

Comments on Maryland House Bill SB0798

March 4, 2024

So called “stream restorations” are not restorations at all. They are stream re-engineering projects that cut down trees and destroy the plants and animals in our parks and increasingly scarce wild places. In spite of claims made by industry, these projects do not significantly reduce the nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment pollution that pollutes the Chesapeake Bay. These projects may actually generate sediment that harms the Chesapeake Bay.

It is my understanding that this bill is being promoted by the stream “restoration” industry. The bill is a misguided attempt to license companies that engage in these destructive practices.

As noted above “stream restorations,” as currently performed, destroy the natural environment. They also open natural areas allowing for invasive plants infestations. They often fail catastrophically after they are built damaging a stream valley. The only work that should be done in natural areas and stream valleys is work to surgically protect critical manmade infrastructure like roads and other public property like sewer lines, etc. This work should be carefully planned and monitored by state staff in concert with interested citizens and citizen groups, and environmental groups who have an interest in preserving our natural areas.

Sincerely,

William G. Gillespie