

Mitigating for Acid Mine Drainage in the Mid-Atlantic Region Williams Run, on Private Property in Vernango County, Pennsylvania (PA)



Valerie Tarkowski, President of the South Sandy Creek Watershed Association is leading a multi-partner effort to mitigate for the effects of acidic pH levels, improving the water quality in Williams Run.

Ill effects of mineral extraction in the Mid-Atlantic Region resulting from acid mine drainage (AMD) and abandoned mine land (AML) has been identified as one of the five greatest stressors to brook trout populations and causes of water quality degradation in this region. Extremely low pH levels (average of 3.2 from a neutral pH of 7) have created unsuitable habitat for most living organisms in the portion of Williams Run affected by acid mine drainage seeping into the stream from numerous locations.

The partnership will restore Williams Run so that it can support life, with lime treatments in the short term and by constructing a limestone bed system to passively treat acid mine drainage for the long term.

Tributaries flowing into Williams Run currently support healthy populations of wild brook trout. This project will allow currently isolated populations of native brook trout to return to the main stem of Williams Run, connecting them and expanding their range. These water quality improvements on private property will benefit stream habitat downstream on State Forest Lands. The landowners have committed to allowing public fishing in this area greatly expanding the brook trout fishing opportunities in western Pennsylvania.

This project further supports range-wide efforts to restore healthy brook trout populations by restoring a population where they have been locally extirpated and providing educational opportunities for other partners throughout the region and range to learn from the techniques used at Williams Run.

Project Partners:

- PA Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation
- Knouse Foods Cooperative
- Mineral Township
- PA Senior Environmental Corps
- Allegheny Mineral
- PA Game Commission
- Irwin Township
- PA Fish & Boat Commission
- Trout Unlimited
- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- Five private property owners.



