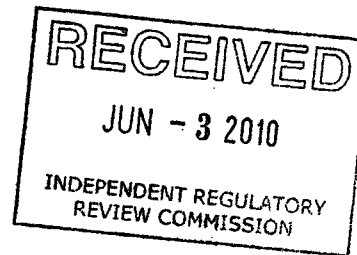


2806

From: Sierra Club Membership Services [membership.services@sierraclub.org] on behalf of Stan Kotala [ccwiba@keyconn.net]
Sent: Thursday, June 03, 2010 9:59 PM
To: IRRC
Subject: Please Support Regulation Nos. 2783 and 2806

Jun 3, 2010

IRRC Regulator
PA



Dear Regulator,

Please help protect water quality in our rivers and streams. Two important regulations are now before the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (Nos. 2783 and 2806). Amendments to 25 Pa. Code Chapter 95 require that gas drilling wastewater be treated before being discharged into our rivers and streams. Amendments to 25 Pa. Code Chapter 102 require a buffer zone for development activities along our Pennsylvania's best rivers and streams.

Requiring developers to maintain a buffer of trees and plants alongside our state's best streams is a smart, low-cost solution to protect these important natural resources and the communities and businesses that depend on them. Because buffers take advantage of Pennsylvania's existing natural resources, they deliver big benefits at little or no cost to taxpayers and businesses.

Buffers benefit our state by:

Keeping drinking water safe: By filtering pollutants out of runoff before it reaches our rivers and streams, buffers help reduce the cost of treating our drinking water. According to the EPA, every dollar invested in protecting the sources of our drinking water saves \$27 in drinking water treatment costs.

Reducing the risk of flood damage: Buffers keep new development away from the stream's edge, reducing damage when flooding happens. In addition, with fewer structures near the water's edge, runoff can be reduced and the volume of flood waters minimized.

Increasing property values: Studies have shown that stream buffers increase property values and the prices that buyers are willing to pay for properties. This in turn increases local the tax base and tax revenues for Pennsylvania's municipalities.

Protecting our streams: Buffers help filter nutrients out of runoff, protecting our streams from excess nitrogen and phosphorus. They shade streams, helping cool them and providing food for fish and other aquatic organisms. They reduce erosion and scouring, helping preserve stream banks and stream bottoms from damage.

Saving Pennsylvania money: Buffers can help reduce the cost for municipalities of stormwater management by using existing natural resources more effectively. This helps save tax dollars.

With tourism and recreation serving as major drivers of Pennsylvania's economy, and EV and HQ streams among the top destinations for anglers and eco-tourists, it is critical that we protect the resources these industries depend on. In 2008, Pennsylvania's tourism industry provided

\$18 billion in wages to more than 600,000 residents. Fishing activities alone generate \$4.7 billion per year in revenue for the state--supplying 43,000 jobs.

Requiring buffers on streams is not a new concept. Over 192 municipalities in a dozen counties in Pennsylvania already have ordinances in place that require buffers on their streams and rivers.

One third of these communities already require buffers of at least 100 feet for new developments, and some require as much as 300 foot buffers for EV and HQ streams.

However, to be truly effective, buffers must be required on the full length of a stream. Just one municipality in the middle of a watershed without a buffer rule can undermine the protection afforded to that township and its downstream neighbors from pollution and flood damage.

The best way to protect our most sensitive streams is with a statewide requirement.

Several of our neighboring states also require buffers on their streams. New Jersey requires 300 foot buffers on its C-1 streams (the equivalent of our EV streams). The state of Maryland requires 200 foot buffers on the Chesapeake Bay and tidal reaches of the streams that drain into it.

Experience in Pennsylvania municipalities with existing buffer ordinances indicates that they have no negative effect on development activity in those communities. A survey of seven municipalities in Chester, Monroe and Northampton counties found that enactment of 100 foot buffer ordinances did not slow development in these municipalities. 77 NPDES stormwater construction permits were granted in these municipalities in the year after adoption of their buffer ordinance while only 63 were issued in the year before adoption of the ordinances.

Protecting the clean streams that fuel our economy and safeguard our health is a wise investment in the future of our commonwealth. We strongly urge you to help ensure our streams and the communities they support are protected by approving the changes DEP has proposed to Chapter 102.

I support the adoption of these regulations. Please let the Independent Regulatory Review Commission know you support them as well.

Sincerely,

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