

A champion of land preservation?

According to the Maryland Environmental Trust, Paul Facchina Sr. is considered to be an "absolute champion of land preservation" in the state of Maryland.

This is a well-deserved description inasmuch as Mr. Facchina has preserved thousands of acres through MET conservation easements.

However, Mr. Facchina is currently proposing a sand and gravel mining operation in Welcome on land that includes approximately 20 to 30 acres of wetland, which flows to Burgess Creek and ultimately to Nanjemoy Creek, one of the last pristine watersheds remaining in the state.

Mill Run, as the wetland is

known, is home to the wild primrose willow, a rare plant species. According to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, there is concern for the loss of potential forest interior dwelling species bird habitat, which could be destroyed by forest-clearing operations proposed by Mr. Facchina.

According to a Washington Post article of June 5, 2005, Facchina Construction has been cited three times by the Maryland Department of the Environment for sediment control violations in the state of Maryland, one of which is subject to a fine up to \$33,000 for sediment runoff into Araby Bog, the only known

environmental treasure of its kind in the entire world.

It is unclear if the fine was actually levied by MDE, but the fact remains that the violations occurred and Araby Bog was damaged considerably due to the lack of adequate sediment control measures.

Therefore, in light of these violations and the proposed gravel mining operation that could destroy a valuable wetland and possibly pollute the Nanjemoy Creek, I have to ask why DNR continues to praise Mr. Facchina as a "champion of land preservation" when he is proposing a business venture that could possibly destroy the very environment he champions?

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