's 1,200 acres allows hunting in specific areas, fishing, boating, kayaking, birdwatching, running, mountain biking, has well-groomed trail and the Rancocas Nature Center, Rancocas State Park is bisected by the tidal reaches of the North and South Branch of the Rancocas Creek. The water trail inside the State Park is 5 miles in length. The distance is easily doubled when one includes backwaters and tributary streams where one can paddle a kayak. The trail connects to Timbuctoo and Mt. Holly on the N Branch and Hainesport and Lumberton on the South Branch. Numerous rustic landings are found throughout the State Park with the gem of enhanced public access being Melpine Landing, Westampton. There are no amenities at Melpine Landing



Cumulative Rancocas Creek
Water Trail Miles
Rounded to the Nearest Mile

Burlington County Canoe Trail

Pemberton Launch	00.00
Smithville	10
Mt. Holly	14

Mt. Holly Oxbow and Tidal Launch

15

Timbuctoo

17

Rancocas State Park Bluewater Trail Miles

Horsehead Point:	00.00	17.5
Rancocas Nature Center Trail Marker #20	1000 feet	
Long Bridge County Park	1500 feet	
Rancocas State of NJ Natural Area, Portal:	2300 feet	
Marsh Point	1	19
Lott's Landing	1.3	
Marl Bank	1.6	20.6
Cullen	1.75	
Melpine Landing	2.25	21.5
Confluence	3	22
South Branch State Park Boat Ramp	4	23
Hainesport Ramp, Burlington County Parks	5	24
Hainesport Public Access Point	6.5	26
Lumberton Municipal Ramp	7	27

Confluence via Main Stem to Amico Island County Park and Delaware River

30

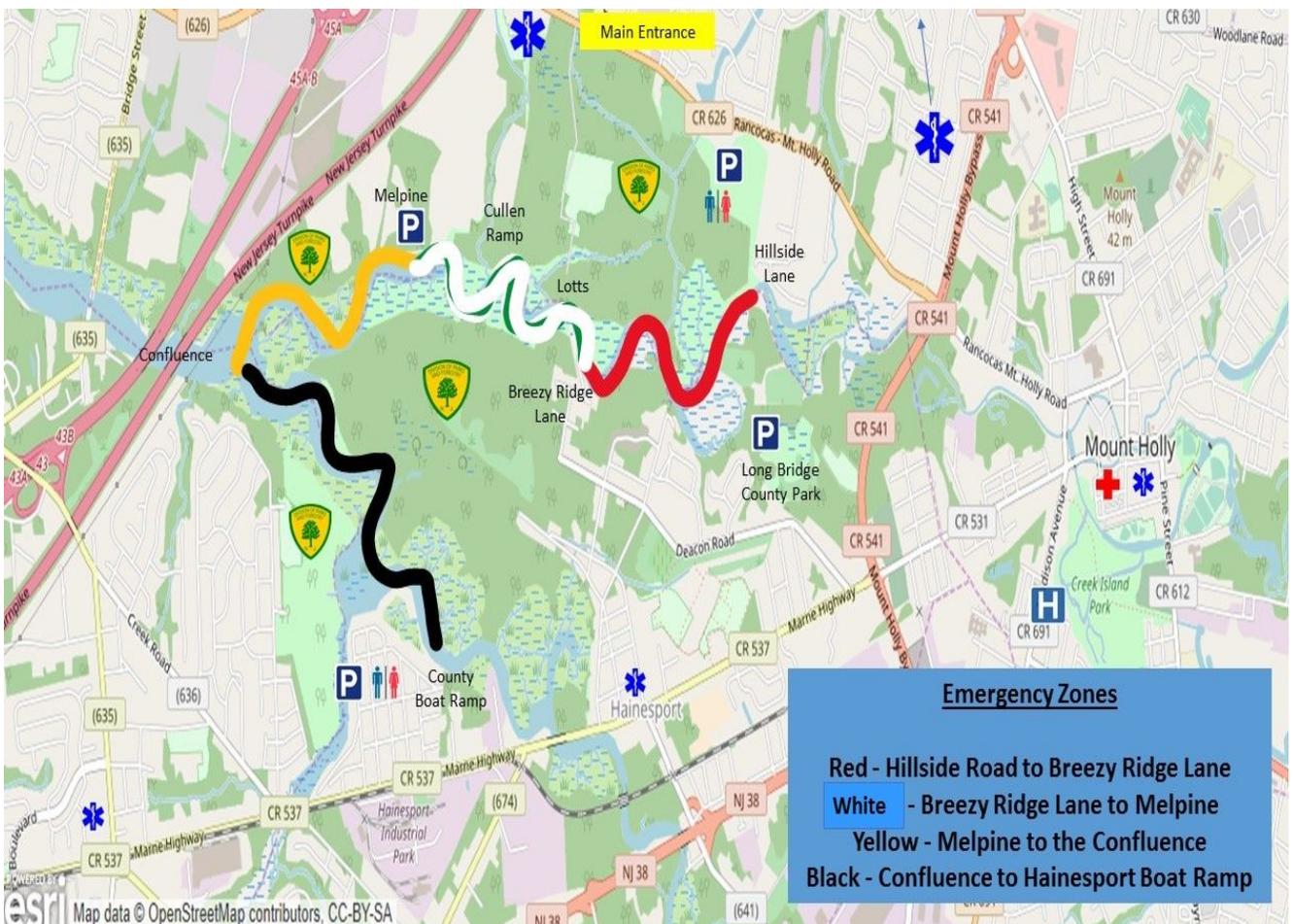
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Emergency Zones and Emergency Access

The Rancocas State Park Bluewater Trail is divided into different emergency zones. Knowing what zone, you are in will help rescuers reach you in case anything goes wrong. If you call 911 tell the operator you are in a specific colored zone. Zones are color coded and identified by different creek front water trail fence post markers. Fence post markers are placed in line of sight of each other along the water trail.

Rancocas State Park Bluewater Trail Emergency Access Zones



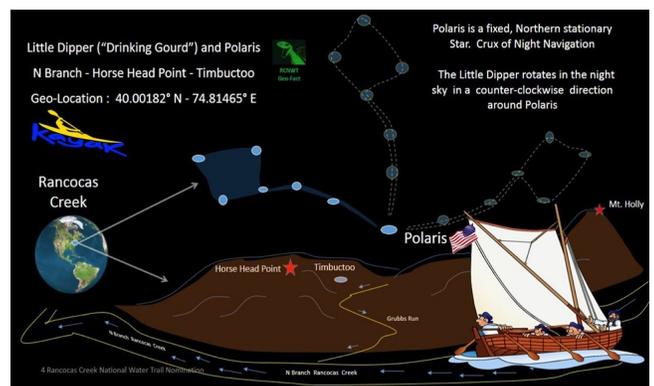
Creekside Waypoints and Places of Interest to Stop to Reflect on Past, Present and Future

1. Horsehead Point (marker found on North Creek Bank)

A visible highpoint along the North Branch Rancocas Creek. Creek Mile 17. Eastern Border of Rancocas State Park. Rancocas State Park Bluewater Trail Mileage 00.00. Geologic entrance to the Rancocas Valley. Elevation 38 Feet Above Sea Level. Nelson's Early records of New Jersey places settlement in this area to around 1670. Located 500 yards west of "Shark's Meadow" (1688). Prominent landmark on the North Creek Bank. Abutted by private landowners and drainage from Timbuctoo's Cedar Swamp. At low tide check out the Northern Creek Bank for remains of an old pier. Paddle into the South channel of the Long Bridge Burlington County Park Backwater. Heron's, Ducks, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Red Tail Hawk, Egrets, Beaver frequently encountered. Small song birds and warblers found during migrations. Killdeer and other sandpipers seasonally common. Horsehead Point is accessible via foot by hiking out the Rancocas Nature Center trails and following an old wood road to the crest of Horsehead Point. Turkey Vulture ride the thermals and uplift along Horsehead Point. Here also the N Branch noticeably widens.

2. Underground Railroad (marker found on South Creek bank)

Horsehead Point is found at 40.00 degrees latitude. Timbuctoo's role as a chock-stone of the underground railroad is well known. Less well known is King David Island as identified in the NJ Riparian Commissions 1876 map of the Rancocas. Less known than the Island, and near today's Long Bridge County Park is the old Timbuctoo Landing. Accessible via car at the



Timbuctoo Historic Site on Church Road, Westampton. At Timbuctoo one finds the Grubb's Run inlet that forms a marshy woodland, flooded by tides twice daily and a cedar swamp w obvious man-dug channel. Deer, ground hogs, osprey, sparrows, rafts of diving ducks and other wildlife encountered. Here the night sky blossoms as overhead one finds the Little Dipper and the North Star (at 40.00 degrees). The North Star was the guide star of the underground railroad. If you paddle the water trail at night stop and look up and find the North Star. Wood duck uncommon but encountered. While the viewshed from the approximate location of Timbuctoo creekfront is exemplary. Respect the privacy of Creek Front property owners.

3. Rancocas Nature Center

250 yards west of Horsehead Point, on the North Bank of the Creek one finds the Rancocas Nature Center's Trail marker #20. This rustic spot allows paddlers access to the numerous well-groomed hiking trails of the



Nature Center. A most excellent hike is to start at Trail Marker 20 and hike around the upper creek bank crest of the 60 Acre NJ State Rancocas Natural Area, one of 44 in the State. Here one crosses over tributary streams of the N Branch. Rancocas Nature Center is found in a 300-year-old former farm site, operated by the Friends of the Rancocas Nature Center under a partnership w the NJ State Park System, Burlington County Parks and Westampton Township. RNC provides classes and activities r/t nature, ecology, and the local woodlands. Check out their

web site at www.rancoanaturecenter.org. It is a ½ mile or a 900-meter hike one way to the Nature Center. Visit its museum, book shop and interpretive visits. Any landing at this site is considered primitive at best. Secure one's kayak for tidal differences.

4. Long Bridge County Park

Landmark is the park bench facing the Creek. There is not developed access for kayaks and canoes into Long Bridge Park. Long Bridge encompassing 115 acres, Long Bridge Park welcomes visitors to a forested sanctuary along the Rancocas Creek. With upland and lowland forests, a freshwater pond and wetlands, tidal marshland, Rancocas Creek shoreline, and meadows, visitors can enjoy hiking, biking, fishing, and picnicking in a rustic natural setting along the Rancocas Creek. Two age-appropriate play areas and several picnic pavilions are also available in a beautifully landscaped central trailhead area. The Long Bridge backwater is accessible either via the King David Pass (for truly wild, remote paddling) or directly above Horsehead Point where the paddler sees a channel heading to the South East. This shallow channel allows one to paddle into the remote tidal marsh. Wildlife of all types abound.



5. State of NJ Rancocas Natural Area (RNA) – 58 acres of Fresh Water Tidal Wetlands

The Rancocas Natural Area (RNA) was designated a State Natural Area in 1978. The RNA is located in NJ's inner coastal plain and is found West of Long Bridge County Park between Rancocas Creek Water Trail Mile 17 and 18. Land side public access to the RNA is by hiking trails only. Public access to the core area of the RNA is limited by topography.

Biotic communities found in the RNA include a Mesic Coastal Plain Mixed Oak Forest, a Floodplain forest, and a Fresh Water Tidal Marsh ecosystem. NJ DEP management and conservation objectives for the RNA are “preservation of freshwater tidal marsh and southern floodplain habitats including one of NJ's largest stands of wild rice”; managing public access limiting adverse impacts from man and removal/eradication of invasive species.

The North Branch provides the southern and part of the eastern boundary while a small tributary, Cedar Swamp Run exists along the western edge. The northern boundary is where the upland hardwood forests of the Rancocas State Park meets a planted pine stand. Here at the RNA paddlers experience upfront and personal an untouched by man natural setting w associated wildlife and ecosystems. Access to the RNA is on the 2 hours before and the 2 hour after High Tide window. Access is limited in the summer months because of foliage and underbrush.

6. Rancocas Creek Maritime Cultural Landscape (MCL)

The term 'maritime culture' grew out of a broader understanding of not only the use of the sea and navigable tidal waters by humans, but the attendant communities, organizational structures, cultural identifiers and associations made between people and seafaring. For example on the Rancocas this claim to be a commercial navigable waterway as both Mt. Holly and Lumberton have a documented heritage of maritime exploration and the prestige of the being a sending area for the Delaware River Ports of Camden and Philadelphia. Rancocas Creek's maritime heritage evolved w/ extensive colonization and use of the tidal Creek for commerce. Today, people driven in cars along roads and over bridges, are in contact with the Rancocas Creek in quite a different way.

The Rancocas is now viewed as more as part of a leisure canvas on which to play beside on holiday, paddle down and explore, and sail on, rather than remember that it is still relied on to move cargo, for example. Creek side landmarks and underwater resources is an important part of the value-added characteristics of the Rancocas State Park Blue Trail. When traversing the water trail stay attune to old ship rips and wrecks. Take the time to ride the tide much as was done 300-400 years past. For the Rancocas from the tide to the headwaters in the NJ Pine Barrens National Reserve the water trails supports submerged landscapes, coastal and estuary related tidal connections to markets, inland waterways, different shallop's, ships, vessels, barges, schooners, tugs and the challenge of the future of enhanced public access supporting Creeks communities and their associations to local, regional and the National MCL.

7. Multi-Use Recreation - Paddle Safe

The Rancocas Creek as it passes through the State Park is tidal and as such is multi-use. Stay alert and keep a sharp eye and listen for jet-skis and motor boats. You can see them from a kayak, but they may not see a kayak. Listen as you will hear such motorized craft before seeing them. When hearing motorized craft paddle close to the creek bank. Do not ride their wakes and wash. Report boaters accordingly by calling the NJ State Marine Police. Multi-use also means folks fish, trap, and hunt inside the State park along the Creek. Wear safety orange during hunting and trapping season. Follow NJ Fish and Game Laws by looking up in the internet NJ Fish and Game Laws. The anchor of Paddle Safe are enhancing awareness during the prevent phase of an incident. Paddle Safe Rancocas Creek material is available by contacting Rancocas Pathways. Ride the tide, share the ride.

8. Landscapes

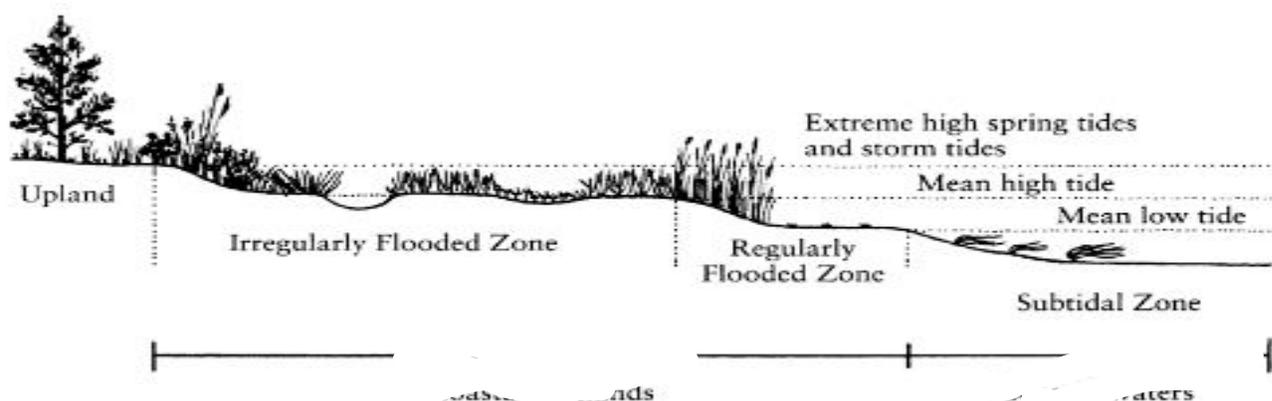
Rancocas State Park Bluewater Trail has different landscapes. Landscapes for people anchors multi-use recreation, Landscapes for Nature cements conservation and the vibrant ecosystems, Landscapes for Business focus is sustainable commerce and Landscapes of heritage are the crown jewel of public access. As you paddle take the time to explore, take time to support local business, take time to listen to the wind and tides and take time to act as stewards to our future.



9. Tributary Streams and the Tidewater Ecology

Fresh water tidal estuaries like the Delaware River is a vibrant, alive, dynamic ecosystem. The Rancocas Creek tidewater ecology is a result of the Rancocas flowing out of the Pine Barrens to reach the tide in Mt. Holly (N Branch) and Lumberton (S Branch). Flowing westerly the 2 main branches join at the confluence and from them to the Delaware River. Flanking the tidal segment are expansive, all encompassing fresh water tidal marshes. These wetlands provide food and nutrients to migrating birds of prey, birds, wildlife and fishes. Detritus (organic matter) is enriched by micro-organisms that lead to fish thriving (when you paddle check out schools of killi-fish, about the size of one's finger nail, swimming about) which then become the food of striped bass and other larger fishes and aquatic animals (seals are documented on the Rancocas from the late 1800's). The fish are feed upon by egrets, herons, osprey and eagles. Fish are also fished for recreational by people.

Freshwater tidal wetlands also are valued as landscapes that buffer flood and storm damage, help w the dynamics of water quality, multi-use recreation and simple aesthetics. The viewsheds on the Rancocas are exemplary in character and quality.



Rancocas Creek Fresh Water Tidal Wetlands

Tributary waterways that flow into the Rancocas tidewaters include: Mill Creek, Willingboro; Parker's Run, Moorestown; Mason's Run, Hainesport; Cedar Swamp Run, Westampton; Grubb's Run, Timbuctoo; Bobby's Run, Lumberton and smaller unnamed streams.

Rancocas Creek fresh water tidal ecosystems are some of the most diverse. Take the time paddling to Explore Long Bridge Burlington County Park's tidal backwaters, the State of NJ (Freshwater Tidal) Natural Area, the Mt. Holly Oxbow and Flood Channel. Here one can paddle through Fresh water tidal Wetlands interspaced into upland ecosystems.



10. Indian Settlements and Land Use

Indian settlements and sites along the Rancocas Creek are traced back 12,000 years. Indians of the Rancocas thrived on the rich, vibrant tidal waters for food and transportation. There are documented Paleoindian sites in the Mid-stem as well as the Headwaters and even in the tidally effected portions along the South Branch, tidewaters. Indians used the Creek and its waters for hunting, fishing, and open areas for agriculture. They used the Creek as a transportation artery for their canoes all supported the Creek's Indian population. Today these sites are protected. As they have been commonly looted in the past it is up to us, today, to act as stewards of the heritage of the Creek. Protect and preserve the legacy.

11. Birds of Prey

Raptors, hawks, eagles, vultures, osprey, red tail, coopers, sharp shined, sparrow hawks are commonly encountered along the Rancocas.

Rancocas Creek provides birds of prey with over 2,000 undeveloped tidal acres and the wide open space of the Burlington County Greenway where they can hunt and rest. Up in the headwaters the Pine Barrens National Reserve unique ecosystems contribute greatly to Rancocas Creek habitats. Paddling the State Park Bluewater trail brings one into open spaces and the birds that rely on for habitat, food, rest and nesting. Birds of prey are somewhat skittish to people. Keep 500 feet away, take nothing but pictures leave nothing but still waters behind. Report eagles to the NJDEP Eagle hotline.

Conservation of Rancocas Creek Birds of Prey. Keep bird lists, help new-comers to the Creek in identifying birds of prey, do not disturb birds of prey, stay clear of any nesting sites, help enhance water quality, report those who threaten birds of prey, get involved in bird census and habitat evaluations. Most of all respect the beauty, power and stealthiest of birds of prey. At night time on the Creek listen for owls. Screech, Barred, and Great Horned Owl are frequently heard.

12. Rancocas State Park's Lott's Creekfront and Landing

Best accessed as a creek side sandy beach landing at low tide, Lott's is the site of the former Foster Lott House. Here visitors are treated to expansive viewsheds of the North Branch. Here one can access a hiking trail that will lead one to the Main Entrance of the State Park after a 2-mile hike. The site is also an emergency access point for vehicles.

13. Fresh Water Tidal Marshes (reference NOAA)

Attesting to the value and scope of the Rancocas Creek Fresh Water Tidal Wetlands are the 2 pages dedicated to the Rancocas Creek ecosystem.

In mid-Atlantic estuaries, such as the Delaware River and the Rancocas Creek, tidal freshwater marshes, enhance important spawning grounds for migratory fish like striped bass, alewife, blueback herring, and American shad; and, estuarine fish like spot and croaker, is key.

Freshwater rivers that meet and blend with coastal saltwater are a diverse continuum of habitats, extending from a saline mouth, to freshwater habitats in the upper branches of rivers or tributaries. Migratory anadromous fish that spend portions of their lives in both fresh and salt water, and estuarine dependent species which are spawned in coastal waters, make use of the entire continuum of habitats for completing their life cycles. This includes tidal freshwater marshes found on the Rancocas Creek corridor. Because of their geographic location, and their role in fueling riverine food webs, tidal freshwater marshes may be one of the more important parts of the estuary.

Tidal freshwater marshes are particularly common in the mid-Atlantic coastal region. Unlike saline marshes, where the diversity of plant life is limited to those species that can tolerate higher concentrations of salt, freshwater tidal marshes are very diverse; a botanists' dream. Here plant diversity increases from lower to higher tidally influenced elevations. In other words, more species are adapted to the less tidally influenced areas of the marsh. Freshwater tidal marshes are also highly productive systems, producing above-ground biomass that equals or exceeds that of saline marshes.

In the Rancocas Creek tidal freshwater marshes, common plant species include broad-leaf herbaceous types with showy flowers, weedy species with thorns and sticky seeds, and a variety of grasses and rushes, including wild rice. Many of the perennial species, such as arrow arum, spatterdock, and cattail also have massive tubers, and swollen roots and rhizomes. Rhizomes are thickened underground stems that grow in a horizontal direction and sprout new sections as they grow. Underground tubers and rhizomes retain carbon, nitrogen, and other

nutrients for subsequent growing seasons. Consequently, freshwater tidal marshes assist humans by trapping carbon emissions, holding fine-grain sediments in place, and mitigating nutrient levels in the estuary.

More importantly, tidal freshwater marshes play a vital role in supporting the reproduction of commercially and recreationally important fish through timely stimulating of riverine food webs in areas where fish spawn and nursery. Fish that benefit from tidal freshwater marshes include anadromous species, such as striped bass, alewife, blueback herring, American shad, hickory shad, white perch, and yellow perch; and, estuarine species, such as spot, croaker, weakfish, and drum. Over time, these species have selected spawning and nursery grounds in river areas contiguous to or near areas of maximum tidal freshwater marsh development.

How do tidal freshwater marshes assist fish reproduction? Many of the plant species occurring in tidal freshwater marshes decompose rapidly at the close of the growing season, releasing to the river large amounts of particulate detritus, dissolved organic matter, and nutrients. These products of decomposition are readily used by bacteria, fungi, and other detritus eating creatures; as well as phytoplankton, which are small algae or plants that float in the water column. Secondary producers, such as copepods, amphipods, rotifers, and insect larvae, in turn, increase their abundance during late winter and early spring by consuming the bacteria, fungi, and phytoplankton. Consequently, when anadromous and estuarine fish spawn and nursery in freshwater areas of rivers during late winter and spring, there is an abundance of food to support the survival of their young.

Conservation and the scientific study and restoration of tidal freshwater marshes. For instance, in the heavily urbanized Anacostia River in the District of Columbia, dredge material from the Anacostia River Federal Navigation Project has been used by the Corps of Engineers to establish tidal freshwater marshes at Kenilworth Gardens and Kingman Lake. While the restored marshes are not considered "pristine," they still benefit migratory fish because some of the habitat and productivity in these areas has been successfully restored.



14. Hunting and Fishing

Rancocas State Park is located within Deer Management Zone #48. Portions of the property are open to properly licensed bow-hunters during Fall, Special Permit, and Winter seasons in pursuit of whitetail deer. No other game species may be taken.

The property has several leased tenants, including a kayak livery, farmers and model airplane enthusiasts. Hunters are reminded to respect official "Safety Zones" and posted areas that are identified as "No Hunting" or "No Trespassing". Violators will be prosecuted.

All harvested deer must be taken to a Fish and Wildlife check station and properly registered and tagged. Additional information can be found in the NJ State Fish & Wildlife Digest.

15. Pemberton "Marl" Wars

As you paddle on by the North Bank of the Creek one observes on a bluff an exposed section of dark black and a rich chocolate soil. This is marl. Geology is the study of time and physical structures. Henry B. Kummel was the NJ's State Geologist in the late 1800's. Kummel and his partner the cartographer C. C. Vermeule, maps of the State of NJ and associated turn of the 19th century NJ State Geologic Reports detail the geologic and commercial characteristics of Rancocas Creek marl. Marl being a type of geologic formation that is dated to being formed around 56 million years ago. Rancocas State Park marl is found in exposed creek banks while Pemberton marl is found in greensand from the upper Cretaceous epoch.

Marl was mined along the Rancocas Creek as a natural resource for commerce by residents and business of the period. In 1877 there were over 69 marl mining pits in NJ, mostly in and about Central NJ. Mining marl was an important commercial entity along the Rancocas Creek from the late 1800's and into the 1900's. Vincentown sand marl on the South Branch, Pemberton on the North Branch, Lumberton on the South Branch, downstream N Branch Mt. Holly are locations on the Rancocas where man mined marl.

Marl was moved to markets either via rail or water. It is known that in that late 1880's a one-year yield of Pemberton chocolate and green marl exceeded 8,000 tons. This extraction of greensand led to the early 1900's Pemberton marl "wars".

Greensand marl material consists largely of glauconite, a complex silicate of iron, aluminum, potassium, and magnesium. In the nineteenth century its primary use was as a "fertilizer"; more recently, it is used as an ion exchange medium in water conditioners. Marl is used extensively in agriculture as a "fertilizer". Farmers "marl" their fields, farmers "fertilize" their fields. In the late 1800's, early 1900's marl prolifically covered local and regional agriculture. Though not to mistakenly describe marl as a true "fertilizer", for greensand marl is not so in the technical sense a "fertilizer". Rather, marl is a soil conditioner much in the same way that slaked lime was used as an additive on Rancocas Creek farm fields.

16. Beavers/Otters/Muskrats

Beavers value on the Rancocas was recognized by Dutch trappers in the 1600's. Muskrat was trapped and sold on the open market into the 1920's. Otter are making a comeback. Stay 500 feet away from wildlife. One will encounter when paddling numerous beaver lodges, more likely than not an actual beaver paddling about. The best time to spot wildlife is dawn and dusk. Observe along the creek banks dens and tunnels where wildlife resides. Conservation of the resource facilitates the long-term health of Rancocas Creek wildlife.



17. Cullen Emergency Ramp

Is an emergency access point requiring close to a 1-mile (one way) hike to reach the Westampton Police Department and Municipal Complex. This emergency boat ramp is named for Westampton Patrolman and NJ State Trooper Sean Cullen who died in the line of duty while putting out a car fire on Rt 295 on March 7, 2016. The ramp allows emergency vehicle access only. The general location of the ramp is where one commonly finds kingfisher, crawfish, beaver, sand pipers, red tail hawk. Directly across the Creek from the Cullen Ramp on the South Bank are the remains, visible at low tide only, of the 1898 navigation improvements to the creek. The ramp is reached also via both hiking and mountain bikes trails.

18. Navigation

400 years man has sailed and floated on the Rancocas Creek tidewaters. Indian use can be traced back 12,000 years. One of the oldest documented journals on the Rancocas is traced back to around 1613 when a Swedish explorer writes about his travels on the Rancocas tidewaters. The head of navigation of the North Branch is Mt. Holly, on the South Branch, Lumberton. The mouth of the Rancocas was the site of a Delaware River anchorage. Delanco and Riverside both had at one time a vibrant ship building industry. Likewise, old documents attest to shore-based ship building right west of the confluence in today's Willingboro. Over 20 creek side landings are encountered along the tidewater reaches. To reach Mt. Holly and Lumberton sailing shallops, schooners and barges traversed the Rancoas. Army Engineers in the late 1890's completed works to improve navigation. Mt. Holly's flood work bypass channel was constructed in 1941. The last commercial navigation on the Creek took place around 1900 and closer to the Delaware up into the 1950's. Navigating the creek at night time brings one into an intimate of constellations and the North Star, a guiding star of the underground rail road. In 2018 review maps before paddling, follow your GIS systems, study the tides, paddle safe.



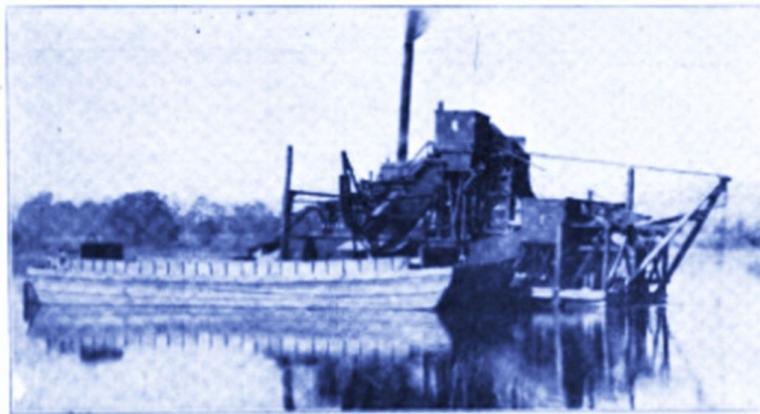
19. Sand Mines

Around the end of the mid 1800's until approximately up until before World War 2 Rancocas Creek sand was mined. Rancocas Creek's sand is high quality refractory in nature and character. This makes the sand ideal for industrial purposes, filtering, and for molding. Sand mines moved by some reports over 600,000 tons of sand a year from the Rancocas. In 2018 remains of these mines are found along the Creek banks where old piers and wharfs are

encountered. These old wooden structures, mostly visible at low tide harbor small organisms that are feed upon by fish, an occasional seal, hawks, owls, eagles, wading birds and diving ducks that easily mingle w/ animals such as beaver, otter and muskrat.

On the Rancocas Creek wildlife

has vibrantly adapted to the creek's ecology. As your looking up the South Branch from the confluence note to your left on the northern creek bank of the South Branch. Add 20 feet or more to the height of these bluffs to gain a perspective on scale of Rancocas Creek Sand mines. Sand was loaded into barges and tugged to Philadelphia and other markets.



SAND DREDGE "INDEPENDENCE" OF THE HAINESPORT MINING & TRANSPORTATION CO.

Ref: Rock products. v.16 no.2 May 22 1915.



20. Melpine Landing

Is found on The North Branch at Creek Mile 15. Melpine's 6-acre heritage is as one of the last remaining original Creekside houses and estates. Most likely constructed in the late 1700's or early 1800's. Melpine evolved over the years. In the late 1970's the house and landing were part of a summer camp for adolescents. In 2018 access to Melpine is through Rancocas Pathways the designated managers of the

Rancocas Creek Trail nomination Special Use auspices of the Service. Access controlled by a no amenities is the landing for kayak trips Bluewater Trail. please sign the the porch office.



National Water and under a Permit let by the NJ State Park to the landing is gate and there are present. Melpine and launch point on the RSP When at Melpine visitor book up on Wildlife is found

throughout the Landing. The viewshed from Melpine is exemplary. Your gaze looks due west into the setting sun and due east as the sun rises. Tides at Melpine average 5-6 feet twice daily. Volunteers are always welcome at Melpine and on the water trail, proper.

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23. Sand Bars and Shoals

Sand bars and shoals are commonly encountered along the Rancoas Creek tidewaters. These shallow water areas appreciate the complexity of paddling. As the tide drops (ebbs) sandbars and shoals are obviously present. These areas are often used as impromptu meeting places for folks on the Creek. They paddle clean and stay in these areas by “Leaving No Trace” Once tides rise (flood) these areas are often under 3-6 feet of water. Expect to encounter sand-pipers and mussels in these areas.



24. John Woolman

John Woolman (October 19, 1720 – October 7, 1772) was a North American merchant, tailor, journalist, and itinerant Quaker preacher, and an early abolitionist in the colonial era. Based in Mount Holly, NJ, Woolman wrote of his travels around the Rancocas Creek, near Philadelphia. He traveled through frontier areas of British North America to preach Quaker beliefs, and advocate against slavery and the slave trade and against the cruelty to animal's economic injustices and oppression, and co0nscritiopn. Beginning in 1755 with the outbreak of the French and Indian War, he urged tax resistance to deny support to the military. In 1772, Woolman traveled to England, where he urged Quakers to support abolition of slavery. Woolman published numerous essays, especially against slavery. He kept a journal throughout his life; it was published posthumously, entitled the *Journal of John Woolman* (1774). Included in Volume I of the Harvard Classics since 1909, it is considered a prominent American spiritual work. The *Journal* has been continuously in print since 1774, published in numerous editions; the most recent scholarly edition was published in 1989.

25. Confluence

54 acres of open water. Here the North and the South join... here is where the main stem meets the combined flows of the North and South Branch. The views from the confluence are exemplary. The vistas



do not account for the land being changed by mining and man's impacts. The North Branch flows by Leed's Wharf (originated from around the late 1700's) before entering the confluence. The South Branch passes through shallows and into the shoals before meeting the N Branch. Directly downstream one sees the NJ Turnpike and the RT 295 Highways Bridges. The confluence remains an undisturbed

pocket of open tidal waters. Paddling around the confluence is a 1-mile paddle where paddlers are buffeted by winds, sun, currents, shallow water, and motorized craft. In season expect to encounter sand-pipers, eagle, osprey, marsh and diving ducks, swallows, and other small birds.

Heron are frequently encountered. Seal have been reported in and around the confluence. The confluence rapidly shoal and is mostly shallow. When the tide is running expect cross currents and tidal forces to move your kayak for you. When paddling expects to encounter extreme tidal forces and rapidly changing creek water flows. While the NJ Turnpike is present if paddle through the confluence you have entered one of the more remote segments of the Creek. Paddle safe, Paddle for open tidal paddling. All-ways wear your life-jacket. All-ways follow a paddle plan.

26. Texas

Located below the confluence and abutting the South bank of the confluence one finds the remains of the "Texas" phosphorous works. Here sulfur, acid and bone-black barged in from Camden Port were cooked off in clay retorts in the manufacture phosphorous. Problem is phosphorous cooked in such a manner was a toxic brew that lead to "phossy jaw: This is when one's jaw erodes away from phosphorous through one cavity's a gruesome experience w rates of mortality. Texas was I the 1870's the sole manufacture of phosphorous in the Unnoted States. Phosphorus was also used to make matches. Mt. Holly had its own in town on the creek bank match factory. In 2018 not, much is left of these old stone buildings, occasional remains of a partial retort, a stone floor, an old water wheel. Here the environment has reclaimed the Creek bank. Stay alert for the remains of the works old wooden pier and wharf.



27. Industrialization and Typhoid

Man has exploited the Rancocas Creek for 12,000 years. Europeans, then Americans have exploited the Rancocas Creek to the fullest over the last 400 years. Water for power drove numerous mills on the Rancocas. Mt. Holly, Lumberton and Pemberton were known as a Mill Towns. The Creek was the artery for to Philadelphia market and before roads was the easiest form of transportation goods and agriculture items to the market and Delaware River Ports. As man encroached the Creek was further exploited for manufacturing and as a sewage dump. In and around 1907 a typhoid epidemic arose on the N Branch. Folks were dumping raw sewage into the Creek where they also derived water for drinking. The result was the ever-growing evolution of waste management facilities along the Creek.

Conservation along the Watershed include reducing source and non-source pollution, check out Mt. Holly's environmental Committee drain painting program and flood plain restoration, enhancing awareness of not use the creek as your trash bin. Adopt a Creek events are held throughout the year blending conversation of the Rancocas Creek into the fabric of local communities. Sand mines added further assaults against the Rancocas Creek. Texas and other local match factories contributed to the degradation of the Creek.

Today the Rancocas Creek renaissance is tuned on multi-use recreation as visitors reap the value of man's impacts to the Creek. Stay alert for old piers and wharfs. Stay alert for development pressures. Report those who use the Creek as a garbage dump. Stewardship of the resource means help improve the water quality of the Rancocas. Start small. Bring a garbage bag w you and carry out others trash. If you use a motorized craft/vessel/jet-ski on the Creek keep them well maintained.

28. Forges and Bog Iron, South Branch

Bog Ore was plentiful in the water beds in and the Rancocas Creek watershed. The deposits, when thick enough, were mined and taken to the Iron Furnace (such as those found in Hainesport, Lumberton and Mt. Holly) for processing. The resultant iron was used locally to produce a variety of goods such as pots, kettles, stoves, and more. The products were transported to many areas along the East coast to fill consumer needs. The entire Pine Barrens region around the headwaters of the Rancocas, was filled with prosperous furnace towns. In areas completely deserted today, there was much activity in colonial, revolutionary and early 19th century times. Stage coaches ran through these areas connecting them with Philadelphia. There was much travel between furnace towns, and to county seats for commerce.

Burlington, Mt. Holly, Hainesport, Lumberton, and Philadelphia were visited almost daily on the stage lines that connected them. Hotels and taverns sprung up along these stage routes, around which grew trading settlements. Farmers on the fertile coastal land supplied these hotels and taverns with food-stuffs and did a thriving business. Itinerant traders went from town to town selling their wares. Shallop's, barges, tugs and schooners maintained a contact with the big cities, and kept everybody in touch with the outside world.(Stemmer, 1943)

29. Hainesport Pass: Turtle Trapping, South Branch

Snapping, Red Bellied, Musk, Painted, Box and more different species of turtles are found on the Rancocas Creek. It is advisable, legally and ethically to consult NJ Fish and Game Laws as they pertain to turtle trapping on the Rancocas. Turtle trapping has taken place on the Rancocas documented back to the late 1780s. Turtle trappers then and now require a light flat bottom boat to get back into the tidal reaches and marshes of the Rancocas. Traps are often placed in 4-6 feet of water. Traps are baited w fish. Turtles are found around old piers and wharfs. They are commonly found on the mud banks sunning. When trapped turtles are turned into soup, cutlets or fried. In the 1920's Philadelphia was one of the largest markets for turtles. Good snapper soup recipes are like a beef stew, but turtles are cooked longer for up to 4 hours. Season w spices and vegetables to taste. Cut turtle meat into small slices.

30. State Park Boat Launch, South Branch

Undeveloped and access via the gated Rancocas State Park, Hainesport entrance. At low tide a very muddy access point. Ramp is narrow w a very small parking area. Landing a kayak here provides access to the many hiking trails inside Rancocas State Park. Stay alert for turtle traps and folks fishing. There are no bathrooms at this undeveloped boat ramp. Watch for ever changing shallows and motorized craft. At High Tide access the Hainesport backwater via the channel closet to the ramp, proper. At low tide there is no access to the Hainesport Backwater.

31. Burlington County Boat Ramp, South Branch

Parking, rest room, garbage can. The Ramp is part of the Burlington County Park System. Respect multi-use. Do not block the ramp when parking. Do not hesitate to talk to folks w jet-skis and motor boats. The boat ramp does not currently charge a landing fee. Be respectful of others at the ramp.

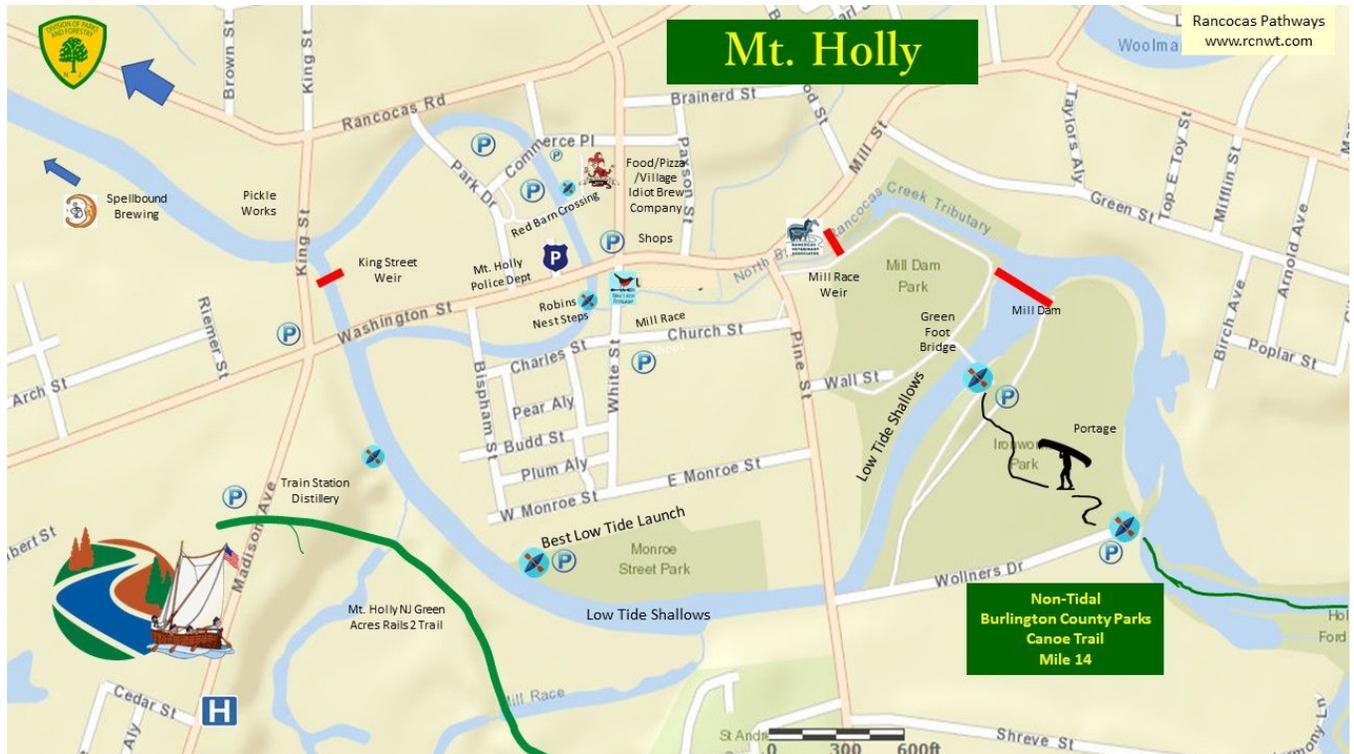


Rancocas State Park

Bluewater Trail Paddle Guide

RESOURCES

Mt. Holly Eateries, Breweries, Pizza Shops, Mill Race and High Street Shops, Vincent's Homemade Ice Cream



Mt. Holly North Branch 400 Years of Maritime Heritage

Other Resources

East Ridge Pizza, Rancocas, NJ

Carlucci's Creek Side Dining – Mt. Laurel

Mt. Holly Motorsports

Timbuctoo

Rancocas Creek Kayak Livery's

Rita's Kayaks – Hainesport, NJ

Rancocas Pathways, Westampton www.rcnwt.com

Melpine Landing, guided excursions/school programs/professional development days/rentals/natural history tours/ Rancocas Creek National Water Trail Project Managers, Naturally, Education is Fun Programs. By appointment.

Clarks Canoes - Pemberton, NJ



Rancocas State Park

Bluewater Trail Paddle Guide

