



## The Importance of Clean Streams Protection in the Poconos Region

### What is an “Exceptional Value” (EV) stream?

- ❖ “Exceptional Value” or EV is the classification given to streams in Pennsylvania that have the cleanest and highest quality of water.
- ❖ EV streams provide unique and valuable resources including outstanding *trout fisheries as well as opportunities for recreation, aesthetic pleasure, and tourism.*



### Who determines whether a stream is EV?

- ❖ The PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the PA Environmental Quality Board (EQB) ensure that these outstanding streams are properly classified so that the *exceptional water quality will be maintained and protected.*
- ❖ The DEP, PA Fish and Boat Commission, or any member of the public can petition to have a stream upgraded to EV.
- ❖ The DEP conducts independent studies to determine whether a stream meets the water quality requirements for EV. If so, then the EQB will implement the rulemaking process, which includes opportunities for public comment, to officially change the status of a stream.

### Why does EV status matter?

- ❖ Both Exceptional Value and High Quality streams are known as *special protection waters* in PA.
- ❖ The second highest stream classification, “High Quality” or HQ, allows for some degradation of the water quality if there is “social or economic justification.”
- ❖ Once a stream is designated EV, its outstanding water quality *must always be protected.*



### EV status does NOT prohibit development.

- ❖ Don't be fooled: *well-planned, environmentally sound development and EV streams co-exist.*
- ❖ Classifying a stream as *EV does NOT prohibit development*, but rather ensures that any development does not impair the highest quality waters in our state.
- ❖ DEP has issued over 100 permits in EV watersheds statewide, *facilitating economic growth* while protecting EV streams.

### EV streams benefit the Poconos.

- ❖ While only 2% of PA streams are classified as EV, *80% of EV streams are in the Poconos* (primarily in Monroe, Pike, and Wayne counties).
- ❖ These streams not only provide *local and regional benefits* but are also the *headwaters to the Delaware River*, the source of drinking water for millions.
- ❖ The EV streams in the upper and mid Delaware River supports approximately *\$22 billion in regional economic activity*, which includes hiking, hunting, fishing, boating, tourism, and farming, according to Delaware Riverkeeper Network.



Visit [www.OurPoconoWaters.org](http://www.OurPoconoWaters.org) to get involved!