

Clean Water Act Research for the Gunpowder Riverkeeper

By: Nick Smith

During the Spring 2026 Semester, Student Attorney Nick Smith assisted Clinic Director Sarah Everhart in researching various Clean Water Act, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit compliance issues in the Gunpowder River watershed. Researching Clean Water Act NPDES permit compliance issues and history involves learning how to navigate the EPA's ECHO website to find relevant data and then synthesizing that data with state enforcement information to assess the degree of noncompliance and the associated legal consequences. Smith performed research on multiple different facilities and met with the client throughout the semester to discuss next steps in how to approach the Gunpowder Riverkeepers mission of defending the Gunpowder, Bush and Middle River watersheds from environmental threats. Smith will be busy studying and taking the Pennsylvania bar exam this summer, but hopes to squeeze in some fly fishing in the Gunpowder River before he begins his legal career.