

WICONISCO CREEK

Description

The Wiconisco Creek watershed encompasses an area of approximately 102 square miles in northern Dauphin County, and 14.2 mi² outside of the county, classifying its size as a large stream. Originating in Schuylkill County, the creek flows generally east to west to its junction with the Susquehanna River at Millersburg Borough. Two significant tributaries enter the Wiconisco Creek at Lykens. Bear Creek enters from the north and Rattling Creek enters from the south. Wiconisco Creek's largest tributary, Little Wiconisco Creek, enters farther west near Millersburg Borough. Many smaller un-named tributaries join Wiconisco Creek between Loyalton and Millersburg.

Rural in character, population density is low with the vast majority of land use in agriculture and forestland. Population centers include several small boroughs. Topography is characteristic of the ridge and valley

province, dominated by flat to moderately sloping land of the valley floor. Steeper slopes are found on the mountains and ridges that form the basin boundary. The ridges of the Wiconisco Creek watershed are composed mainly of red and gray sandstone and conglomerate. The valley is underlain with sandstone and shale. A portion of the eastern section of the watershed is underlain with coal.

DEP Classification

The main stem of Wiconisco Creek is classified as a WWF. Some tributaries to Wiconisco Creek (source to Route 209 at Bridge) are listed as CWF while other tributaries from this bridge to the river are identified as Warm Water Fishery (WWF). Bear Creek is listed as a Coldwater Fishery (CWF). Rattling Creek's East and West Branches are classified as Exceptional Value (EV) with their confluence to the Wiconisco Creek classified as a high quality cold water fishery (HQ-CWF). The Little Wiconisco Creek is identified as a WWF. PA DEP lists a portion of Wiconisco Creek and several of its tributaries in the watershed as impaired for one or more of their designated uses. A section of the Wiconisco Creek in the headwaters area is impaired by metals

and low pH from abandoned mine drainage (AMD). Bear Creek is also listed as impaired by metals caused by AMD. Little Wiconisco Creek also appears on the list due to siltation and nutrient impairments attributed to agricultural activities. A few small tributaries of Wiconisco Creek are also listed due to similar impacts from agricultural activities.



Wiconisco Creek watershed

Wiconisco Creek before entering the Susquehanna River

QUICK FACTS

Watershed Size: 116.2 mi²,
14.2 mi² in
Dauphin County

Land Uses: Primarily
Agriculture and
Forested

Stream Miles: 161.7

Impaired Stream Miles: 58.9

DEP Stream Classification:

- Rattling Creek East and West Branch – EV
- Rattling Creek E/W Branch confluence to mouth – HQ-CWF
- Bear Creek – CWF

DEP Listed Impairments:

- Little Wiconisco Creek – Siltation and nutrients from agriculture activities
- Bear Creek – Metals from AMD
- Wiconisco Creek headwaters – Metals from AMD

Watershed Municipalities

Rush Twp, Jefferson Twp, Jackson Twp, Williams, Williamstown, Washington Twp, Elizabethville, Wiconisco Twp, Upper Paxton Twp, Millersburg, Mifflin Twp, Lykens Borough, Lykens Twp, Berrysburg, Gratz

