

# Pennsylvania Aquatic Community Classification

## Pennsylvania's Least-Disturbed Stream (LDS) Reaches

Least-disturbed stream (LDS) reaches were chosen to identify areas for conservation protection. LDS reaches can also be used to select aquatic habitats that can serve benchmarks for restoration of degraded streams. These high quality stream segments ideally have little disturbance from human influences and demonstrate natural ecological function.

Stream units for the analysis are the stream segments defined by EPA Reach Files (Version 3.0). Each stream reach was assigned information about its position in the watershed, local environmental characteristics and landscape information about the watershed that drains to the reach. Grey streams are in areas where we were unable to obtain land use data. These streams were therefore omitted from the LDS analysis.

