

OPPOSE HB 2282

Topic: Stormwater Management Program exemption for tree harvesting.

Bill Patron: Del. Edmunds

Overview:

This legislation, as amended, would create a new exemption from erosion and sediment control and stormwater management requirements under the State Water Control Law for certain pre-development tree harvesting. Under current law, erosion and sediment control and stormwater management plans must be approved prior to commencing land disturbing activity, including stump removal or grubbing as part of tree harvesting, except for when an area is being reforested or converted to an agricultural use. These water quality protections would no longer be required for these tree harvesting activities under the legislation.

Reasons to oppose:

- This legislation would take away DEQ and local government oversight and authority of erosion and sediment control and stormwater management for harvesting of timber where the area will not be reforested or converted to an agricultural use (which activity is already exempt).
- It would remove all water quality protections under the State Water Control Law for these activities and instead allow the tree harvester to determine what level of land disturbance is necessary to harvest the timber.
- Existing means can address the timeline concerns that led to the introduction of this bill, including hand felling of trees or surveying for listed endangered species subject to time of year cutting restrictions.
- Violations of the existing timber harvesting exemption should be addressed rather than creating a new exemption to legalize such activity.



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Saving a National Treasure

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This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)'s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia's conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker. VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.

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