

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 917

(Frederick County Delegation)

Environment and Transportation

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Frederick County - Scenic River Advisory Board - Composition

This bill establishes requirements for the membership of a scenic river advisory board established by a local governing body for a scenic or wild river that flows through Frederick County and one or more other counties.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: None. The bill does not affect Frederick County finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The membership of a scenic river advisory board established by a local governing body for a scenic or wild river that flows through Frederick County and one or more other counties must consist of:

- two residents of each county through which the scenic or wild river flows who own land contiguous to the scenic or wild river;
- two residents of each county through which the scenic or wild river flows who do not own land contiguous to the scenic or wild river;
- two representatives of the local governing body of each county through which the scenic or wild river flows, who must be nonvoting members of the board; and

- one representative of an organization in the county with expertise in agriculture, such as the local farm bureau, grange, or soil conservation district.

Current Law: Upon completion of an approved management plan for a scenic or wild river, a local governing body may establish a scenic river advisory board for each designated scenic or wild river within its jurisdiction. Each board, as constituted by the local authority, may recommend policies, laws, and regulations in furtherance of the aims of the Scenic and Wild Rivers Program to the appropriate local governing body. If a scenic or wild river flows through more than one county, the scenic river advisory board may consist of an equal number of members from each county.

Background: The following rivers (and associated tributaries) are included in the Scenic and Wild Rivers Program: Anacostia, Deer Creek, Monocacy, Patuxent, Pocomoke, Potomac (in Montgomery and Frederick counties), Severn, Wicomico (in Charles County), and Youghiogheny. A “scenic river” is defined as a free-flowing river whose shoreline and related land are predominantly forested, agricultural, grassland, marshland, or swampland with a minimum of development for at least two miles of the river length.

The policy of the State is to preserve and protect the natural values of these rivers, enhance their water quality, and fulfill vital conservation purposes through wise use of resources within their surrounding environment. The Secretary of Natural Resources is directed to formulate and implement a program to carry out that policy for each designated river. The program must include the preparation of a management plan. Upon completion of the plan, the Secretary must submit the plan, with any appropriate recommendations, to the governing body of every county where the affected river is located for its approval and recommendations.

There is a Scenic and Wild Rivers Review Board, which reviews any inventories, studies, plans, and regulations prepared under the Scenic and Wild Rivers Program. Statute also requires the appointment, by the Scenic and Wild Rivers Review Board, of a local scenic and wild river advisory board for each river included in the Scenic and Wild Rivers Program, subject to membership requirements. A local board is directed to review any proposed inventory, study, plan, and regulation and make recommendations to its local governing body and the Scenic and Wild Rivers Review Board on the inventory, study, plan, or regulation. Upon completion of an approved management plan, the local governing body may establish a scenic river advisory board for each designated scenic or wild river within its jurisdiction to make recommendations to the appropriate local governing body.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 1032 (Senator Hough) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Frederick County; Department of Legislative Services

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