

Hello everyone, I am Carrie Richmond, District Manager for Sullivan County Conservation District.

First, I would like to thank Senator Yaw and the Senate Majority Policy Committee for the invite to be a panelist today.

Sullivan County along with other counties is no stranger to flooding. Flooding is a very big issue and continues today.

When there is flooding you get the questions of why the streams are not being dredged and where is the money coming from? Dredging is not the answer. You are better off stabilizing the stream banks. Stabilization can be log vanes, modified mud sill or planting trees to name a few. That all takes money. Where does that money come from. Growing Greener is one example of a funding source but it does have its downsides. A more dedicated funding source would be a better idea like what has been done for ACAP and DGLVR. Dedicated funding would ensure that more streambank stabilization projects would be done, and the results would show overtime.

Conservation Districts take the time to fill out the paperwork for grants and in the end, they wait to find out if they will even get the funding and then it's the waiting game of getting permits approved. Permitting is an issue across the state but depending on the water quality, that also can make it harder. All the time that is wasted is money and time lost.

A success in our county was, around 3 years ago the conservation district was approached by the county commissioners to work with them and other departments within the county in creating a streambank stabilization program. Landowners must fill out an application, applications are ranked and then projects are awarded. One project that was done was clearing a major log jam up stream of a town. If that log jam was not removed, that would put the whole town at risk in the future whenever there be heavy rainfall or possible flooding event. The application process is similar to DGLVR and ACAP other than the funding source came from the county through their "covid" money which is no longer available. If there was a dedicated funding source, more successful projects could be done.

Thank you for this opportunity.