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**Steve Moyer**  
*Vice President of Government Affairs*

June 16, 2022

The Honorable Jared Huffman, Chair  
House Natural Resources Committee  
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Cliff Bentz, Ranking Member  
House Natural Resources Committee  
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife  
U.S. House of Representatives

Re: Trout Unlimited supports H.R. 6949, the Delaware River Basin Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2022.

Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Bentz, and members of the subcommittee:

On behalf of our 300,000 members and supporters nationwide, Trout Unlimited (TU) writes in support of H.R. 6949, the Delaware River Basin Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2022, which will be considered at the subcommittee's June 16<sup>th</sup> legislative hearing.

H.R. 6949, the Delaware River Basin Conservation Reauthorization Act will reauthorize the Delaware River Basin Restoration Program (DRBRP) through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through 2030 and will adjust matching fund requirements to target those areas most in need of funding.

The passage of the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act in 2016 created a framework to provide funding to address the unique needs of communities and ecosystems throughout the diverse Delaware River Watershed. The Upper Delaware River is home to one of the most iconic trout fisheries in the U.S., bringing anglers from around the world to the watershed to support a robust recreational economy. Funding provided through the DRBRP addresses issues ranging from public access, restoration and protection of critical habitats, and establishment of riparian and wetland habitats. The watershed is home to 8 million people from rural communities to large cities such as Philadelphia and provides clean drinking water to over 11 million people. The bill has support among a diverse array of stakeholders in the communities throughout the watershed.

Since 2018, the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund has awarded \$26.6 million to 123 projects, which generated \$46 million in match, for a total conservation impact of \$72.6 million. These projects will collectively restore over 20 miles of riparian habitat and 75 miles of stream habitat, conserve and enhance 882 acres of wetland habitat, restore 254 acres of floodplain, improve 22,309 acres of forest habitat and open 4,695 acres for public access. In FY22 alone, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, which administers the grants, received a total of 61 proposals requesting \$26.5 million dollars. This amount reinforces a continued need to improve the health and resources of the Watershed for generations to come.

In addition to reauthorization of the DRBRP, TU also supports proposed changes to matching fund requirements proposed in the bill. Specifically, the allowance of a 90% federal investment with 10% match

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**A mission to bring together diverse interests to care for and recover rivers and streams so our children can experience the joy of wild and native trout and salmon.**

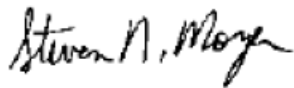
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for small, rural, or disadvantaged communities provides a more attainable threshold for projects in the communities that need these dollars the most. This type of approach is an efficient and effective way to ensure that limited resources are targeted to where they can provide maximum benefit.

Without Congressional action, the Delaware River Basin Restoration Program will expire in September 2023. The reauthorization provided in H.R.6949 will allow the program and its restoration successes to continue through 2030. We greatly appreciate the committee taking up this important legislation to reauthorize the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven N. Meyer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'S' and 'M'.