

## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 190259, **Version:** 0

---

Opposing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' proposed revised definition of "Waters of the United States" and urging the Agencies to preserve the 2015 Clean Water Rule, which includes wetlands, headwaters, and intermittent and ephemeral streams in the definition of "Waters of the United States".

WHEREAS, The 2015 Clean Water Rule clarified the term "Waters of the United States", which defines the extent of waters protected under the Clean Water Act's suite of pollution prevention, control, and clean-up programs; and

WHEREAS, The Clean Water Act is the fundamental federal law protecting the Waters of the United States from pollution, degradation, and destruction; and

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has water resources that are abundant and vital to overall ecosystem health and economic well-being of the Commonwealth, with approximately 86,000 miles of streams, 404,000 acres of wetlands, 161,445 acres of lakes, 17 square miles of the Delaware estuary, and 63 miles of Great Lakes shorefront; and

WHEREAS, Our streams provide drinking water for roughly 63% of the Commonwealth's citizens and are critical to our economy, including small breweries that are supporting over 21,000 jobs and our wildlife, tourism, and recreation industries, which generate \$2.8 billion; and

WHEREAS, Our wetlands perform vital cost-free filtration of drinking water and source water, often in the headwaters regions as well as contain many of our rare, threatened, and endangered species, reflecting their critical importance to the conservation of biodiversity within the Commonwealth. Our wetlands also and provide critical flows for our State fish, the brook trout; and

WHEREAS, The proposed rollback will weaken protections for drinking water sources at a time when our drinking water sources are increasingly threatened by the impacts of climate change, outdated and failing infrastructure, and growing pollution from unregulated contaminants and industrial sources; and

WHEREAS, Strong Federal standards are needed because water does not respect political boundaries and flows from one state to another; and

WHEREAS, More than 1,000 peer reviewed scientific studies have confirmed that headwater intermittent and ephemeral streams and wetlands affect the quantity and quality of water in larger bodies of water downstream; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby oppose the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' proposed Revised Definition of "Waters of the United States" and further urge that the EPA and the Corps preserve a broad definition of "Waters of the United States" that includes Clean

Water Act protections for headwater, ephemeral, and intermittent streams, and wetlands, as defined by the 2015 Clean Water Rule.