

Wetlands Regulatory Advisory Committee
09:00 AM - 04:00 PM Wednesday October 07, 2026
Division of Water / Natural Resources and Environmental Control

Hello, I am [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from Middletown, Delaware. Thank you in advance for your consideration regarding what I am about to share. From a public perspective, it's concerning because within each meeting, time is spent noting that the manual mandated by Congress since 1987 is not science-based, protections are not mandated, and species of concern can remain just that without any protection. When SB9 was signed by the Governor, he stood within protected Delaware lands and the headlines read "Further Protects For Delaware Wetlands".

Because a co-chair questioned his own interpretation of the legislation which formed this Committee, I want to share how taxpayers read your charge and purpose. According to SB9, Delaware Wetlands are immeasurably valuable and are threatened due to loosening of federal protections; therefore, you have been brought together in order to protect, preserve, retain, and replenish.

Furthermore, you were brought together to protect against any net loss of wetlands. It is also noted in SB9 that the public should have the ability to cross over wetlands in some cases in order to access other areas, such as a body of water. Because of this, you are charged to create a permitting process that allows construction of a walkway that does not double as a pier.

Lastly, you are charged with designing a process in which a landowner can dispute wetland designations on their property. SB9 includes details to assist in making a case against landowners in some cases because protecting wetlands is that important. This Committee can perhaps suggest that wetlands be replaced by landowners or developers off property in some cases.

I previously owned 40 acres that contained two spots that became small areas of wetlands over time. Three Delaware builders called these spots “a problem for builders” and advised me to “cover them up” so that they would not affect a disability housing project that I was working on at the time. This advice was terrible because these two spots had attracted blue herons, egrets, eagles and even wild turkeys. A Delaware resident used these areas to educate youth on soil, habitat, wild life, water, and more. To three homebuilders, these spots were a mere nuisance. f

For this reason, I have to share on the record that it's concerning to me that the wetland scientist committee member is a member of the Homebuilders Association of Delaware and is also the sole chair of the wetlands definition subcommittee. Likewise, it is a concern to the public that a member of the Homebuilders Association of Delaware is a cochair, and seemingly the lead, of the full wetland protection advisory committee. How invested are homebuilders and realtors in protecting our open space for future generations?

I encourage you to revisit the legislation that brought you here today. We have lost over 50% of wetlands. Neighboring states have created regulations that look like a novel for a reason. Delawareans recognize the science of off-shore wind projects regarding the permanent destruction of habitats from construction noise. I implore you to use your moral compass because all attention is on you.

Respectfully,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the speaker.

Ashley - the Committee stated that public comment periods are at discretion; therefore, you should let the public speak after they have listened for seven hours straight. If technical issues make them 60 seconds late, be courteous in the future.