

# HOUSE BILL 784

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By: **Delegate Stein**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2022

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

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.**

19 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
20 INDICATED.

21 (B) “BIODIVERSITY” MEANS THE FULL RANGE OF LIVING ORGANISMS  
22 NATIVE TO A REGION.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (C) "IRREPLACEABLE NATURAL AREA" MEANS AN AREA WITH HABITAT  
2 NECESSARY TO SUPPORT:

3 (1) A UNIQUE NATURAL COMMUNITY; OR

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

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

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

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

10 (2) SUPPORTS AN UNUSUALLY PRISTINE EXAMPLE OF A NATIVE  
11 ECOSYSTEM TYPE.

12 **3-502.**

13 (A) THERE IS AN IRREPLACEABLE NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM IN THE  
14 DEPARTMENT.

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

18 **3-503.**

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

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

23 (2) ESTABLISHING MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR IRREPLACEABLE  
24 NATURAL AREAS, INCLUDING:

25 (I) A MAP DEPICTING BOUNDARIES FOR EACH AREA;

26 (II) A DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIQUE FEATURES AND THREATS  
27 FOR EACH AREA; AND

1 (III) COMPATIBLE AND INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES FOR EACH  
2 AREA.

3 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June  
4 1, 2022.