

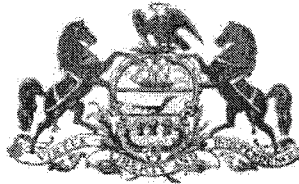
MIKE VEREB, MEMBER  
150<sup>th</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

2783

HARRISBURG:  
314-C MAIN CAPITOL  
PO BOX 202150  
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2150  
PHONE: (717) 795-7164  
FAX: (717) 260-6522

DISTRICT OFFICE:  
3950 GERMANTOWN PIKE  
SUITE 101  
COLLEGEVILLE, PA 19426  
PHONE: (610) 409-2615  
FAX: (610) 409-2619

EMAIL: [mvereb@pahousegop.com](mailto:mvereb@pahousegop.com)  
WEBSITE: [www.RepVereb.com](http://www.RepVereb.com)



*House of Representative*  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

November 25, 2009

Environmental Quality Board  
P. O. Box 8477  
Harrisburg, PA 17105

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to request the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to require a minimum 100-foot forested stream buffer on all streams located within the Commonwealth. Currently, DEP requires forested buffers on Exceptional Value (EV) streams; however, the buffers program for other streams is voluntary.

Mandatory forested buffers of at least 100 feet on both sides of every stream in our state, with 150 feet on small headwater streams and 300 feet on EV and High Quality streams, should be required. Forested buffers have many positive benefits for both the environment and the economy. Buffers reduce pollution of our streams, limit erosion of stream banks, improve habitat for fish and keep streams cooler. They also help to reduce flooding damage, increase property values for nearby properties, and cut costs for stormwater management and treatment of drinking water. Municipalities throughout the Commonwealth, realizing the benefits that buffers bring to local communities, are already requiring at least 100-foot buffers.

DEP should also continue to review stormwater plans to ensure that they meet the standards of the Clean Water Act and do not degrade the quality of the streams of the Commonwealth. An expedited permit review process, like the new "permit-by-rule" (PBR) program, puts rivers and streams at risk, is poor policy, and violates core requirements of the Clean Water Act. Of particular concern is the fact that the PBR would apply in High Quality and Impaired watersheds. These watersheds require special protections to ensure that water quality is protected and maintained. Those special protections cannot be ensured through an expedited permit review process. Also, without review by the state and without opportunities for public comment, stormwater management will get worse, not better. Pennsylvania's streams cannot afford more pollution and runoff, and we cannot afford increased flooding and drinking water treatment costs.

Pennsylvania's 83,000 miles of streams are a valuable resource that must be protected for future generations. Please make 100-foot forested stream buffers a mandatory requirement on all streams in Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael C. Vereb".

Rep. Mike Vereb  
150<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

CC: PA Campaign for Clean Water  
West Norriton Twp., 1630 W. Marshall Street, Jeffersonville, PA 19403  
East Norriton Twp., 2501 Stanbridge St., East Norriton, PA 19401  
Upper Providence Twp., 1286 Black Rock Rd., Box 406, Oaks PA 19456  
Lower Providence Twp., 100 Parklane Drive, Eagleville, PA 19403