



EANY SUPPORTS A-B-Cs of Stream Protection



Memo #29

No Same As
[S.4162 \(Harckham, et al.\)](#)

Explanation:

This bill provides protections to 41,000 miles of class C streams in New York. Any development that might affect class C streams will have to apply for a permit and take the proper steps to ensure these critical waterways are not harmed or degraded.

The health of our streams is directly linked to the safety of our drinking water. Class C streams protect against flooding, filter harmful pollutants, and feed into waterways that can serve as or recharge drinking water sources. The vitality of these freshwater resources is also essential to maintaining a recreation economy that support thousands of jobs across the state; class C streams are specifically defined as those that support fisheries and non-contact recreation.

In 2020, the Trump administration finalized its rollback of the science-based, Obama-era Clean Water Rule. Thousands of miles of streams across the state are now more vulnerable to pollution without these federal protections. Given the difficulty of reversing this decision at the federal level, New York needs to bolster our efforts to safeguard the integrity of our streams and drinking water.

Proactively protecting streams is far cheaper and a more sensible environmental investment than cleaning up water pollution and restoring degraded natural resources. Recent pollution by the toxic chemicals PFOA, PFOS, and 1,4-dioxane, and the costs associated with removing them from our drinking water, shows the urgent need for source water protections that prevent contamination from occurring in the first place.

Summary:

This bill amends the environmental conservation law to include class C streams in the list of protected streams within the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation regulatory system.