

## HIGHWAY STATISTICS

### Delaware Scenic Coastal Highways & Climate Change

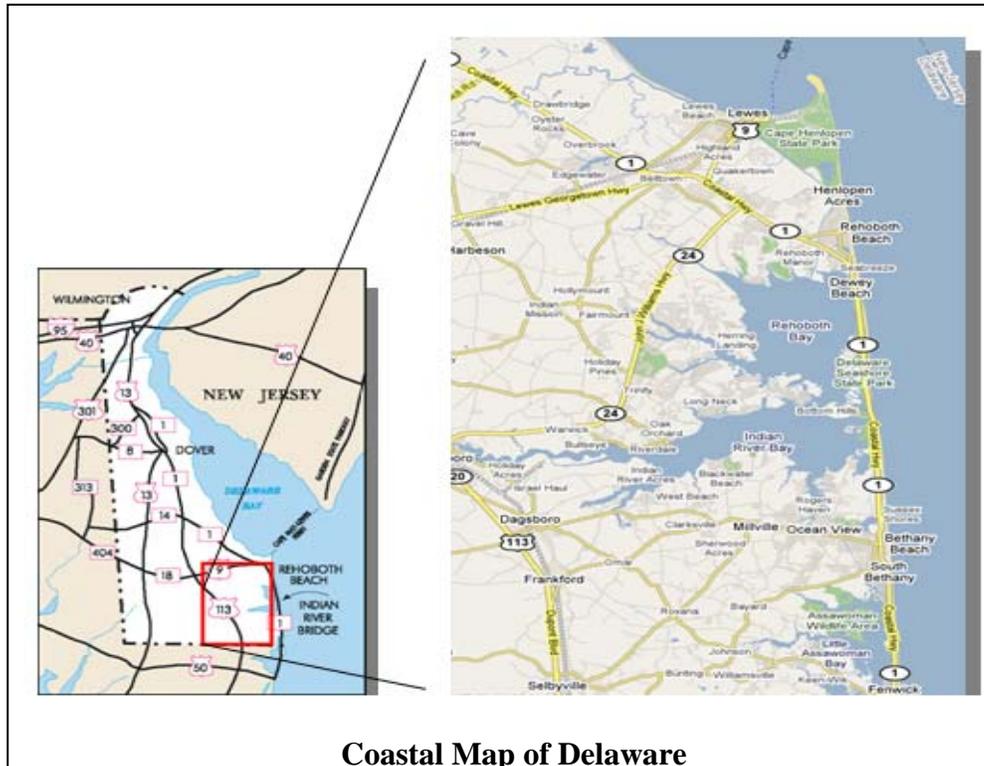
There are approximately 117 miles of coastline on the east side of Delaware. Except for a small stretch in the middle, the coastline is served by interconnected roads and two major highways: SR 9 on the north and SR 1 on the south. SR 1 is an Arterial Highway extending into Ocean City in Maryland.

State Route 9 is a 52-mile road that runs from the historic City of New Castle to south of Dover Air Force Base mostly along the western shore of the Delaware River and Bay. It passes over the C & D Canal and through communities such as Delaware City and Leipsic. There are lush green farm fields that stretch for miles along this route. Moreover, the corridor of SR 9 contains the largest area of preserved coastal marshland of nearly 50,000 acres, on the east coast. Surrounded by natural beauty, the State of Delaware has designated Route 9 as a “Coastal Heritage and Scenic Byway”.

With the Reedy Point Bridge over the C & D Canal, State Route 9 also serves as a north-south connector in addition to SR 896, US 13, and SR 1 in the state. This route relieves traffic congestion from its parallel routes. This route also has the potential to serve vehicular traffic by boat to and from New Jersey across the Delaware River. With the National Park along the C & D Canal in the planning stages, unfortunately, the future development of SR 9 is seems inevitable.

Presently, most truck traffic on SR 9 fits into one of three groups: trucks associated with the petrochemical complex located between New Castle and Delaware City, farm trucks serving the area south of the C&D Canal, and munitions trucks diverting around the City of Dover to reach a back gate at the Dover Air Force Base. All three groups are subject to traffic fluctuations. Traffic to and from the petrochemical complex depends on the vitality of that industry. Farm traffic is seasonal. Munitions traffic varies with national security needs.

State Route 1 on the south serves the coastline alongside the Atlantic Ocean in Delaware. The ocean view coastline is about 25 miles from historic Lewes to Fenwick Island through Rehoboth, Dewey Beach, and Bethany Beach. This stretch of coastline is lined with captivating sand beaches that attract sun worshippers from all over the region. Three state parks are located here within 12 miles of the beachfront. The resorts, comprising Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, Bethany Beach, and Fenwick Island are largely devoid of high-rise buildings as each retains a small-town charm. As discussed below, in major storm events SR 1 is prone to coastal flooding, which can result in significant volumes of traffic diverting to US 113, farther inland.



In “Global Warming Effects on Delaware Wildlife”, the National Wildlife Federation has reported that the sea level near Lewes has risen about one foot in the past 100 years. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has estimated that the sea level will rise between 7.2 inches and 23.6 inches by 2100. The Philadelphia District of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has recently completed two beach nourishment projects here to protect the desirable beach width. The USACE also has a three-year beach nourishment program for the protection of these ocean beaches from tidal storm.

In spite of cyclic beach protection projects, the Delaware coastline is vulnerable to “Nor’easter” storms, particularly along the SR 1 corridor, whenever one of these storms strikes the Delaware coastline. DeDOT expends considerable funds on repairing storm damage. In addition to roadway damage, there is the financial loss to tourism, local business, and homeowners. There is also irreparable damage to wildlife and wetland areas. Unfortunately, there are no provisions in the Federal-aid Apportionment formula to provide for damages to roadways as a result of Nor’easters.

There is also severe traffic congestion in the SR 1 Corridor near the coastline, particularly during the summer months. DeDOT provides Resort Transit Service with extra buses from Memorial Day to mid-September to alleviate traffic congestion in this area. There are also Park & Ride, plus free Bikes on Buses provisions by DeDOT to help mitigate traffic problems. Nonetheless, certain signalized intersections lack capacity in this corridor.