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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

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November 24, 2009

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

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

RE: Proposed Rulemaking on 25 PA. CODE CH. 102: Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Management

To Whom It May Concern:

I strongly urge the DEP to adopt a mandatory stream buffers program, and uphold the current technical review of all stormwater plans in the state of Pennsylvania. Pollution and runoff caused significant damage to the streams in our state and without quality initiatives like buffers programs we could risk increased flooding and costly water treatments in our communities.

As a state legislator and earlier as a township official, I have always been a strong supporter of proper stormwater control in Bucks County. Such measures are crucial to the health of our water supply and the protection of natural resources. As a supervisor in Lower Makefield Township, I worked to enact a Low Impact Development (LID) ordinance which has become a national model for establishing firm guidelines for new construction projects to include natural drainage systems and open space buffers, and to minimize earth disturbances.

The current DEP requirements for forested buffers on exceptional value streams are indeed beneficial to the state of Pennsylvania. However, I encourage an expansion of these buffers to at least 100 feet on both sides of every stream, 150 feet on small headwater streams and 300 feet on "Exceptional Value" and "High Quality" streams. By maintaining the integrity of our stream water through the use of proper buffers, we will not only see benefits in the health of our aquatic environments but also within our own communities as flooding damage will be minimal and drinking water quality will be maintained for our residents. This saves our local governments billions of dollars each year in drinking water treatment costs, while also increasing property values.

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY COMMISSION

The rigorous review of all state stormwater plans by the DEP should also be maintained. The Clean Water Act has clearly established guidelines to promote the quality of the streams in Pennsylvania and all permit review processes should abide by its standards. Any type of abbreviated review of such plans could endanger the health of our streams, particularly "High Quality" and "Impaired" watersheds.

Thank you for your consideration of these measures. It is my hope that the DEP will support the plan for the 100 foot forested stream buffers meaningful additional buffers to specific high quality or impaired waterways. Please feel free to contact me at 215-968-3975 or 717-787-5475 with any questions you may have on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve J. Santarsiero", written over a horizontal line.

Steve J. Santarsiero
State Representative