

Ho. Co. 5-25
Howard County – Patuxent River Wildland – Use of Motor Vehicles
and Motorized Equipment
Ho. Co. 5-25
In the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Committee Hearing on March 11, 2025
Position: FAVORABLE

March 7, 2025

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of the HoCo 5-25: Howard County – Patuxent River Wildland – Use of Motor Vehicles and Motorized Equipment bill.

While our young people and sadly many, many adults spend their lives staring into, and fiddling with their phones, our outdoor spaces become overgrown, unattractive, and impassible. Human health requires (demands!) a connection with nature.

The trails on our public lands must be accessible in order for our residents to be able to safely use them, and to foster their appreciation for our natural spaces. Requiring volunteers to use 18th century methods to maintain the public’s access to nature and the wilderness trail areas (that their tax money helps to maintain and protect) is altogether unrealistic. Volunteers, by their nature, are those who care most about these areas. They would prefer support, and possibly some training, instead of regulations that hamper their ability to care for our open spaces. Having the ability to cut out a section of a large fallen tree across an existing trail helps maintain that trail, while not creating other “user-defined,” trails. These work-around trails increase erosion and disruption of any trail system, and the surrounding environment.

I understand that our government agencies are dealing with budget constraints and lack the human resources to care for our parks and trails in the way they would like. Please give those who want to care for and maintain access to our natural spaces the tools to effectively do that.

Please pass Ho. Co. 5–25 so we can more safely and effectively access our most healthy recreational activities.

“In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life, —no disgrace, no calamity, (leaving me my eyes,) which nature cannot repair.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

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