

PUBLIC HEARING ANNOUNCEMENT - OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY
on PA Department of Transportation and PA Turnpike Commission Stormwater Permits

When: Tuesday, July 20th. The virtual public hearing will begin at 6 p.m. and end at 9 p.m. or earlier.

Where: Virtual meeting. Advance signup is required; RSVP to Brian Chalfant of DEP at (717) 783-8073 or bchalfant@pa.gov. Meeting link will be available at: <https://www.dep.pa.gov/PublicParticipation/Pages/Virtual-Public-Hearings.aspx> (scroll to the bottom for the meeting link).

Why you should participate: Storm runoff from state roads and highways – and the pollution it carries – leads to poor water quality and unhealthy conditions in Pennsylvania’s rivers. Through a statewide permit program, municipalities and large public facilities have been required to reduce the amount of pollution that flows off local roads and properties. But the requirements are not the same for everyone.

PennDOT alone manages over 40,000 miles of roads. They are also obligated by permit to reduce pollution from stormwater under the proposed permit. *But the details of how they will do that will not be shared with the public until after the permit has been issued.*

If you represent a local environmental organization, now is the time to speak up. Tell the Department of Environmental Protection, which issues these permits, that you want to know how this affects the rivers where you live and work. Which communities will see a reduction in polluted runoff, and which will not? Let them know that you care about water pollution, and want to know that these large agencies are doing their fair share of the work to help clean up Pennsylvania’s waters.

How to participate:

- The attached maps show the places in the Delaware basin that are covered by the permits. If you care about the rivers in these places, consider giving testimony at the hearing.
- Take a look at the permits, and learn more about what environmental groups are saying about them (permits and a joint comment letter also attached).
- Sign up to speak by July 19, the day before the meeting. You will be given up to five minutes to share your testimony, which will become a part of the public record. OR you may submit comments via email or letter to DEP.
- Log into the virtual hearing at the scheduled date and time:
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/PublicParticipation/Pages/Virtual-Public-Hearings.aspx> (scroll to the bottom of the page).
- It is strongly recommended that you download and test the software in advance.

In your written or verbal testimony, tell DEP:

- Explain why you care about the rivers (and lakes, and streams, and wetlands) where you live and work.
- Tell them where and how you’ve seen these places be affected by storm runoff from state roads and highways. include specific data points, if possible.
- Ask: how will PennDOT and the Turnpike Commission deal with polluted runoff in these places that you care about?

If you need assistance crafting testimony, you may contact:

Colleen Walters, River Network: cwalters@rivernetwork.org
Ellen Kohler, University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center: ejkohler@umd.edu
Lia Mastropolo, American Rivers: lmastropolo@americanrivers.org
Jessica O’Neill, PennFuture: oneill@pennfuture.org