



Proposed Gateway Warehouse/Distribution Center

What you need to know about the impact on Monocacy Creek

How to make your voice heard

Following the Public Hearing on Monday, April 29, The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has now opened a comment period until May 14, 2024. You can email your concerns about the Warehouse/Distribution Center proposed for the property located on Gateway Drive in Hanover Township near the intersection of 512 and Route 22. In addition to concerns about truck traffic creating air- and noise-pollution in an already congested area, stormwater runoff from the proposed use also threatens our High-Quality (HQ) Monocacy Creek.

The presence of a HQ waterway in a densely populated, urbanized community like the Lehigh Valley is exceptionally rare and precious. Hundreds of thousands of people from all walks of life have access to an incredible resource. The Monocacy Creek has borne the brunt of development over the last decade. The creek has proven to be resilient, but it's unclear how much more stress it can handle.

The DEP is accepting written comments and concerns until May 14, 2024. **This is your chance** to urge the DEP to prioritize and protect one of our local special-protection streams from harmful degradation by denying this proposal so that stormwater runoff that carries pollutants and damages our precious wild trout ecosystem will not be added to the Monocacy and other waterways downstream.

Written comments and concerns must be submitted to DEP by May 14, 2024.

WHAT: DEP comment period on a distribution center threatening the High Quality (HQ) Monocacy Creek in Northampton County, PA.

DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS: Tuesday, **May 14, 2024**

TO SUBMIT COMMENTS: Send comments that **include a reference to the Arcadia/Gateway Distribution Center Proposal** by mail or email:

By email:

RA-EPWW-NERO@pa.gov and include a cc to pkania@pa.gov

Or by mail:

Pamela Kania
DEP Northeast Regional Office (NERO)
2 Public Square
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701-1915

Background on the Warehouse/Distribution Center

The proposed project will be a 250,000+ square-foot warehouse/distribution center located on Gateway Drive in Hanover Township near the intersection of Route 512 and Route 22. The project site is currently a hotel plus an additional lot adjacent to the hotel. It will affect the High Quality (HQ) Monocacy Creek, which is also designated as a Class A wild trout stream by the PA Department of Environmental Protection. The proposed building, associated parking lots, and stormwater facilities are located only 1000 feet uphill of the creek. Stormwater runoff will pass through culverts under the building, parking lots and roadways, directing the runoff to an existing culvert built nearly 60 years ago that passes under route 22. The water will then cut through an eroding ravine that leads directly into the Monocacy Creek.

Background on Special Protection Waters

Because this DEP permit deals with stormwater impacts from this distribution center project, your comments should focus on water quality impacts and/or your experience with the Monocacy Creek. **Personal stories, experiences, and recommendations are most important for DEP's consideration.**

The DEP is responsible for providing designations for all the waterbodies in the state. These designations are determined by several considerations, including aquatic life, primary use, chemical composition, etc. High Quality (HQ) is the second-highest classification that DEP can provide. HQ streams are a unique and valuable community resource, offering not only outstanding trout fisheries and opportunities for recreation, tourism, and aesthetic enjoyment, but also [can provide billions of dollars in value to the local economy](#) through both revenue generation and cost savings thanks to flood mitigation, carbon sequestration, and more.

We've seen countless distribution center/warehouse projects proposed or constructed in the Monocacy Creek Watershed in recent years. These projects – like the one proposed here – risk degrading our local streams by changing natural drainage patterns, clearcutting swaths of forested lands, dramatically increasing impervious surfaces, and creating more cumulative impacts from stormwater runoff. This stormwater contains pollutants such as heat, salt, and sediment that cannot always be appropriately mitigated through built stormwater controls and best management practices. In addition to jeopardizing the water quality of our creek by dramatically changing the landscape and increasing impervious surface and polluted runoff, distribution centers are threatening the health and safety of our communities through increased tractor trailer traffic, air quality concerns, and noise and lighting impacts, just to name a few.

Thank you,

Monocacy Creek Watershed Association
100 Illick's Mill Road
Bethlehem PA 18017
Email: monocacycrkwa@gmail.com

Jane Cook

MCWA secretary/treasurer
610-216-2322

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

- The health of the Monocacy Creek watershed should not need to withstand yet another industrial-scale project because it has seen too many already.
- The Monocacy Creek has the second largest population of wild, stream-bred trout per hectare of stream bottom of all the streams in Pennsylvania. Building yet another irresponsibly sited logistics facility in its watershed threatens this rare and precious resource.
- More than 34% of Pennsylvania's waterways are so degraded that the DEP considers them "impaired". Adding to that, 20% of the Lehigh River watershed is also considered impaired. Continuing to add impervious surface to the Monocacy Creek watershed may lead to the degradation and impairment of this precious HQ waterway.
- The Lehigh Valley is home to many Environmental Justice communities, some of which are within a reasonable walking distance or short drive from the Monocacy Creek. Continued irresponsible development in the Monocacy Creek watershed – like this project and the others that came before it – threatens one of the few healthy waterways in the region the public can access for recreation.
- The increase in impervious surface created by this irresponsibly sited project will impose very real and direct negative impacts on the Monocacy Creek through inundation with stormwater runoff that will likely carry contaminants into the main flow. The consequences of this are many, including destruction of trout habitat and flooding, along with impacts on the Lehigh River, the Delaware River, and other waterways downstream to Philadelphia, threatening the drinking water sources for many municipalities. The Lehigh River has been named one of the nation's 50 most at-risk waterways. With the Monocacy Creek running directly into the Lehigh in downtown Bethlehem, the contaminants that enter the Monocacy have a direct impact on this already vulnerable river.