

Committee: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date/Time: 3/3/2023 1:00 PM

Item: HB0942 - Wetlands and Waterways Program - Authorizations for Stream Restoration Projects

Good afternoon,

My name is Rod Simmons. I am testifying in favor of HB0942 on behalf of the Maryland Native Plant Society.

As an environmental scientist, I have been intimately involved with many stream and wetlands restoration projects in the greater Washington-Baltimore region for over 30 years at the federal, state, and local levels, from stream geomorphology and geohydrology to ecological assessments to post-construction plantings to best practices and policy recommendations.

In my professional opinion, we need to stop using so-called stream restoration projects to help us meet local and regional pollution reduction targets for the Chesapeake Bay. They don't work and are environmentally destructive.

There is zero scientific evidence that "restoration" reduces pollution (nitrogen and phosphorus and sediment) from either the forested stream valley or the stormwater that is the root cause of the pollution and erosion in these streams. Upper headwater streams are not the real problem and restoring them in this way is not fixing anything. Stormwater runoff, which is caused by overdevelopment of watersheds and the failure to implement adequate volume and pollutant best management controls, is the real issue. **It is what needs to be managed.**

If we want to help the bay, we must manage stormwater before it reaches these streams. We must disallow the use of our forested stream valleys as stormwater management facilities.

The native flora and fauna, wetlands, and water resources that are still found naturally along urban streams and the parks they flow through should be protected, not bulldozed.

Thank you.