

Resolution Rescinding Support for Redesignating the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area as a National Park and Preserve

WHEREAS, on January 8, 2022, the New Jersey Chapter voted in favor of a “Resolution Supporting the Creation of a National Park and Preserve at the Delaware Water Gap and Surrounding Area and a Chapter Committee to Work in Cooperation with Other Sierra Club Chapters to Achieve its Creation”; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed name of the park is the Delaware River National Park and Lenape Preserve; and,

WHEREAS, the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is already set aside to protect wildlife and its habitat for recreational purposes; and,

WHEREAS, the redesignation of the area requires an act of Congress. There are two members of Congress from the New Jersey side of the proposed region of the park. Josh Gottheimer, (NJ-5) has made a statement that he is not in support. John Kean, Jr. (NJ-7) is unlikely to support the park, especially as both Warren and Sussex County Commissioners have voted against the park. Therefore, it is unlikely that the park proposal will receive congressional approval; and,

WHEREAS, local Lenape tribal leaders have spoken out strongly and unanimously against the redesignation, in part because of their concern for hunting, and in part because they believe they will lose the ability to protect their sacred sites; and,

WHEREAS, The Sierra Club is committed to actively promoting and advocating for the rights of Indigenous peoples, supporting their efforts for Free Prior Informed Consent, increasing access on federal lands for cultural practices and gathering, protecting of sacred sites on federal lands, and building power for Tribal partners at the grassroots and all levels of government. The Sierra Club supports Native Peoples' wielding of their sovereign powers to protect the environment and to establish environmental justice; and,

WHEREAS, a national park is just one of many paths to securing permanent protection of land, wildlife, and habitat, and protecting our clean air, soil, and water,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club rescinds our previous resolution in support for the creation of a National Park and Preserve at the Delaware Water Gap and Surrounding Area unless the circumstances surrounding the issue substantially change.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chapter encourages further efforts to protect and conserve the lands around the existing Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, to protect it from residential over-development, warehouse construction, logging, oil and gas drilling and road building. The New Jersey chapter commits to finding ways to further protect the DWGRA and surrounding areas while having indigenous and community voices at the forefront. The NJ chapter will establish a committee to formalize this work.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Isaac", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

Richard Isaac
Chapter Chair
January 14, 2023