

10: SURFACE WATERS AND NEW JERSEY WATER QUALITY STANDARDS

State surface waters are classified according to Surface Water Quality Standards (NJAC 7:9B) (<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wms//sgwqt/200610swqs.pdf>), which were developed to improve impacted surface waters and to protect and maintain the high quality water resources. Waterways are classified in three ways according to their general quality and structure, the occurrence and structure of trout populations, and special resource protection status.

All flowing surface waters within Franklin Township are classified as FW2, which are all fresh waters not characterized as FW1 (not subjected to any man-made wastewater discharges or increases in runoff from anthropogenic activities). Designated uses within FW2 waterbodies include the maintenance, migration and propagation of natural and established biota (collection of organisms), contact recreation, industrial and agricultural water supply, public potable water supply, and any other reasonable uses. Within FW2 waters, toxic substances shall not be at levels toxic to humans or aquatic biota, all discharges shall be permitted pursuant to NJPDES, nutrients shall not be in concentrations that render waters unsuitable for designated use (except by natural causes), and there shall not be other changes in use or chemistry that are not deemed reasonable by the state.

In addition, surface water habitats within the State are classified in part on their ability to support trout and other species of fish. This classification is made because Salmonids (trout family) are reliable indicators of water quality; trout typically can survive in waters with high dissolved oxygen levels, low turbidity, metals, and temperatures. All streams within Franklin Township are characterized as either Trout Maintenance (TM) or Trout Production (TP). TP streams are those used by trout for spawning and/or nursery purposes, while those classified as TM are waters with the potential to support trout populations throughout the year. Trout Maintenance waters within the Township include the main stems of the Musconetcong River, and Pohatcong Creek. Trout Production streams include Halfway House Brook, Mill Brook, and Montana Brook. All tributaries to the Pohatcong in the Township are TP as well as one tributary of the Musconetcong.

Recognizing the stresses placed on river habitats in 1965, the U.S. Congress passed the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. In 1995, an Interagency Wild & Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council Charter gave coordination and administration duties of the Wild and Scenic Act to federal agencies like National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management. Designation as a Wild and Scenic River falls under three categories: wild, scenic and recreation. Recently, portions of the Musconetcong River were included in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System through legislative action by New Jersey State Senators and Representatives and with support from local organizations. The process was finalized in December 2006. To date, two designations of the river have been approved along three segments of river: Segment A, Saxton Falls to the Rt. 46 Bridge, 3.5 miles, scenic; Segment B, Kings Highway Bridge to the railroad tunnels at Musconetcong Gorge, 20.7 miles, recreational; and Segment C, Hughesville Mill to the Delaware River confluence, 4.3 miles, recreational. Segment B of the Musconetcong River flows through Franklin Township.