



BRENTWOOD Maryland

February 26, 2026

THE TOWN OF BRENTWOOD SUPPORTS PRIORITIZING NON-MECHANICAL STREAM RESTORATION PRACTICES.

The Town of Brentwood urges you to support the 2026 legislative session SB688, Environment - Stream and Floodplain Restoration Projects - Requirements and Limitations

Streams and stream valleys are essential parts of our communities and ecosystems and historically some restoration projects have been destructive or heavily engineered "re-engineering" projects that destroy these mature forests and natural habitats under the guise of ecological restoration. Streams are sometimes the only natural areas present in urban and suburban areas. Stream valleys are integral to lessening heat island effects, countering the impacts of global warming, and providing a healthy environment for people, plants, and wildlife. We therefore support additional restrictions on projects involving mechanical, in-stream construction such that they must document that non-disturbing alternatives are infeasible and demonstrate "measurable functional lift" through long-term monitoring, rather than relying on modeled, pre-construction outcomes.

Further, we support limiting reengineering projects to streams that are in fact in a degraded state; require that community notification and engagement be conducted; ensure that best management practices are used to promote ecological uplift and preserve wildlife habitat, including preserving trees to the maximum extent practicable; and require long-term monitoring for a minimum of five years after project completion of stream water quality, biological integrity, and related measures. We support the mandating that the Department of the Environment prioritize methods that do not disturb existing streams and forests and maintain or increase ecological integrity. Our recommendations are:

1. Maintain municipal flexibility so local governments can address unique urban conditions where engineered restoration may still be necessary.
2. Provide clear implementation guidance and timelines to avoid delays in active or planned projects.
3. Ensure funding alignment so municipalities are not burdened with additional mandates without financial support.

4. Include stakeholder consultation requirements, particularly with local governments and watershed groups, during rulemaking.

Thank you,

Jerry L. Burgess

Mayor Rocio Tremino-Lopez and V. Mayor Jerry L. Burgess

Town of Brentwood