

**Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Stroud Water Research Center
Clean Water Action
Raymond Proffitt Foundation
PennFuture
PA Chapter Sierra Club**

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**Conservation and Water Research Orgs Applaud
Streamside Forest Buffers Bill**

Bristol, Pa.— Relying upon, current science that shows streamside forest buffers protect communities from pollution and reduce flooding , Pennsylvania State Senator John Rafferty (R-44) introduced a new bill to support protection of forest buffers along streams, creeks and rivers in the state. The new bill is being applauded by both conservation and water research organizations.

“This measure will provide the most basic protections from pollution and flooding to every community in the Commonwealth,” said **Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper**. “Streams lined by healthy forested buffers reduce pollution in the creeks communities drink from, fish in, and play in. Once established, vegetated buffers help communities meet federal pollution protection laws at a very low cost, they can provide protection from flooding that devastates communities, and they help prevent erosion that undermines public and private lands as well as bridge and road infrastructure. Moreover, this law will ensure that the cost of providing these protections is

appropriately carried by new development projects, not by taxpayers or municipal and state budgets.”

Senate Bill 1465 focuses on securing 100-foot buffers on waterways that are bordered by new development projects with additional protections for waterways that fail to meet state water quality requirements as well as streams designated exceptional value or high quality. The law encourages municipal ordinances to provide this protection and supports statewide action in the absence of municipal ordinances.

“We recently reviewed over 230 scientific studies and concluded that streamside forest buffers must be at least 100 feet wide on both side of the stream to adequately protect its physical, chemical, and biological integrity. So, I am delighted to hear about this proposed legislation. It is consistent with the latest science,” said **Bernard W. Sweeney, Ph.D. Director Stroud Water Research Center**, based in Avondale, Pa.

"Pennsylvanians are lucky to have Senator Rafferty who recognizes the value in protecting streamside buffers. Protecting streamside buffers is a common sense approach to safeguarding our water, our most vital and precious resource to our welfare," said **Michael Roles, Program Organizer for Clean Water Action in Pennsylvania**. "Clean Water Action thanks Senator Rafferty for taking this critical, practical step."

"This critical buffer legislation takes a major step in protecting future water quality in Pennsylvania," said **John Hoekstra, Executive Director of the Raymond Proffitt Foundation**.

“Polluted runoff from storms is a significant source of pollution in our streams and rivers. Buffers consisting of forest or other vegetation act as filters to help keep nutrients, pesticides, and other contaminants out of our waterways. Ensuring that no more of these natural filters are lost to development is a good first step to protecting the quality of our water for all people and wildlife that depend on it,” said **Cindy Dunn, President and CEO of PennFuture**.

"Scientific research demonstrates that vegetated stream buffers control erosion, prevent flooding and improve water quality. This bill puts into practice what legislators have known for a long time," said Thomas Au, conservation chair for the Pennsylvania Sierra Club.

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