



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

House Bill 1415

Grading and Sediment Control Plans – Agricultural Land Management Practices – Definition

Date: March 11, 2022

Position: **Oppose**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Doug Myers, Maryland Senior Scientist

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **OPPOSES** HB 1415, which would exempt certain agricultural land management practices from grading and sediment control plans.

Clearing and grading of land for any purpose is a significant source of nutrient and sediment pollution to local streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. This fact is reflected in the calculations of the Chesapeake Bay Model which identify the largest loads of these pollutants associated with land use conversions.

The Environment Code specifically requires grading and sediment control plans to avoid and minimize this source of pollution. The definition of Agricultural Land Management Practices being sought in this bill is broad enough to cover just about any activity that could occur on a farm, including the destruction of forested lands near a stream. Agency expertise to review and approve such plans, including evaluation of steep slopes, minimizing how much open soil is exposed at a given time and grading recommendations specific to a site are the first lines of defense against this pollution source.

CBF urges the Committee's UNFAVORABLE report on HB 1415. For more information, please contact Robin Clark, Maryland Staff Attorney at rclark@cbf.org and 443.995.8753.

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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.