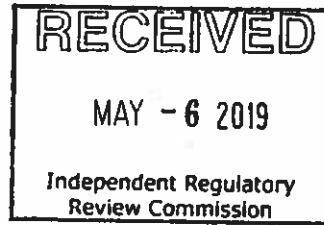


Tuesday, April 30, 2019

3226



Patrick McDonnell
Secretary DEP
Environmental Quality Board
PO Box 8477
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477

Subject: Proposed Rulemaking: Water Quality Standards - Class A Stream Redesignations (#7-548)

Dear Secretary DEP McDonnell:

The Perkiomen Valley Trout Unlimited has a long standing history of conservation initiatives on the Perkiomen Creek, its tributaries, and headwaters that travel through Montgomery, Berks, LeHigh, and Bucks counties. Most of these waters have breeding populations of brown trout and include small populations of brook trout. For 2019, our primary project is restoration of stream banks and installation of various stream habitat improvements along the Hosensack Creek in Montgomery County. This project is funded by the Coldwater Heritage Partnership on behalf of the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (Environmental Stewardship Fund), the PA Fish and Boat Commission, the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds and the PA Council of Trout Unlimited. Additionally, we are installing tree stakes along various parts of our watershed's headwaters. This work brings awareness to our residents about the importance of these natural resources, which is building enhanced interest in protecting the watershed and is also encouraging residents to fish and enjoy our local natural treasures. These efforts are also enhancing the bonds between our TU Chapter and our various government bodies and county conservation districts. Lastly, this work is reducing erosion impacts on the Green Lane Reservoir which is a primary source of potable water and extensive recreational opportunities. The connection between Aqua PA (owner of the reservoir), our TU Chapter and local communities continues to grow through the conservation initiative we continue to pursue. This work is an example of the benefits and importance of pursuing the upgrading of the 41 streams.

I strongly support the Pennsylvania Environmental Quality Board proposal (Pennsylvania Bulletin, March 23, 2019) to redesignate 41 Class A wild trout streams to High Quality-Cold Water Fishes (HQ-CWF).

The benefits of these upgrades are numerous.

Protecting the water quality of these streams with High Quality designations will help ensure that our best wild trout populations continue to thrive. This supports an outdoor recreation economy worth \$29 billion to the state; Pennsylvania boasts 16,000 miles of wild trout water and more than 1.3 million anglers.

At the same time, HQ designations protect water supplies for downstream users, including farmers and industry. More than 175,000 citizens draw drinking water from these streams. We all know that protecting water quality at the source is far cheaper than treating it downstream.

I applaud Pennsylvania for protecting these 41 waters, and urge the DEP to move quickly to advance additional packages of Class A streams that are still awaiting upgrade to HQ status.

Sincerely,

Mark Stannard
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