
By: **Delegates Weir, Wood, and McClenahan**
Introduced and read first time: February 14, 2000
Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Natural Resources - Submerged Aquatic Vegetation - Recreational**
3 **Watercraft**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Natural Resources to establish a
5 program to study the impact of recreational watercraft on submerged aquatic
6 vegetation beds; requiring the Department to designate certain submerged
7 aquatic vegetation beds for the study; requiring the Department to take certain
8 actions to mark designated submerged aquatic vegetation beds; requiring the
9 study to make certain evaluations; authorizing the Department to adopt certain
10 regulations; requiring the Department to make a certain report; defining certain
11 terms; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the
12 impact of recreational watercraft on submerged aquatic vegetation.

13 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
14 Article - Natural Resources
15 Section 4-213(a)
16 Annotated Code of Maryland
17 (1997 Replacement Volume and 1999 Supplement)

18 BY adding to
19 Article - Natural Resources
20 Section 4-213.1
21 Annotated Code of Maryland
22 (1997 Replacement Volume and 1999 Supplement)

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

1

Article - Natural Resources

2 4-213.

3 (a) In this section, "submerged aquatic vegetation" means a vascular or
4 nonvascular hydrophyte, which is rooted or unrooted, that lies entirely beneath the
5 surface of the water, except for flowering parts in some species.

6 4-213.1.

7 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
8 INDICATED.

9 (2) "STUDY" MEANS THE STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF RECREATIONAL
10 WATERCRAFT ACTIVITIES ON SUBMERGED AQUATIC VEGETATION BEDS.

11 (3) "SUBMERGED AQUATIC VEGETATION" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN
12 § 4-213(A) OF THIS SUBTITLE.

13 (B) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH A PROGRAM TO STUDY THE IMPACT
14 OF RECREATIONAL WATERCRAFT ACTIVITIES ON SUBMERGED AQUATIC
15 VEGETATION BEDS IN THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND COASTAL BAYS.

16 (C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DESIGNATE A MINIMUM OF THREE
17 SEPARATE SUBMERGED AQUATIC VEGETATION HABITATS WITHIN THE CHESAPEAKE
18 BAY AND COASTAL BAYS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE STUDY.

19 (2) EACH DESIGNATED SUBMERGED AQUATIC VEGETATION HABITAT
20 SHALL HAVE A MAXIMUM DEPTH OF 4 FEET.

21 (3) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CLEARLY MARK EACH DESIGNATED AREA
22 WITH BUOYS.

23 (D) THE STUDY SHALL:

24 (1) EVALUATE THE DIRECT IMPACT OF RECREATIONAL WATERCRAFT
25 ACTIVITIES ON THE ECOLOGICAL VALUE OF SUBMERGED AQUATIC VEGETATION
26 BEDS; AND

27 (2) EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DEPARTMENT'S ACTIVITIES
28 DESIGNED TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACT ON SUBMERGED AQUATIC VEGETATION
29 HABITATS.

30 (E) THE DEPARTMENT MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS TO ADMINISTER THIS
31 SECTION.

32 (F) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL REPORT THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY TO THE
33 GOVERNOR AND, SUBJECT TO § 2-1246 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO THE
34 GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2003.

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
2 October 1, 2000. It shall remain effective for a period of 3 years and, at the end of
3 September 30, 2003, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this
4 Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.