

**SB 873 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Senate Committee On Natural Resources**

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**Meeting Dates:** 2/20

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Allows the Department of Land Conservation and Development, Department of State Lands, and Department of Transportation to use bioengineering practices that incorporate 'natural materials' for projects that mitigate, preserve, restore, remediate, or stabilize coastal resources. Describes authorized 'natural materials' as including trees, plants, logs, rocks, and woody debris.

*FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued*

*REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued*

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:**

Coastal shorelines are dynamic; constantly changing in response to wind, waves, tides, and increasingly rising sea levels and intensified storm impacts. Coastal bioengineering practices aim to protect property and provide habitat connectivity by reducing erosion and stabilizing shorelines.

Some shoreline stabilization methods employ 'hard materials' for protection, including bulkheads, retaining walls, walkways, and roads. These methods are frequently discouraged by state agencies as being environmentally destructive and having a tendency to collapse over time, necessitating expensive repairs.

Bioengineering practices that employ 'soft materials' typically install deep-rooted native plant species, logs, root wads, vegetative mats, and other methods that reduce or eliminate the need for hard materials. Soft methods are frequently encouraged by state agencies as imitating natural systems, adapting to environmental conditions, and providing habitat for fish and wildlife.

Senate Bill 873 would allow the Department of Land Conservation and Development, Department of State Lands, and Department of Transportation to use bioengineering practices that incorporate natural materials for projects that mitigate, preserve, restore, remediate, or stabilize coastal resources.