

## Learn to Interpret My 5 Point Water Rating System

5 pt. Scale System for How the Water Was When We Hiked the Trail...		
	Water	5-pt. Scale
<b>Personal Rating System:</b>	<b>Very High Levels</b> (water is abundant, could be high crossings!)	<b>Excellent Water</b> - 5
	<b>High Levels</b> (water is plentiful, crossings taken with care)	<b>Good Water</b> - 4
	<b>Medium Levels</b> (water shouldn't be a problem)	<b>Ok Water</b> - 3
	<b>Low Levels</b> (water is scarce)	<b>Poor Water</b> - 2
	<b>Very Low Levels</b> (water is almost non-existent, filter where possible)	<b>Bad Water</b> - 1
<b>* Use this chart to interpret my water level rating system for each hike or backpacking trip.*</b>		

I have created a personal water rating system that I use to reference the water level when we hike or backpack a trail. Water is obviously an important resource for anyone out on the trails, especially for backpackers and campers. Water is used for thirst, survival and navigational purposes. So I have created this 5 point scale to rate the water level.

How did/do I know the water level for the particular region I am in? I look to the USGS WaterWatch website & check out the Current Streamflows for a river or creek close by!

USGS Main Website - <http://www.usgs.gov>

USGS Water Website - <http://water.usgs.gov>

USGS US WaterWatch Website - <http://waterwatch.usgs.gov/new>

USGS PA Current Streamflow Website - <http://waterwatch.usgs.gov/new/index.php?m=real&r=pa&w=map>

First I view the hike on the topographic maps, both real and digital. I then find the nearest stream that would be directly related to the runoff or drainage system of the hike/area we are traveling in. I look at the levels prior to our hike and after our hike to see exactly what they were when we hiked the trail. I then post this information along with the rating on my website for an additional resource for you.