



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

Senate Bill 471

Water Pollution Control – Discharge Permits –
Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity

Date: March 29, 2023

Position: **Support**

To: Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Matt Stegman, MD Staff Attorney

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** SB 471, which provides for better management of stormwater on construction sites. If adopted, this bill would provide new tools for state and local environmental managers to control stormwater and, where necessary, stop excess pollution from reaching local waterways.

Stormwater pollution from developed and developing areas is the fastest growing source of pollution to local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. According to the Chesapeake Bay Program, construction sites are the highest loading source of nutrients and sediment to waterways on a per-acre basis. Open ground – where tree removal and grading have removed root mass and exposed bare soil – requires special care to keep pollutants onsite. When basic controls fail due to site-specific conditions, intensifying rainfall, or other factors, a site can load years or even a decade's worth of pollutants into a waterway in days. Better managing these sites is a pressing challenge: Maryland's Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan states that, by 2025, stormwater will become a larger source of pollution to the Bay than wastewater.

As amended by the Senate, SB 471 requires enhanced review and public engagement of construction application permits that have a potential impact on high-quality waterways and requires the Maryland Department of the Environment to regularly update guidance for sediment control plans based on the latest available data.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on SB 471.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 300,000 members and e-subscribers, including over 109,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.