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HOUSE BILL NO. 492

House Amendments in [] — February 11, 1994

A BILL to amend and reenact § 10.1-560 of the Code of Virginia, relating to land disturbing activities.

Patrons—Watkins, Cox, DeBoer, Ingram, Martin and Reid

Referred to Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 10.1-560 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 10.1-560. Definitions.

As used in this article, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Agreement in lieu of a plan" means a contract between the plan-approving authority and the owner which specifies conservation measures which must be implemented in the construction of a single-family residence; this contract may be executed by the plan-approving authority in lieu of a formal site plan.

"Applicant" means any person submitting an erosion and sediment control plan for approval or requesting the issuance of a permit, when required, authorizing land-disturbing activities to commence.

"Certified inspector" means an employee or agent of a program authority who (i) holds a certificate of competence from the Board in the area of project inspection or (ii) is enrolled in the Board's training program for project inspection and successfully completes such program within one year after enrollment.

"Certified plan reviewer" means an employee or agent of a program authority who (i) holds a certificate of competence from the Board in the area of plan review, (ii) is enrolled in the Board's training program for plan review and successfully completes such program within one year after enrollment, or (iii) is licensed as a professional engineer, architect, certified landscape architect or land surveyor pursuant to Article 1 (§ 54.1-400 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 54.1.

"Certified program administrator" means an employee or agent of a program authority who (i) holds a certificate of competence from the Board in the area of program administration or (ii) is enrolled in the Board's training program for program administration and successfully completes such program within one year after enrollment.

"Conservation plan," "erosion and sediment control plan," or "plan" means a document containing material for the conservation of soil and water resources of a unit or group of units of land. It may include appropriate maps, an appropriate soil and water plan inventory and management information with needed interpretations, and a record of decisions contributing to conservation treatment. The plan shall contain all major conservation decisions to assure that the entire unit or units of land will be so treated to achieve the conservation objectives.

"District" or "soil and water conservation district" means a political subdivision of this Commonwealth organized in accordance with the provisions of Article 3 (§ 10.1-506 et seq.) of this chapter.

"Erosion impact area" means an area of land not associated with current land-disturbing activity but subject to persistent soil erosion resulting in the delivery of sediment onto neighboring properties or into state waters. This definition shall not apply to any lot or parcel of land of 10,000 square feet or less used for residential purposes or to shorelines where the erosion results from wave action or other coastal processes.

"Land-disturbing activity" means any land change which may result in soil erosion from water or wind and the movement of sediments into state waters or onto lands in the Commonwealth, including, but not limited to, clearing, grading, excavating, transporting and filling of land, except that the term shall not include:

1. Minor land-disturbing activities such as home gardens and individual home landscaping, repairs and maintenance work;

2. Individual service connections;

3. Installation, maintenance, or repair of any underground public utility lines when such activity occurs on an existing hard surfaced road, street or sidewalk provided the land-disturbing activity is confined to the area of the road, street or sidewalk which is hard surfaced;

4. Septic tank lines or drainage fields unless included in an overall plan for land-disturbing activity relating to construction of the building to be served by the septic tank system;

5. Surface or deep mining;

6. Exploration or drilling for oil and gas including the well site, roads, feeder lines and off-site disposal areas;

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60 7. Tilling, planting, or harvesting of agricultural, horticultural, or forest crops, or livestock feedlot
61 operations; including engineering operations as follows: construction of terraces, terrace outlets, check
62 dams, desilting basins, dikes, ponds, ditches, strip cropping, lister furrowing, contour cultivating, contour
63 furrowing, land drainage and land irrigation; *however, this exception shall not apply to harvesting of*
64 *forest crops unless the area on which harvesting occurs is reforested [artificially or naturally] in*
65 *accordance with the provisions of Chapter 11 (§ 10.1-1100 et seq.) of this title or is converted to bona*
66 *fide agricultural or improved pasture use as described in subsection B of § 10.1-1163;*

67 8. Repair or rebuilding of the tracks, right-of-way, bridges, communication facilities and other related
68 structures and facilities of a railroad company;

69 9. Agricultural engineering operations including but not limited to the construction of terraces, terrace
70 outlets, check dams, desilting basins, dikes, ponds not required to comply with the provisions of the
71 Dam Safety Act, Article 2 (§ 10.1-604 et seq.) of Chapter 6 of this title, ditches, strip cropping, lister
72 furrowing, contour cultivating, contour furrowing, land drainage and land irrigation;

73 10. Disturbed land areas of less than 10,000 square feet in size; however, the governing body of the
74 program authority may reduce this exception to a smaller area of disturbed land or qualify the conditions
75 under which this exception shall apply;

76 11. Installation of fence and sign posts or telephone and electric poles and other kinds of posts or
77 poles;

78 12. Shore erosion control projects on tidal waters when the projects are approved by local wetlands
79 boards, the Marine Resources Commission or the United States Army Corps of Engineers; and

80 13. Emergency work to protect life, limb or property, and emergency repairs; however, if the
81 land-disturbing activity would have required an approved erosion and sediment control plan, if the
82 activity were not an emergency, then the land area disturbed shall be shaped and stabilized in
83 accordance with the requirements of the plan-approving authority.

84 "Local erosion and sediment control program" or "local control program" means an outline of the
85 various methods employed by a program authority to regulate land-disturbing activities and thereby
86 minimize erosion and sedimentation in compliance with the state program and may include such items
87 as local ordinances, policies and guidelines, technical materials, inspection, enforcement and evaluation.

88 "Owner" means the owner or owners of the freehold of the premises or lesser estate therein, a
89 mortgagee or vendee in possession, assignee of rents, receiver, executor, trustee, lessee or other person,
90 firm or corporation in control of a property.

91 "Permittee" means the person to whom the permit authorizing land-disturbing activities is issued or
92 the person who certifies that the approved erosion and sediment control plan will be followed.

93 "Person" means any individual, partnership, firm, association, joint venture, public or private
94 corporation, trust, estate, commission, board, public or private institution, utility, cooperative, county,
95 city, town, or other political subdivision of the Commonwealth, any interstate body, or any other legal
96 entity.

97 "Plan-approving authority" means the Board, the program authority, or a department of a program
98 authority, responsible for determining the adequacy of a conservation plan submitted for land-disturbing
99 activities on a unit or units of lands and for approving plans.

100 "Program authority" means a district, county, city, or town which has adopted a soil erosion and
101 sediment control program which has been approved by the Board.

102 "State erosion and sediment control program" or "state program" means the program administered by
103 the Board pursuant to this article, including regulations designed to minimize erosion and sedimentation.

104 "State waters" means all waters on the surface and under the ground wholly or partially within or
105 bordering the Commonwealth or within its jurisdiction.

106 "Town" means an incorporated town.