Subject: : Conservation
Topic: : Help Protect PA's Wild Trout Streams
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Just received this .....

The Pennsylvania Legislature is proposing to severely gut the state's Endangered Species Act and other protections that help protect wild trout and other sensitive PA species that are part of Pennsylvania's natural heritage. Delaware Riverkeeper Network urges you to contact the Legislative Chairs and your state legislators now to stop this bad legislation and attend the joint legislative hearing on Monday in Pottsville if you can.

There are many things wrong with these Bills but five things to point out now:

The PA Fish and Boat Commission, PA Game Commission, and Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources would be prohibited from designating a species as Threatened &Endangered unless the species was FEDERALLY designated. Plus the law would put political pressure over the science by requiring any action or listing by the agency to first be submitted to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission for approval.

The proposed legislation would greatly weaken PA's Wild Trout stream designation – by removing the ability for a stream to be given Wild Trout stream protection provisionally in advance of publication in the PA Bulletin. This contradicts how DEP applies Exceptional Value existing use designation to Wild Trout streams in advance of Environmental Quality Board (EQB) approval and would allow for degradation of our important and rare wild trout streams as PADEP works through the lengthy and often multi-year long stream upgrade process.

Any new designation of a Pennsylvania endangered species could only happen if that species is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its entire federal range. So a species could be on the verge of extinction in PA and it would not qualify as endangered in Pennsylvania and receive necessary special protections under this new proposed law.

The legislation would shift the burden onto the taxpayers and state agencies to determine the presence of threatened and endangered species instead of keeping that burden on the developers and polluters who are applying for permits.

Pennsylvania species on the existing state's listing would be AUTOMATICALLY DELISTED from the state's "centralized database " after two years unless they are re-designated by the agency.

You can find out contact information for your PA state legislators here:

http://www.delawareriverkeeper.org/ri ... g-issue-detail.aspx?Id=61