

My name is Bennett Kottler. I am a Project Manager of Stream Restoration projects for the Mill Creek Alliance. This is a statement in opposition to H.B. 175.

I work to restoring the streams and environmental resources in southwest Ohio. I work with private landowners, municipalities, businesses, and institutions. Mangement of Ohio's water resources is a systemic effort. From uplands to floodplains to streams, these resources are connected. Some of the most ecologically valuable land is located in ephemeral streams and wetlands. These areas require much less financial investment and are far easier to manage than larfe streams and rivers. Ephemeral headwaters and streamside wetlands, provide outsized benefits to: flood mitigation, and habitat for plants and beneficial insects found only in Ohio. By removing ephemeral streams and wetalnds from Ohio's water portfolio, Ohioans lose options in a changing world. Without these water resources we are more susceptible to extreme weather events and habitat loss. Without these resources, the developers and private landowners I work with, are likely to incur more liability from flooding. Ohio has been a leader on water regulations for a half century. H.B. 175 is bad financial, scientific, and environmental policy. I urge you to vote against H.B. 175