

HB 884_CBF SUPPORT_EHE.pdf

Uploaded by: Erik Fisher

Position: FAV



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education

House Bill 884

State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forests - Protection

Date: March 30, 2022

Position: **Support**

To: Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs

From: Erik Fisher, AICP, MD Land Use Planner

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** HB 884, which provides important protections for old-growth forests on state-owned lands. Old-growth forests provide unique and powerful environmental and social benefits, protecting biodiversity, fighting climate change, improving water quality, and promoting human health.

Old-growth forests are unique ecosystems that keep Marylanders healthy and play a vital role in our region's environment. While nearly all forested areas improve environmental conditions, the returns are often the greatest in old-growth forests – and some benefits can only be realized in these special areas. Old-growth forests sequester carbon at very high rates, create topsoil, provide microhabitats for fungi and fauna in accumulated dead wood, and provide a reservoir of diverse tree and understory species that can seed other areas. The mature trees and soil structure in old-growth forests also act as the Bay's best natural filter for polluted runoff, capturing nutrients and sediment that would otherwise foul nearby waterways.

Old-growth forests are rare and at risk of elimination without focused management.

The term “forest” is used to describe a continuum of wooded lands, from emergent natural regeneration of saplings to young pine stands, patches of maturing mixed hardwoods, and fully developed, multi-layered forest ecosystems. Existing state laws generally do not distinguish between these various types of forest. As a result, old-growth forests are usually managed as part of a much larger class of wooded lands governed by rules that allow for significant impact and loss. But according to the Old Growth Forest Network, less than 1% of our region's remaining forest land is old-growth. As these areas are undefined and largely unprotected in statute, Maryland could silently and unwittingly lose its remaining old-growth forests.

The protection afforded by HB 884 ensures a future for Maryland's old-growth forests on public land.

HB 884 adopts a definition of old-growth forests that is firmly rooted in science and practice, and extends protection from logging to forests meeting those criteria in state parks and wildlife management areas (WMAs). This procedure will help state land managers steer logging to more suitable areas and safeguard the limited remaining public old-growth forests in Maryland. Extending this protection to old-growth forests in state Natural Resource Management Areas (NRMAs) would also be appropriate, as these lands are managed in like manner to state parks and WMAs.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 884. For more information, please contact Robin Jessica Clark, Maryland Staff Attorney at rclark@cbf.org and 443.995.8753.

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403
Phone (410) 268-8816 • Fax (410) 280-3513

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.

HB884_jmalooof_fav.pdf

Uploaded by: Joan Maloof

Position: FAV



OLD-GROWTH FOREST NETWORK

Connecting people with nature by creating a national network of protected, mature, native forests

PO Box 21
Easton MD 21601
410-251-1800
oldgrowthforest.net
info@oldgrowthforest.net

March 27, 2022

Education, Health and Environment Affairs Committee
Senate Building
Annapolis MD

Re: HB884-State Land Conservation-Old-Growth Forest Management --**Favorable**

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I represent thousands of Marylanders who are members of the Old-Growth Forest Network. We urge you to vote in favor of HB884, as most of the House has (123-9).

Please be aware that the bill has been amended significantly since it was first introduced to the house. The few previous objections to the bill were focused on the original wording that included protection of old-growth forests on lands with conservation easements (“eased” lands). As the bill passed, and as it stands now, it includes protection ONLY for identified old-growth forests on two categories of state land: state parks, state wildlife management areas. We also hope to include Natural Resource Management Areas, which have only 62 acres of old-growth forest on them, but that acreage includes the School House Woods, the old-growth forest that was displayed on the front page of the March 13th Baltimore Sun.

It is a very small and simple bill. According to the most recent survey of old-growth forests on state-owned land (2007) the total area protected by this bill would come to only 350 acres (412 acres if including the Natural Resource Management areas) -- less than 0.1% of all state-owned land. Surely, we can preserve this small bit of ecologically important, irreplaceable, forest!

The definition for “old growth” used by DNR was decided by representatives from forestry, parks, heritage, and independent scientists. Threats of ‘wildfire’ in the old-growth are completely unfounded, as research has shown that younger forests are more flammable than old-growth forests.

I do not think anyone in the state, including the Maryland Forestry Association and the Department of Natural Resources, would want to see the last of our ancient forests cut, and at present there is no plan to cut them. This bill is merely pre-emptive to ensure that these forests stand for future generations regardless of shifts in administrations and policies.

For the forests,

Joan Maloof, PhD
Founder and Executive Director

HB884_MDSierraClub_fav Sign On Letter 30Mar2022.p

Uploaded by: Josh Tulkin

Position: FAV



Committee: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Testimony on: HB884 “State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forests - Management”

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: March 30, 2022

We, the undersigned organizations, strongly support HB884. This important legislation continues the decades-old campaign by a multitude of environmental and conservation organizations as well as Maryland government entities to protect Maryland’s remaining and exceedingly rare old-growth forests. Old growth forests within state forests are off-limits to logging due to the Forest Stewardship Council certification requirements, however, old-growth areas in Maryland’s state parks and wildlife management areas have no such protection. HB0884 would prohibit logging of old growth forests within state parks and wildlife management areas.

We support the conservation of old growth forests because they:

- **Sustain species of greatest conservation need:** About 40% of Maryland’s Rare, Threatened, and Endangered (RTE) species benefit from or are limited to old growth forests.
- **Provide reservoirs of genetic diversity:** They contain unique habitats and micro-habitats supporting a rich diversity of flora and fauna.
- **Support research:** They provide a critical baseline for study of managed forests and serve as reference sites for ecological conditions and historical databases.
- **Provide valuable ecosystem services** such as watershed protection, carbon sequestration, and invasive species mitigation.

- **Provide an ecological refuge against human pressure:** There is intrinsic value in wildness for wildness' sake; they are aesthetically pleasing.

The bill mandates that an old-growth “no logging” management best practice be expanded to include Maryland State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). Nearly 43% of old growth forests on State Park lands and WMAs have no protection. And, the largest and oldest trees are found in unlogged forests. Old forests are better at capturing carbon and storing carbon dioxide than young forests, which also have a seven times higher mortality rate. We understand that a supportive amendment may be offered that expands this commendable bill to cover Natural Resource Management Areas. We would strongly support such an amendment, which would have little or no fiscal impact.

For all these reasons, we strongly encourage a favorable report.

Sierra Club Maryland Chapter, Rosa Hance, Chair
Maryland Legislative Coalition, Climate Justice Wing, Diana Younts
Maryland Legislative Coalition, Cecilia Plante
The Nature Conservancy Maryland/DC Chapter, Michelle Dietz, Director of Government Relations
Safe Skies Maryland, Mark Southerland, Legislative Director
Indivisible Howard County, Richard Deutschmann
Maryland Conservation Council, Paulette Hammond, President
Maryland Ornithological Society, Kurt Schwarz, Conservation Chair
Maryland Campaign for the Environmental Human Rights Amendment, Nina Cardin, Director
Audubon Mid-Atlantic, Jim Brown, Director of Policy
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland, Phil Webster
Audubon Society of Central Maryland, Angela Moxley, President
Baltimore Green Space, Katherine Lautar, Executive Director
Catoctin Land Trust, David Lillard, Executive Director
Friends of St Clements Bay, Elisabeth Curtz
Queen Anne’s Conservation Association, Jay Falstad, Executive Director
Baltimore Tree Trust, Justin Bowers, Chief Operating Officer
Maryland League of Conservation Voters, Marisa Olszewski
Chesapeake Legal Alliance, Evan Isaacson, Senior Attorney, Director of Research
National Aquarium, Laura Bankey, Vice President of Conservation Programs
Anacostia Riverkeeper, Trey Sherard
Beaverdam Creek Watershed Watch Group, Tom Taylor, Co-Chair
Southern Maryland Audubon Society, Bob Lukinic, Conservation Chair

hb884, old growth forest protection, 2022 (2).pdf

Uploaded by: Lee Hudson

Position: FAV



Delaware-Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony Prepared for the
Education, Health and Environmental and Affairs Committee
on
House Bill 884
March 30, 2022
Position: **Favorable**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify for care of the gifts of creation. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are a faith community with three synods in every part of our State.

Our community addressed concern for a safe, healthy, flourishing environment to sustain life in "Caring for Creation" [ELCA, 1993 assembly]. Stewardship of natural resources and processes with conservation and preservation policies is wise, for it protects what is for the benefit of all things now living.

We communicated to DNR our concern about timbering an old growth forest patch in the Pocomoke State Forest over a year ago. Protecting such resources as a matter of State policy is obviously necessary. If logging State assets is not proscribed, obviously commercial pressures to do so will continue.

One particular and instructive interest in the Pocomoke incident illustrates the need to defend the web of life from degradation. There are entire migratory bird species that are biologically obligated to light for respite or nesting in dense timber stands such as old growth. Maryland's Eastern Shore is one of the most critical migratory flyways on the planet. There are additional ecological imperatives represented by these precious and irreplaceable resources. "Old growth" means you cannot compensate or substitute for its loss.

The environment is not a commodity. State holdings are public trusts, not commercial assets. Please give **House Bill 884** a favorable report.

Lee Hudson

HB0884 State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forest

Uploaded by: Susan Barnett

Position: FAV

Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee of the Senate
Testimony on: HB0884 State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forests - Protection

Submitting: *Susan Barnett*

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Hearing Date: 3.30.2022

To the Honorable Chair Pinsky and all members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee of the Senate:

I am writing in favor of HB0884 for the following reasons:

Old-growth forests are forests that have never been clear-cut. Such forests store the most carbon and are vitally important for biodiversity.

Such forests are rare. It is estimated that in Maryland only .01% of forests are old growth. Most biologists believe that all remaining old growth areas should be preserved. Maryland should begin formally preserving the old-growth forests on its public lands.

According to a 2007 Maryland Dept of Natural Resources report, there are 2300 acres of Old Growth in 40 separate forested tracts. Many of these are protected as Maryland "Wildlands". Seventeen of the 40 old-growth areas have no protection as Wildlands. These total 386 acres.

Although old-growth areas in Maryland's State Forests are off-limits to logging due to the Forest Stewardship Council certification requirements, old-growth areas in Maryland's state parks have no such protection.

This bill will formalize protection for old-growth forests owned by the State of Maryland, so forests that have been standing for hundreds, possibly thousands, of years will remain standing through future political and staff changes.

I recommend a favorable report on this important bill with the amendments.

Sincerely,

Susan Barnett
12 Plateau Place, Unit H, Greenbelt, MD 20770
suzanbwild@gmail.com
301 474 7465

HB 884 State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forest

Uploaded by: Cait Kerr

Position: FWA



Protecting nature. Preserving life.

The Nature Conservancy
Maryland/DC Chapter
425 Barlow Pl., Ste 100
Bethesda, MD 20814

tel (301) 897-8570
fax (301) 897-0858
nature.org

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

TO: Paul Pinsky, Chair of the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee and Committee Members

FROM: Michelle Dietz, The Nature Conservancy, Director of Government Relations and Cait Kerr, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation & Climate Policy Analyst

POSITION: Support with Amendments HB 884 State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forests – Management

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) supports HB 884, offered by Delegate Gilchrist, with amendments. TNC is a global conservation organization working to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. In Maryland, our work focuses on delivering science-based, on-the-ground solutions that secure clean water and healthy living environments for our communities, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing resilience in the face of a changing climate. We are dedicated to a future where people and nature thrive together.

TNC is part of a global effort to preserve the world's remaining wild and near-natural habitats, with the goal of protecting 30 percent of the planet by 2030. HB 884 would advance these goals by protecting areas of old-growth forest in Maryland State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas from logging practices. TNC also supports an amendment that would extend those protections to Natural Resource Management Areas. Natural Resource Management Areas were included in this bill as first introduced and were mistakenly removed during the House amendment process by an administrative error. The House amendments intended to remove land that could consist of private property, as well as land that already has some old-growth forest protections in place; Natural Resource Management Areas do not fall into those categories.

A 2007 study funded by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources found that there were nearly 2,300 acres of old-growth forest in 40 separate forested areas across the state. More than 1,700 acres were found within Maryland State Forests where logging is prohibited, either by a Wildland designation or through compliance with the Forest Stewardship Council, protecting these parcels. Maryland State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas do not provide the same protections, meaning that 17 out of the 40 old-growth areas, equaling approximately 400 acres, are not protected from logging. HB 884 would address this by requiring old-growth forests owned by the State to follow management practices that prohibit logging, thereby protecting existing old-growth forests and any future old-growth forests the state may acquire.

Old-growth forests host more biodiversity, and are able to store more carbon, than young forests. In the United States, 34% of forests are older than 140 years old, but only 2% of these forests are located outside of Alaska. Forests over 140 years old have declined by 30% globally since 1900. Because old-growth forests are rare and in decline due to natural and human-caused threats such as invasive species, disease, storms, land conversion, and climate change, it is more important than ever to formalize protections for this precious resource.

Each year, the United States loses an area the size of Delaware to development and unsustainable use. This land and biodiversity loss can often be irreversible. Climate change and a wide range of human activities are impacting habitats at an unprecedented and unsustainable rate. The precipitous decline in biodiversity is one of our greatest challenges; it is jeopardizing food and water supplies and undermining social and economic stability. Old-growth forests are crucial to protecting state forests' biodiversity. By passing HR 884, Maryland can take marked steps to maintain old-growth forests' biodiversity within our state in order to create a future

where natural areas can support the most vulnerable species and can continue to provide valuable ecosystem services.

TNC commends Delegate Gilchrist for advancing legislation that preserves Maryland's old-growth forest habitats, protects biodiversity, and maintains our carbon storage capacity.

Therefore, we urge a favorable with amendments report on HB 884.

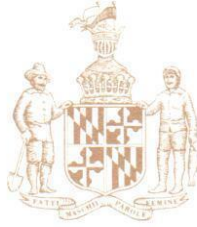
HB884_Gilchrist_favamd (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Carleen Mcleod

Position: FWA

JIM GILCHRIST
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County

Environment and Transportation
Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 219
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3744 · 301-858-3744
800-492-7122 Ext. 3744
Fax 410-841-3057 · 301-858-3057
Jim.Gilchrist@house.state.md.us

The Maryland House of Delegates
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 884 Old-Growth Forests
March 30, 2022

EHEA Committee

Favorable with Amendment
Amendment 363427

HB 884 protects Old-Growth Forests in State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas. Both of these areas are managed by the Department of Natural Resources. Amendment 363427 adds Natural Resources Management Areas. I urge a favorable report for HB 884 with Amendment 363427.

After the bill was voted on by the House it came to my attention that Natural Resource Management Areas, also managed by the Department of Natural Resources, includes an important Old-Growth Forest on the Eastern Shore. I have drafted an amendment to include Natural Resource Management Areas. That is amendment number 363427 for House Bill 884.

I hope the Committee will be able to consider favorably the bill with this amendment. However, the bill as passed by the House is an important step in protecting Old-Growth Forests. I leave it to the committee to determine if the bill with or without the amendment is appropriate at this time. I urge action to protect Old-Growth Forests. Thank you so much for considering this bill.

cf.ShoreRivers Testimony FAV HB884.pdf

Uploaded by: Elle Bassett

Position: FWA



Testimony in SUPPORT of HB884- STATE CONSERVATION LAND – OLD GROWTH FORESTS – PROTECTION

March 29, 2022

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT of HB884** on behalf of ShoreRivers. ShoreRivers is a river protection group on Maryland's Eastern Shore with over 2,000 members. Our mission is to protect and restore our Eastern Shore waterways through science-based advocacy, restoration, and education.

HB884 will fill a current protection gap for old-growth forests located on State conservation land. Old growth forests are very rare and only .01% of forest are considered old growth in Maryland. Not only do these forests sequester carbon and provide vital biodiversity, they also provide great benefits to our local water quality by reducing stormwater runoff, uptaking nutrients, and preventing erosion.

The Wye River in particular, located in Queen Anne's and Talbot County, features the unique 2,800-acre Wye Island, a vast majority of which is a State Natural Resource Management Area. The island is home to the impressive old growth Schoolhouse Woods – which provide habitat to a variety of species including the recently delisted endangered Delmarva fox squirrel. While there are currently no threats to log these woods, this bill would ensure a formalized protection for such vital habitat.

We do urge an amendment to the bill to include Natural Resource Management Areas within the bill again, ensuring the protection of vital old growth forests such as Schoolhouse Woods.

For these reasons stated above, ShoreRivers urges the Committee to adopt a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on **HB884**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elle Bassett".

Elle Bassett

Miles-Wye Riverkeeper, on behalf of:

ShoreRivers

Isabel Hardesty, Executive Director

Annie Richards, Chester Riverkeeper | Matt Pluta, Choptank Riverkeeper
Elle Bassett, Miles-Wye Riverkeeper | Zack Kelleher, Sassafras Riverkeeper

Main Office

114 S. Washington St.
Suite 301
Easton, MD 21601
443.385.0511

Regional Office

111A North Main St.
Galena, MD 21635
410.810.7556

shorerivers.org

Regional Office

207 S. Water St.
Unit B
Chestertown, MD 21620
410.810.7556

HB 0884 FAV Horstman.pdf

Uploaded by: jeffrey horstman

Position: FWA

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Senate Building
Annapolis MD

Re: Favorable for HB 884-State Land Conservation-Old-Growth Forest Management

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Growing up on the Eastern Shore I have seen significant deforestation over the last 50 years as row crop farming has dominated land use and eliminated forests throughout the Delmarva. As a Department of Natural Resources summer employee in 1979 and 1980, I helped cut the walking trail on Wye Island known as "School House Woods". School House Woods is the largest mapped Old Growth Forest left on the Delmarva at 14 acres.

While most Old Growth Forests on State owned land are protected, two years ago I discovered that Old Growth Forest, located on State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas and Natural Resources Management Areas are not protected. While these state holdings do not encompass significant acreage of Old Growth Forest, they are very rare, special and ecologically important places. HB 884's goal is to simply codify and extend the existing protections already given to Old Growth Forests on the majority of state land to State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas and Natural Resource Management Areas.

The bill as it sits today needs a minor amendment to add Natural Resource Management Areas back into the bill, those areas were accidentally removed in the House amendment process. That would include School House Woods on Wye Island; the largest Stand of Old Growth Forest left on the Eastern Shore. Hopefully, with your help, we can get the amended bill back to the house quickly, for passage. As Dr Maloof stated with the amendment this bill only affects approximately 400 acres of forested land state wide.

As of today, no one is interested in logging or mismanaging these Old Growth Forest areas, however, I think it is important and easier to put these protections in place before anyone has other designs that might adversely impact these forests. I want to thank Delegate Gilchrist for Sponsoring this bill as well as the 12 co-sponsors and the 123 House members who voted favorably.

Jeff Horstman
Founder and Executive Director ShoreRivers (Retired)
300 Wye Island Road
Queenstown, Md. 21659

HB0884 State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forest

Uploaded by: Jerry Henger

Position: FWA

To: Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee of the Senate
Testimony on: HB 884 State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forests - Protection
Submitting: Jerry Henger
Position: Favorable with Amendments
Hearing Date: 3.30.2022

To the Honorable Chair Pinsky and all members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee of the Senate:

I am writing in favor of HB 884:

Old-growth forests are a gift from Nature (spared by man) and should not be cut down.

If the Mona Lisa were a tree, would we cut it down; if a 300-year tree was a 1959 Cadillac, would we send it to the junk yard for scrap metal. Of course not.

The few remaining old growth forests and every old growth tree must be saved and protected. These trees and forests store the most carbon and are vitally important for biodiversity and help fight against climate change. And we are in the fight of our lives, a fight for the health of the planet, a fight for the quality of our lives, the air we breathe, the water we drink. Climate change will impact the crops we can grow, and just about every other aspect of life as we know it. We must do everything we can to slow it down.

Old growth forests are rare; you can't make them overnight, or in 20 or 50 years. It is estimated that in Maryland only a fraction of forests are old growth. Most biologists believe (and me too) that all remaining old growth areas should be preserved. Maryland should begin formally preserving the old-growth forests on its public lands.

From my understanding of this bill, it will formalize protection for old-growth forests owned by the State of Maryland. These forests that have been standing for hundreds of years will remain standing through future political changes. And will be looked upon and marveled at by our children and grandchildren, and we get to enjoy them right now.

I recommend a favorable report on this important bill with the amendments. Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Jerry Henger
423 Wingate Road
Baltimore, Maryland
jhenger@msn.com
443-799-7975

HB0884 State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forest

Uploaded by: Mary Lynn Poirier

Position: FWA

Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee of the Senate

Testimony on: HB0884 State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forests - Protection

Submitting: *Mary Lynn Poirier*

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Hearing Date: 3.30.2022

To the Honorable Chair Pinsky and all members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee of the Senate:

I am writing in favor of HB0884 for the following reasons:

- Old-growth forests are forests that have never been clear-cut. Such forests store the most carbon and are vitally important for biodiversity.
- Such forests are rare. It is estimated that in Maryland only .01% of forests are old growth. Most biologists believe that all remaining old growth areas should be preserved. Maryland should begin formally preserving the old-growth forests on its public lands.
- According to a 2007 Maryland Dept of Natural Resources report, there are 2300 acres of Old Growth in 40 separate forested tracts. Many of these are protected as Maryland "Wildlands". Seventeen of the 40 old-growth areas have no protection as Wildlands. These total 386 acres.
- Although old-growth areas in Maryland's State Forests are off-limits to logging due to the Forest Stewardship Council certification requirements, old-growth areas in Maryland's state parks have no such protection.
- This bill will formalize protection for old-growth forests owned by the State of Maryland, so forests that have been standing for hundreds, possibly thousands, of years will remain standing through future political and staff changes.
- This bill will protect old-growth forests so that there many benefits can be enjoyed by future generations.

I recommend a favorable report on this important bill with the amendments.

With gratitude for all your hard work,

Mary Lynn Poirier

15-S Laurel Hill Road

Greenbelt. 20770

lynnpoirier29@gmail.com

240-472-7523

