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"Economic Stratification and Environmental Management: A Case Study of the New York City Catskill/Delaware Watershed"

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Long run success in watershed management requires understanding of how economic stratification and social values affect water quality protection. Feedback effects on water quality are produced by three aspects of economic well-being: income levels, quality of life and inequality, including the effects of gender based inequality. In the US emphasis on individualistic values leads to reliance on local and private policy solutions to social problems. Analysis of the context of New York City's internationally famous watershed agreement with communities 120 miles distant provides a case study of these relationships. The nature of economic stratification in these upstate communities and the insufficient response of social policies were an impediment to achieving New York City's water quality goals. As a consequence the City's watershed agreement contains direct economic aid to Watershed communities. The Agreement does not address all stratification issues. Some call for solutions beyond the local level and an approach that benefits from the European emphasis on community. It is in the interest of watershed managers to broaden the scope of their concerns to understand and support state and national programs which address problems created by economic stratification. The expansion of the European Union increases the relevance of these lessons for Europe.
— Text from The White Horse Press website

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