



One-Page Summary of Comments to the Environmental Quality Board

July 20, 2016

I submit these comments on behalf of Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future ("PennFuture") in support of the Environmental Quality Board's proposal to amend the Pennsylvania Code to provide exceptional value status to sections of Swiftwater Creek (Monroe Co.), Sobers Run (Northampton Co.), Mill Creek (Chester and Berks Co.), and Silver Creek (Susquehanna Co.). 46 Pa. Bull. 2970 (June 11, 2016). Pennsylvania's water resources are essential to the Commonwealth's health and economic well-being, and they should be given the strongest level of protection possible.

PennFuture is a statewide environmental public interest organization with offices in four Pennsylvania regions, and serves as the Pennsylvania affiliate for the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), one of the nation's oldest and largest wildlife conservation organizations.

PennFuture strongly supports the addition of the stream segments listed in the June 11, 2016 Pennsylvania Bulletin announcement to the list of "Exceptional Value" waters in Pennsylvania. As noted in the Pennsylvania Bulletin notice, objective scientific data reveal that these streams are among the best of Pennsylvania's natural waters. Designating these stream segments "Exceptional Value" will help provide them with an additional layer of protection to ensure that they continue to serve as a viable habitat for aquatic life. We ask that you finalize this rulemaking to provide these special waters with the protection they so richly deserve.

I also write to express appreciation to the Board and the Pennsylvania Department of Protection for working with municipalities and citizens groups to bring about these improvements to water quality protection in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Bulletin notice indicates that each of these stream redesignations was initiated by a petition submitted by either a municipality or a citizens group. We are encouraged to see the state government working with communities to achieve a beneficial result for the citizens of the Commonwealth. We commend the good work of all involved, and we hope that this will serve as a model for future mutual endeavors.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments, and thank you for all of the work that you do to ensure Pennsylvanians' constitutionally protected right to "pure water." Pa. Const. art. I, § 27.

-Michael Helbing, Staff Attorney