

**Stephen Hoffman**

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**From:** ecomment@pa.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 15, 2021 2:42 PM  
**To:** Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net; regcomments@pa.gov; Troutman, Nick; gking; lversen, Sarah A.; Emily.Eyster; IRRC  
**Cc:** c-jflanaga@pa.gov  
**Subject:** Comment received - Proposed Rulemaking: Water Quality Standards - Dunbar Creek et al. Stream Redesignations (#7-557)

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**Re: eComment System**

**The Department of Environmental Protection has received the following comments on Proposed Rulemaking: Water Quality Standards - Dunbar Creek et al. Stream Redesignations (#7-557).**

Commenter Information:

Eric Harder  
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Comments entered:

Mountain Watershed Association (MWA), home of the Youghiogheny Riverkeeper is submitting these comments in support of the redesignation of portions of Dunbar Creek. We are a nonprofit citizen-led, science based, environmental organization focused on protection, preservation and restoration of the Indian Creek and greater Youghiogheny River watersheds. We are located in Pennsylvania, but our work spans widely through the Upper Ohio Watershed. We submit these comments on behalf of our organization and our membership of over 2,000 members.

Dunbar Creek, a tributary of the Youghiogheny River in Fayette County, needs to be redesignated as an Exceptional Value (EV) stream, a designation reserved for the Commonwealth's cleanest streams. This designation affords Dunbar Creek the highest possible protection from potential water degradation.

The redesignation to EV status should apply from the source of Dunbar to the convergence with Gist Run, those reaches that exceeded or met the Departments quality standards for EV, based on the latest 2016 PADEP study. The surrounding watershed is largely forested and within the gamelands. This redesignation process has the support of many community members, including Senator Pat Stefano.

Pennsylvania's Chapter 93 "Water Quality Standards" are regulations rooted in the federal Clean Water Act and PA's Clean Streams Law. These regulations allow PADEP to protect and restore water quality in rivers and streams across the Commonwealth. Chapter 93's antidegradation scheme exists in large part to maintain a stream's water quality where the water quality exceeds the minimum level of quality required to protect stream uses such as aquatic life and recreation. Such streams are eligible for the "special protection" designations of High Quality or Exceptional Value.

The Dunbar Creek watershed is a picturesque area of Fayette County. The large amount of forested area and the relatively low levels of historic agricultural, commercial, and industrial development have combined to allow the uses and quality of the watershed to become truly exceptional. Because the law would require the protection and maintenance of existing water quality, MWA supports the redesignation of Dunbar Creek to an Exceptional Value status. Benefits of this redesignation would benefit anglers, locals, downstream users, and the commonwealth of PA.

We urge the Environmental Quality Board to redesignate Dunbar Creek as an Exception Value waterway.

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No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
Jessica Shirley

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