RAISE YOUR VOICE TO PROTECT OUR RIVER!

Call your elected officials to support the 5 pieces of legislation for 2018 that would directly impact the South River:

FORESTS

**House Bill 766/SB610**: Will update the 27-year-old law to: 1. Clearly define “priority” forests, 2. Clarify what justifies clearing priority forests, 3. Require that an acre of forest be replanted for each acre of priority forest cut down, 4. Clarify that forest protection planning must come early in the development process, 5. Authorize and encourage better spending of fee-in-lieu money so state, local and nonprofit agencies and groups that already replant trees can use some of those fees.

**WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?** Forests provide innumerable benefits to water quality, air quality, and habitat in our State. This legislation will help ensure that those benefits do not continue to shrink along with Maryland’s dwindling forest cover. At least 14 to 22 acres of forest are cut down or lost each day in Maryland—equal to at least 10 football fields of trees. That’s 5,000 to 8,000 acres each year. Tell your elected officials to vote FOR HB766 and SB610 and conserve the forests that are a vital protection and filter for the South River.

SEPTIC TANKS - 2 Bills

**House Bill 458**: Requires that all homes sold in the Critical Area be outfitted with Best-Available Technology.

**House Bill 719**: Requires that all subdivisions over 1 acre within 1000 feet of a stream and cannot hook up to sewer use Best-Available Technology.

**WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?** Over 40,000 septic systems in Anne Arundel County contribute over a million pounds of nitrogen to our waterways every year. The River is impaired for fecal coliform and nitrogen. Many other jurisdictions throughout the State suffer similar septic system pollution. Tell your elected officials to vote FOR Bills HB 458 and 719 to "support River-friendly septic tank upgrades!"

REPORTING VIOLATIONS

**House Bill 1381**: Requires all local governments with delegated authority to enforce sediment and erosion control law and the Critical Area Act to report on their enforcement efforts to the State.
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? In FY 2016, Anne Arundel County required 11 staff to conduct 9380 erosion and sediment control inspections, which found 928 violations. Yet only 133 of these violations received a penalty. Currently, this sort of enforcement data is not widely available, and inconsistent between counties when it is made available. We expect the requirement to publicly report on violation numbers, enforcement efforts, and staffing needs will incentivize local governments to generate the political will and necessary resources for robust enforcement of our environmental laws, and help keep our rivers clean. Tell your elected officials to vote FOR HB1381 and conserve the forests that are a vital protection and filter for the South River.

Styrofoam Ban

HB538/SB651: Would ban the sale of expanded polystyrene foam, a.k.a. Styrofoam, in food service containers.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? Polystyrene foam is a dangerous plastic, for our waterways and for our health. Foam breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces as it passes through the waste stream and into our River, eventually winding up in our fish and shellfish. Along the way, foam soaks up almost 10x more toxins than other plastics, and allows these toxins to bio-accumulate in aquatic life and ourselves when we eat seafood. Our trash trap in Crab Creek has captured over a thousand pieces of foam since installation in June 2017. With the ready availability of eco-friendly and cost-comparable alternatives, the time to ban foam is now. Tell your elected officials to vote FOR HB538 and SB651 and conserve the forests that are a vital protection and filter for the South River.

Want More Information? Please contact Riverkeeper Jesse Iliff at jesse@southriverfederation.net