

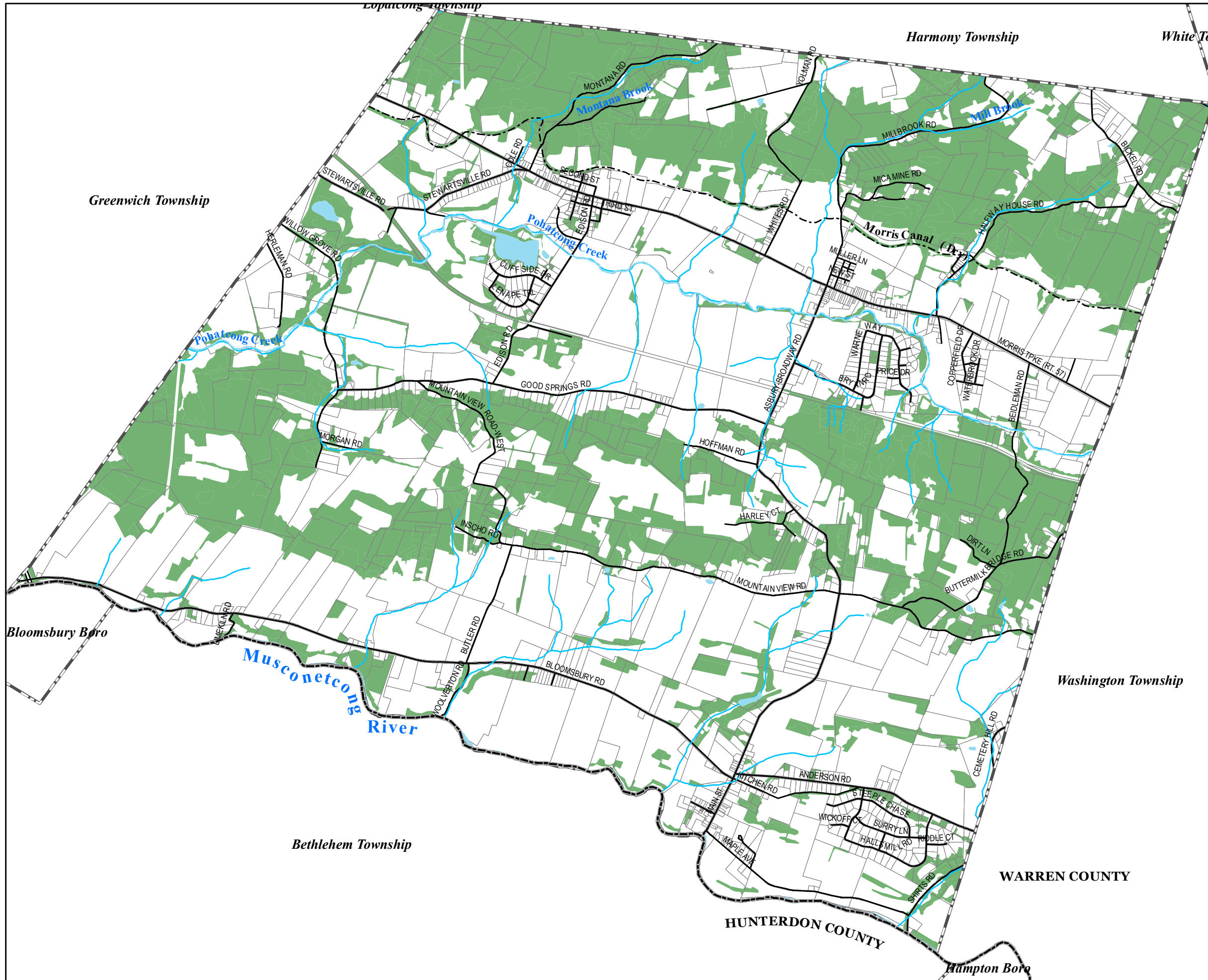
22: UPLAND FORESTS

Upland forests consist of vegetation types commonly thought of as prototypical forests, which excludes wetland forests types such as swamps. The following description of upland forests is based on a subset of NJDEP LU/LC data, utilizing Type 95 LU/LC descriptions. Upland forests include all upland areas covered by woody vegetation. The vegetation can consist of primarily deciduous, coniferous or a mixture and include scrub/shrub and brush areas as well as mature tree stands of various densities. Also included in this category are early stage forest successional stands, commonly referred to as old fields, which are included because of their potential development into forests.

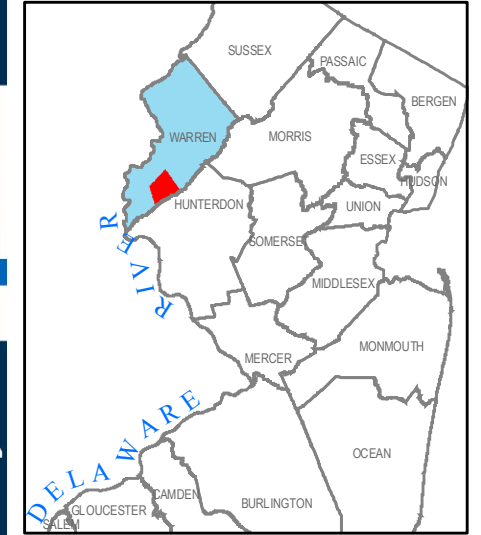
Upland forests are the dominant ecosystem in this part of New Jersey barring development and agricultural land use changes. Forested lands are currently and historically valued for aesthetic, recreational, ecological, and economic value. From an ecological perspective, forests are important because they provide rich habitat for indigenous and migratory wildlife including mammals, birds, and herptiles. Familiar wildlife utilizing forests in New Jersey include White-Tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*), Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*), migratory Warblers (Parulidae), Timber Rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*), and myriad others. Forests also contain a diverse plant assemblage composed of various subgroups based on height or strata. The upland forest community of Warren County is typically composed of various Oaks (*Quercus* sp.), Maples (*Acer* sp.), Hickory (*Carya* sp.), Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), and Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*). Shrub and understory layers have largely been decimated through over-browsing by deer. Forests contribute to area hydrology by increasing infiltration rates of precipitation into groundwater and minimizing sheet erosion due to runoff. Forests remain economically valuable because of timber production and recreational uses including hiking, bird watching, and hunting. Forest preservation is vigorously pursued by many conservation groups representing varied interests including those discussed above.

Forested lands cover 5,233.99 acres, or 34.7% of Franklin Township ([Figure 21](#)). Upland forests are concentrated along the ridgeline areas of the Township but are also distributed in small to medium patches in the low-lying areas. While upland forests are the second largest land cover, the largest land cover, agriculture, is concentrated in large swaths in the low-lying areas of the Township.

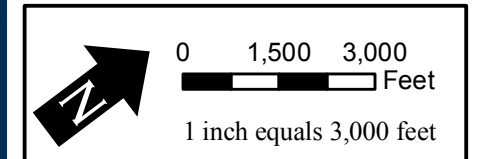
Deciduous forests with greater than 50% crown closure, the intermingling of canopy branches, is the predominant forest type within Franklin Township, accounting for 3,808.52 acres or 72.3% of upland forest area. This is a high quality forest type with an assemblage of climax species. Eleven (11) additional forest types are recognized in the Township, varying by assemblage, crown closure, and use, such as plantations, which are uniform stands planted for commercial harvest. Forests with coniferous species or mixed coniferous and deciduous species account for 9.67% of forested land mass.



NEW JERSEY COUNTY MAP



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SOURCES:

1. Parcel, roads and the Franklin Township Boundary data obtained from Warren County Planning Dept. "This map was developed using the Warren County New Jersey, Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by Warren County and is not county-authorized."
2. Surface water data obtained from the NJDEP, Division of GIS.
3. Upland Forests data is a sub-set of the 2002 Land Use/Land Cover data obtained from NJDEP, Division of GIS.

FIGURE 21
UPLAND FORESTS

NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY
 FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
 WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

Legend

- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundaries
- Ponds/Lakes
- Streams**
- Streams
- Morris Canal (Dry)
- Roads
- Parcels
- Upland Forests (5,242.2 Ac)

