

# SENATE BILL 259

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(PRE-FILED)

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CF HB 228

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By: **Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee (By Request – Departmental – Natural Resources)**

Requested: September 15, 2023

Introduced and read first time: January 10, 2024

Assigned to: Budget and Taxation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Natural Resources – Maryland State Parks – Funds and Plan Alterations**

3 FOR the purpose of extending the date by which the Park System Critical Maintenance  
4 Fund must be expended; authorizing the Park System Capital Improvements and  
5 Acquisition Fund to be used for State projects on lands managed by the Department  
6 of Natural Resources for public purposes; altering the allowable uses of funds for the  
7 initial allocation to the Park System Capital Improvements and Acquisition Fund;  
8 authorizing the Great Maryland Outdoors Fund to be used for promoting outdoor  
9 environmental education in the State; extending the date by which the Department  
10 is required to develop and publish a Comprehensive Long-Range Strategic Plan; and  
11 generally relating to the State park system.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
13 Article – Natural Resources  
14 Section 5-220(a) through (c) and (g), 5-221(a) and (b), and 5-222(a) and (b)  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland  
16 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

17 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
18 Article – Natural Resources  
19 Section 5-220(k), 5-221(c), (g), (j), and (l), 5-222(c), (g), and (k), and 5-2A-05(a)  
20 Annotated Code of Maryland  
21 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

22 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
23 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

24 **Article – Natural Resources**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 5–220.

2 (a) In this section, “Fund” means the Park System Critical Maintenance Fund.

3 (b) There is a Park System Critical Maintenance Fund.

4 (c) The purpose of the Fund is to provide funding for completing State projects  
5 that address critical maintenance concerns on lands managed by the Department for public  
6 purposes.

7 (g) The Fund may be used only for State park projects that address critical  
8 maintenance concerns on lands managed by the Department for public purposes.

9 (k) (1) For fiscal year 2024 only, the Governor shall include in the annual  
10 budget bill a General Fund appropriation in the amount of \$70,000,000 to the Fund for  
11 State projects that address critical maintenance concerns on lands managed by the  
12 Department for public purposes.

13 (2) The Department shall expend the funds allocated under this subsection  
14 before July 1, ~~[2026]~~ **2029**.

15 5–221.

16 (a) In this section, “Fund” means the Park System Capital Improvements and  
17 Acquisition Fund.

18 (b) There is a Park System Capital Improvements and Acquisition Fund.

19 (c) The purpose of the Fund is to provide funding for:

20 (1) Completing State **[park]** projects related to capital improvements on  
21 lands managed by the Department for public purposes; and

22 (2) Acquiring land to be managed by the Department for public purposes  
23 **[as a State park]**.

24 (g) The Fund may be used only for:

25 (1) Completing State **[park]** projects related to capital improvements on  
26 lands managed by the Department for public purposes; and

27 (2) Acquiring land to be managed by the Department for public purposes  
28 **[as a State park]**.

29 (j) Money expended from the Fund for capital improvements **[in the State’s**  
30 **parks]** **FOR STATE PROJECTS ON LANDS MANAGED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR**

1 **PUBLIC PURPOSES** is supplemental to and is not intended to take the place of funding  
2 that otherwise would be appropriated for capital improvements [in the State's parks] **FOR**  
3 **STATE PROJECTS ON LANDS MANAGED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC**  
4 **PURPOSES** and the acquisition of land by the Department that will be managed for public  
5 purposes.

6 (l) The first \$70,000,000 received by the Fund may be used only as follows:

7 (1) **AT LEAST** \$5,000,000 for infrastructure projects that mitigate the  
8 effects of climate change, including:

9 (i) Flood barriers;

10 (ii) Forest buffers;

11 (iii) Green spaces;

12 (iv) Building elevation;

13 (v) Stormwater infrastructure;

14 (vi) Wetlands restoration; and

15 (vii) Addressing environmental justice concerns;

16 (2) **AT LEAST** \$5,000,000 for historic preservation, in accordance with  
17 subsection (m) of this section;

18 (3) **AT LEAST** \$20,000,000 for transportation improvements, including:

19 (i) Improving bike lanes and trails, increasing walkability, and  
20 expanding parking availability; and

21 (ii) Targeting transportation investments to avoid capacity  
22 shutdowns;

23 (4) **AT LEAST** \$10,000,000 for increasing water access, including kayak  
24 and boat launches and areas for picnicking near water and swimming; and

25 (5) **UP TO** \$30,000,000 for land acquisition, including:

26 (i) Areas in the central and southern regions of the State that will:

27 1. Relieve overcrowding at existing State parks; and

28 2. Expand public access to State parks and outdoor

1 recreation;

2 (ii) Sites of significance to the history of African American, Asian,  
3 Indigenous or Native American, and Hispanic or Latino populations in the State; and

4 (iii) Beachfront or waterfront property for public access.

5 5-222.

6 (a) In this section, “Fund” means the Great Maryland Outdoors Fund.

7 (b) There is a Great Maryland Outdoors Fund in the Department.

8 (c) The purpose of the Fund is to:

9 (1) Support the Office of Outdoor Recreation in the Department;

10 (2) Provide resources to improve existing and create new outdoor  
11 recreation **AND OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION** opportunities; [and]

12 (3) Implement the recommendations of the Maryland Outdoor Recreation  
13 Economic Commission to promote and grow the outdoor recreation sector in the State; **AND**

14 (4) **PROMOTE AND GROW OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN**  
15 **THE STATE.**

16 (g) The Fund may be used only for:

17 (1) Implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Outdoor  
18 Recreation Economic Commission[, including establishing and supporting an Office of  
19 Outdoor Recreation in the Department];

20 (2) Department projects and programs that provide, promote, and enhance  
21 outdoor recreation **OR OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION** opportunities in the  
22 State; and

23 (3) Awarding grants to destination marketing organizations for the  
24 purpose of promoting and marketing State parks.

25 (k) Money expended from the Fund for existing programs in the Department that  
26 provide, promote, and enhance outdoor recreation **OR OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL**  
27 **EDUCATION** opportunities is supplemental to and is not intended to take the place of  
28 funding that otherwise would be appropriated for those programs.

29 5-2A-05.

1 (a) The Department shall:

2 (1) Develop and publish a Comprehensive Long-Range Strategic Plan by  
3 December 1, ~~[2023]~~ **2024**;

4 (2) Update the Comprehensive Long-Range Strategic Plan every 5 years  
5 to reflect major goals and progress toward meeting those goals; and

6 (3) Submit to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the  
7 State Government Article, the Comprehensive Long-Range Strategic Plan and any updates  
8 to the plan.

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
10 October 1, 2024.