

S.C.C.A EV Petition

Early in 2006, the Shermans Creek Conservation Association submitted a petition to the Pennsylvania Environmental Quality Board regarding a proposed change of the Shermans Creek stream designation from that of Warm Water Fishery (WWF) to that of Exceptional Value (EV). The segment proposed for re-designation is the main stem of Shermans Creek from the confluence of Cisna Run to the confluence of the Susquehanna River.

As part of this petition, the SCCA submitted their "State of the Watershed Report" and other documentation supporting that the main stem of Shermans Creek from Cisna Run to its mouth is an exceptional warm water fishery of the highest water quality and ecological significance.

Numerous studies have been done supporting this petition, such as critical wildlife species, aquatic macro invertebrate and water sampling, scenic beauty and recreational opportunities, endangered plants & habitats along with agricultural and other land usage and municipal growth information, etc.

By discussing concentrated livestock operations and development as potential threats the water quality of Shermans Creek, SCCA does not contend that agricultural, residential or commercial development should not occur within the watershed, but that it supports sustainable growth practices, which provide increased economic opportunity for the region while at the same time, preserving and enhancing our agricultural heritage and our environment.

EV designation for the lower Shermans Creek, will not slow or stop future growth and development, but it does ensure that any proposed new discharges, including discharges of storm-water associated with construction activities, will undergo review under PA's anti-degradation regulations to protect and maintain water quality.

What an EV designation does is ensure that any proposed new discharges, including discharges of storm-water associated with construction activities, will undergo review under PA's anti-degradation regulations to protect and maintain water quality.

These regulations do not have any special protection provisions for streams designated WWF. Thus, discharges that degrade WWF streams are permitted, so long as existing uses are protected.

An EV designation is required to ensure the full protection that the resource deserves under the anti-degradation regulations.

All persons that use and recreate on Shermans Creek will benefit from an upgrade of the re-designation. Residents will benefit by an increase in property value and overall health of the individuals due to higher water quality standards.

Sporting-related businesses, and other related businesses will benefit from increased recreation on an exceptional stream.

Water suppliers will benefit from lower costs to treat water to meet drinking water standards. Livestock owners and farmers will benefit from healthier livestock and crops from better water quality, not to mention, scout camps, campers, hikers, bird watchers, state park visitors, hunting and fishing organizations and West Perry and Susquenita Schools will also benefit from the re-designation.

SCCA does not anticipate that any persons, businesses or organizations will be negatively impacted by the EV designation. Any persons proposing new discharges to the watershed will be required to follow the anti-degradation implementation regulations designed to protect and maintain the exceptional water quality of Shermans Creek. Based on the experiences of other watersheds, the SCCA does not anticipate this to be an impediment to development or growth.

After the submission of this petition, the Pennsylvania Environmental Quality Board will review the petition and rule if an independent study should be done of the Shermans Creek by DEP.

Once this study is completed, and if DEP supports the request for re-designation, local municipalities will have access to this information and be given a reasonable amount of time to voice their opinions, before the EQB makes a decision.