

## SWATARA CREEK

### Description

Swatara Creek is a large watershed covering, 571 mi<sup>2</sup>, 127.3 mi<sup>2</sup> of which are in Dauphin County. The stream originates in Berks and Schuylkill Counties, generally moving southwest through Lebanon and Dauphin Counties where it meets the Susquehanna River at Middletown Borough. Major tributaries in Dauphin County include Beaver Creek, Kellock Run, Manada Creek, and Bow Creek entering Swatara Creek from the north and Spring Creek East entering from the south. The watershed in Dauphin County is characterized by extensive suburban development with some areas of farmland and forestland. Population centers in the watershed include Hershey and surrounding area, Hummelstown Borough, and Middletown Borough.

Topography in the watershed is characterized by relatively low, rolling hills. The geology of the watershed is composed of two geologic formations. The formation in the northern and eastern portion of the watershed contains shale, limestone, dolomite, and sandstone. Geology in the southwestern portion is characterized by red sandstone, shale and conglomerate intruded by diabase. In areas of the watershed underlain by limestone, Karst topography dominates with many areas prone to sinkhole formation.

### DEP Classification

Swatara Creek and most of its major tributaries are classified as a Warm Water Fishery (WWF). Most of its major tributaries are also classified as WWF. However, Manada Creek from its source to Interstate-81 is listed as a Cold Water Fishery (CWF). The remaining streams are listed as a WWF. Sections of the Swatara Creek are listed as impaired by siltation from agricultural sources. Relatively small sections of Beaver Creek are impaired by siltation from urban/suburban and agriculture sources. A small section of Manada Creek is listed as impaired by pathogens and nutrients from a municipal point source and siltation from road runoff. Two small sections of Bow Creek are identified as impaired by priority organics and siltation from road runoff and agriculture. Extensive areas of Spring Creek East are listed as impaired by siltation, organic enrichment and low dissolved oxygen from agricultural activities, urban runoff and storm sewers.



*Swatara Creek before entering the Susquehanna River.*

### QUICK FACTS

**Watershed Size:** 571 mi<sup>2</sup>,  
127 mi<sup>2</sup> in  
Dauphin County

**Land Uses:** Wide variety

**Stream Miles:** 253.3

**Impaired Stream Miles:** 58.1

#### DEP Stream Classification:

- Section of Manada Creek from source to I-81 – CWF
- Swatara Creek and all other tributaries – WWF

#### DEP Listed Impairments:

- Sections of Swatara Creek – siltation from agriculture
- Section of Beaver Creek – Siltation from urban/suburban runoff and agriculture
- Section of Manada Creek – Pathogens and nutrients from a municipal point source, siltation from road runoff
- Sections of Bow Creek – Priority organics and siltation from road runoff and agriculture
- Sections of Spring Creek East – Siltation, organic enrichment, and low dissolved oxygen from agriculture, urban runoff, and storm sewers

#### Watershed Municipalities:

Conewago Twp, Derry Twp, East/West/South Hanover Twps, Hummelstown Borough, Londonderry Twp, Lower Paxton Twp, Middletown Borough, Lower Swatara Twp, Swatara Twp



*Swatara Creek watershed*