

Why Clean Stream Protections Matter in the Poconos

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 headwaters of the Delaware River support approximately **\$22 billion in regional economic activity**, which includes hiking, hunting, fishing, boating, tourism, and farming.



Please sign up to learn more information about Clean Streams Protections, and see what YOU can do to help protect these exceptional Poconos waters!