

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Submitted by Stillwater Watershed Partners

May 22, 2025

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking member Hicks-Hudson and members of the committee. Stillwater Watershed Partners is a 501c3 nonprofit established in March of 2022. Membership is mostly row crops and cow/calf operators along with timberland farms. We are in the counties of Harrison and Tuscarawas counties here in Ohio.

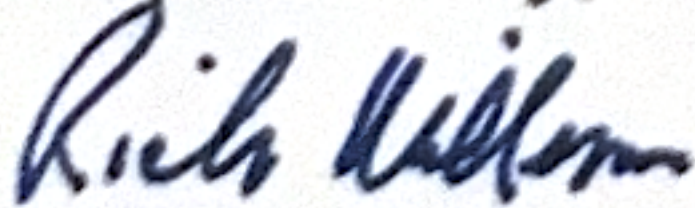
Our members (20) own or lease over 8,000 acres of land contiguous to the Stillwater Creek. It is the main drainage channel for 485 square miles within the basin, which includes parts of Belmont, Guernsey, Harrison, Carroll and Tuscarawas Counties.

The Stillwater Creek is 44 miles long, flowing south to north. A mature stream with a sluggish nature is impacted by large woody log jams and severe stream bank erosion caused by years of neglect. These log jams are causing frequent flooding coupled with severe soil erosion, significantly limiting the use of the acreage affected.

H2 Ohio Rivers Program funded a scouting float that documented the entire stream. River Rangers International performed the float and provided a 700 page master report created from research. We are currently working on areas of priority. Our funding partners, MWCD, USACE, oil and gas energy companies appreciate the matching funds H2 Ohio can potentially provide if awarded in the future.

In closing, the Stillwater Watershed Partners urge you to restore full funding to H2 Ohio and reject the Ohio House FY26-27 budget proposal decreasing funding by 44%.

Respectfully,



Rich Milleson
President
Stillwater Watershed Partners