The Rancocas Watershed includes not only the river itself but also the land it drains. From its headwaters in the cranberry bogs and Pine Barrens of western Ocean County, to its mouth at the town of Riverside, the Rancocas River weaves through the Delaware Bay watershed – where salt waters of the Atlantic Ocean and fresh waters of the Delaware River mix. The Delaware Estuary provides critical habitat for many species of plants, animals, birds, and fish. The Delaware Estuary is one of the few remaining coastal ecosystems in the United States to contain a significant portion of its original hydrology. Since the 18th century, much of the Delaware Estuary has been altered, primarily by the construction of dams, impoundments, and levees. These changes have resulted in the loss of habitat and the degradation of water quality. The Delaware Estuary is also subject to the effects of pollution, including nutrients, sediments, and chemicals. Despite these challenges, the Delaware Estuary remains an important ecosystem for both scientific research and public education.

In Town...

The Rancocas Watershed is a large area (approximately 360 square miles), so there are a number of interesting towns and places to explore. Riverside, Delanco, and Medford all have stories to tell. Your support for these businesses will in turn help to support the local economy and in doing so, will contribute to protecting the natural resources of this wonderful area.

We hope you find this guide helpful and that you enjoy your visit to the Rancocas Watershed.

Mount Holly

Mount Holly seems to have a market on the heart and minds of those who reside in this area. It is a town of historical significance. It is also now realizing its potential as a tourist destination. Two of the town’s main attractions are man-made as opposed to natural.

The Rancocas Railroad Station Museum, 3 Fort Dix Rd., (609) 894-0546 is home to a variety of local exhibits. It is also the starting point of a converted rail-to-trail, which guides hikers on a 2-mile loop out to the former Birmingham Station and back to Pemberton. A guidebook to the trail is available in the forest offices.

On the opposite end of town, located in an old blacksmith’s shop, is a Clark’s Canvas Rental, 201 Hanover Street, (856) 984-4448. Paddling in a canoe will give you a first-hand look at the North Branch. But before you put in, stock up on all of your picnic needs at the Byrnes, Batsto, or Atsion. A variety of options are available for camping in the forest.

Other Places of Interest...

Whitebog (609) 841-4666, is a silent village undergoing a major transformation affecting all of New Jersey through the leadership of the Whitebog Preservation Trust. It was once a thriving blueberry and cranberry producing community. Even today cranberry bogs are scattered throughout the region ranking New Jersey third in the nation in cranberry production.

Smithville Mansion and Industrial Village (609) 265-5068, was an impressive historical structure. The prison was designed by Robert Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge (856) 983-0326. This wildlife rehabilitation hospital and educational facility treats more than 2,000 animals per year. Sixty percent are returned to the wild. Those remaining are there to teach you about our wildlife.

Where to Live Your Head...

Rice’s Mill House Museum & B&B, 31 Hanover Street, Pemberton. Come enjoy the art of living well: (609) 894-0756

The Iris Inn at Medford, 45 South Main St, Medford. A delightful bed and breakfast experience in a beautifully preserved 1800 Victorian home. (609) 654-7528

Brendan T. Byrne State Forest, P.O. Box 215, New Lisbon. Camplinas, cabins, and yurts are available at this state park facility. (609) 726-1191

Where the Locals Grab a Bite...

La Familia Sonnini, 201 Old Marlton Pike, Medford. (609) 654-5217

Flo’s Lakeside Tavern, 2205 Maryland Ave., Hainesport. Comes highly recommended by the locals. (609) 261-3222

Runway Cafe, 68 Stacey Haines Rd., Medford. Serving-up hungry pilgrims and their passengers at the South Jersey Regional Airport. (609) 518-0400

The Deli Station, 25 Madison Ave., Mount Holly. This establishment, serving breakfast and lunch, is set-up in a late 1800’s train station. (609) 261-2455

Robins Nest, 2 Washington St., Mount Holly. Classically inspired cuisine and waterside dining on the North Branch and Mill Race Waterway. (609) 261-6149

Unravelley’s Tavern, Rt. 38 & Lumberdton Rd., Hainesport. Another local favorite. (609) 261-4453

Cafe Noelle, 20 South Main St, Medford. A French BYOB with a celebrity following. (609) 953-1155

Prospector’s Grill and Saloon, Rt. 38 & Ark Road, Mount Laurel. You had better practice your two-step before stopping by. (856) 235-1121

Timbuctoo or Bucktown was a community of freed and fugitive slaves in the early to mid 1800’s. In its prime, the town’s 125 residents supported a school and an AME Zion Church. The last remaining evidence of its existence is the cemetery located at Church Street and the North Branch of the Rancocas Creek. To schedule a visit to the cemetery call (856) 786-8689.

The Medford Village Culinary Herb Garden is filled with scents of lavender, sage, thyme, and tarragon. Located in Medford Village Park, come enjoy this peaceful spot along Main Street in beautiful Medford.

Where to Go...

The Delanco waterfront along Delaware Avenue is mostly private property. There are, however, public benches at Walnut, Edgewood, and stop by Robins Nest for dinner. The Restaurant for information about their self-guided audio walking tour.

We hope you find this guide helpful and that you enjoy your visit to the Rancocas Watershed.