

HOUSE BILL 784

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By: **Delegate Stein**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2022

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

Committee Report: Favorable

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 7, 2022

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Department of Natural Resources – Irreplaceable Natural Areas Program –**
3 **Establishment**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Irreplaceable Natural Areas Program in the
5 Department of Natural Resources to preserve Maryland’s native biodiversity on
6 State-owned land managed by the Department; and generally relating to the
7 Irreplaceable Natural Areas Program.

8 BY adding to

9 Article – Natural Resources

10 Section 3–501 through 3–503 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 5. Irreplaceable
11 Natural Areas Program”

12 Annotated Code of Maryland

13 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

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

16 **Article – Natural Resources**

17 **SUBTITLE 5. IRREPLACEABLE NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM.**

18 **3–501.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
2 INDICATED.

3 (B) "BIODIVERSITY" MEANS THE FULL RANGE OF LIVING ORGANISMS
4 NATIVE TO A REGION.

5 (C) "IRREPLACEABLE NATURAL AREA" MEANS AN AREA WITH HABITAT
6 NECESSARY TO SUPPORT:

7 (1) A UNIQUE NATURAL COMMUNITY; OR

8 (2) A PLANT OR ANIMAL SPECIES LISTED AS THREATENED OR
9 ENDANGERED UNDER TITLE 10, SUBTITLE 2A OF THIS ARTICLE.

10 (D) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE IRREPLACEABLE NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM.

11 (E) "UNIQUE NATURAL COMMUNITY" MEANS AN AREA THAT:

12 (1) HAS AN ASSEMBLAGE OF NATIVE PLANTS OR ANIMALS THAT IS
13 RARE OR DECLINING IN THE STATE; OR

14 (2) SUPPORTS AN UNUSUALLY PRISTINE EXAMPLE OF A NATIVE
15 ECOSYSTEM TYPE.

16 **3-502.**

17 (A) THERE IS AN IRREPLACEABLE NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM IN THE
18 DEPARTMENT.

19 (B) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PRESERVE MARYLAND'S NATIVE
20 BIODIVERSITY ON STATE-OWNED LAND MANAGED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR
21 CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS OF THE STATE.

22 **3-503.**

23 ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2023, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS
24 TO CARRY OUT THIS SUBTITLE, INCLUDING REGULATIONS:

25 (1) DESIGNATING IRREPLACEABLE NATURAL AREAS ON
26 STATE-OWNED LAND MANAGED BY THE DEPARTMENT; AND

27 (2) ESTABLISHING MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR IRREPLACEABLE
28 NATURAL AREAS, INCLUDING:

- 1 **(I) A MAP DEPICTING BOUNDARIES FOR EACH AREA;**
- 2 **(II) A DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIQUE FEATURES AND THREATS**
- 3 **FOR EACH AREA; AND**
- 4 **(III) COMPATIBLE AND INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES FOR EACH**
- 5 **AREA.**

6 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
7 1, 2022.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.