

March 14, 2022

The Honorable Tim Schaffer, chair
Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
State House
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Senator Schaffer,

I have been told that your committee is hearing HB175 tomorrow and I wish I could be there in person to testify. The value of ephemeral streams cannot be overstated to the long term well being of Ohio. I know the inclination is to only think of the short-term positives of a situation, but the Associated Press article by John Flesher this weekend on the plight of Michigan and its water supply really brought home to me why we need to think for the long-term.

Michigan, like Ohio, would be expected to have plenty of usable water, but they do not. Bob has said for years that water will make Ohio the sought-after spot to do business in the future, as water becomes scarcer in other parts of the world. BUT all our water will do us no good if it is polluted.

Ephemeral streams are the beginning of the state's water. These indented areas that often look dry are the pathways for new water from rain or snow to get into the rivers, lakes, and aquifers of Ohio. They are the tiny capillaries that feed the arteries that supply us with drinking and recreational water as well as power industry.

If these indentations are allowed to be covered or polluted, we will change the way run off works and demand that water find a new downward path. This might be into or through some unsuspecting homeowner's basement or make another person sick because pollution left on dry looking land has seeped into the groundwater and aquifer and into a well. It can also increase flooding of land and roads.

The recent heavy rains helped me realize that our property has many more ephemeral streams on it than I ever dreamed of. Sure, I knew about the big ones that have dry stream beds most of the time but managed to come out of their banks with water filled with sand and gravel from excavation in the subdivision above our home, but I didn't know about all the tiny ones that could easily be seen in the snow. They all are supposed to end up in the Little Miami River to recharge it, but they don't because these ephemeral streams have carried so much silt downhill they have block their own path. These streams are the beginning of the renewal of all our efforts to remain a state with dependable water.

Please make sure Ohio's waters are protected from beginning to end. Please make sure that it stays clean and flows where it has for generations, so no private citizen must deal with your decision made for someone's short-term gain.

Ohio's future as a livable place for the next 100 years or so depends on it.

Thank you for listening and acting for the long-term best interests of your constituents and the state.



Hope Taft

"Whether we and our politicians know it or not, Nature is party to all our deals and decisions, and she has more votes, a longer memory, and a sterner sense of justice than we do." -**Wendell Berry**