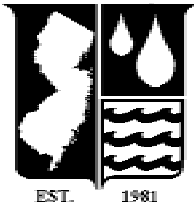


# Raritan Basin Watershed Management Project

## Fact Sheet #7

### THE ROLE OF THE NEW JERSEY WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY



#### The New Jersey Water Supply Authority

The New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA) was formed in 1981 as a result of the New Jersey Water Supply Act. NJWSA became responsible for all water supply facilities previously owned or operated by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). The NJWSA staff, overseen by Executive Director, Thomas G. Baxter, P.E., operates and maintains public water supply facilities in the Raritan Basin System (including the Round Valley and Spruce Run Reservoirs in Hunterdon County, and the Delaware and Raritan Canal) and the Manasquan Reservoir in Monmouth County. The Raritan Basin System provides the basic source of water supply to public and private water utilities that serve over 1.2 million people in central New Jersey, including Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset, and Union Counties, plus some areas of northern New Jersey.

A Commission consisting of six public members and chaired by the Commissioner of the NJDEP oversees the NJWSA, including fiscal and policy decisions. The unpaid public members are appointed by the Governor and represent the agricultural community, industrial and residential water users, private watershed associations, public finance and water resource management and distribution.

#### NJWSA: Lead Agency For The Raritan Basin Project

A diverse group of Raritan Basin interests asked NJWSA to lead a watershed management initiative. NJDEP and NJWSA have signed agreements to develop a watershed management plan for the 1,100 square mile Basin. Parts of seven counties are within the Raritan Basin (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Somerset and Union). Funding for the project comes from a combination of the State "Watershed Protection Fund" and federal funds. The project is part of the NJDEP's initiative to implement watershed management throughout the State, and is modeled after programs elsewhere in the nation. The goal of watershed management in New Jersey is to protect and enhance the quality of the State's waterways by addressing water quality, water supply, stormwater impacts and ecological health issues.

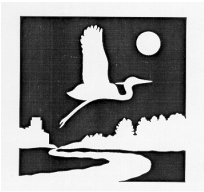
Partners in the first phase of the project include:

- NJ Department of Environmental Protection
- South Branch Watershed Association
- Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association
- Upper Raritan Watershed Association
- United States Geological Survey
- Rutgers Center for Env't'l Communication
- North Jersey Resources Conservation and Development Council
- United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service

*"The Spruce Run and Round Valley Reservoirs in Hunterdon County were constructed by the State of NJ as initial steps in the long-range water conservation and development program authorized by the 1958 Water Supply Law and its companion Water Bond Act."*  
NJWSA 1999 Annual Report



Stakeholders in the process include representatives from sewer and water utilities, municipalities and counties, business and industry, environmental organizations, builders, the League of Women Voters and many others.



## NJWSA's Watershed Protection Unit

The NJWSA formed its Watershed Protection Unit in 1999 to work with project partners to conduct a characterization and assessment of the Raritan Basin and its water resources. This process determines the current status of the environment, and how this compares to community goals and to adopted standards in New Jersey.

The results are being published in technical documents, fact sheets such as this one and a public summary. These documents include information on geology, riparian areas, critical habitats, water quality and quantity, and impervious cover. The Watershed Protection Unit has also been working to educate stakeholders, encourage public participation and prepare materials for stakeholder consideration.

Issues identified in the characterization and assessment will serve as a foundation for stakeholder education and preparation of the watershed management plan development, starting in the fall of 2000. The Raritan Basin Watershed Management Plan will be adopted as an official policy document of the NJDEP by June 2003.

### For More Information.....

The Raritan Basin Watershed Management Project is a partnership of government, non-profit and private organizations working together to improve the water resources of the Raritan River. To learn more about the Raritan Basin Watershed Management Project or for additional information on the NJWSA's role in the Raritan Basin Project, contact the New Jersey Water Supply Authority, Watershed Protection Programs Unit, at (732) 356-9344 or visit our website at [www.raritanbasin.org](http://www.raritanbasin.org). Also, you may contact the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) Raritan Region staff at (609) 633-7020 or visit the NJDEP Division of Watershed Management website at [www.state.nj.us/dep/watershedmgt/](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/watershedmgt/) for additional information on watershed management issues.