

# HOUSE BILL 884

M1

2lr1442

---

By: ~~Delegates Gilchrist, Foley, and Lierman~~ Lierman, Amprey, Barve, Boyce, Fraser-Hidalgo, Healey, Holmes, Jalisi, Lehman, Love, Ruth, Stein, Stewart, and Wells

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2022

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

---

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 9, 2022

---

## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Conservation Land – Old-Growth Forests – ~~Protection~~ Management**

3 FOR the purpose of ~~establishing protections for old-growth forests located on State~~  
4 ~~conservation land~~ requiring the Department of Natural Resources to manage certain  
5 State conservation land in a certain manner under certain circumstances; and  
6 generally relating to old-growth forests.

7 BY adding to

8 Article – Natural Resources

9 Section 1-406

10 Annotated Code of Maryland

11 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

12 Preamble

13 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland recognizes the unique cultural and ecological  
14 benefits of preserving old-growth forests; and

15 WHEREAS, At present, many of the old-growth forests located on land preserved  
16 under the State's land conservation programs lack formal protection; now, therefore,

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

18 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

---

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 Article – Natural Resources

2 1-406.

3 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
4 INDICATED.

5 (2) “OLD-GROWTH FOREST” MEANS A FOREST:

6 (I) AT LEAST 5 ACRES IN SIZE WITH A PREPONDERANCE OF OLD  
7 TREES, OF WHICH THE OLDEST EXCEED AT LEAST HALF THE PROJECTED MAXIMUM  
8 ATTAINABLE AGE FOR THE SPECIES; AND

9 (II) THAT EXHIBITS SEVERAL OF THE FOLLOWING  
10 CHARACTERISTICS:

11 1. SHADE-TOLERANT SPECIES ARE PRESENT IN ALL AGE  
12 AND SIZE CLASSES;

13 2. RANDOMLY DISTRIBUTED CANOPY GAPS ARE  
14 PRESENT;

15 3. A HIGH DEGREE OF STRUCTURAL DIVERSITY  
16 CHARACTERIZED BY MULTIPLE GROWTH LAYERS REFLECTING A BROAD SPECTRUM  
17 OF AGES IS PRESENT;

18 4. AN ACCUMULATION OF DEAD WOOD OF VARYING  
19 SIZES AND STAGES OF DECOMPOSITION ACCOMPANIED BY DECADENCE IN LIVE  
20 DOMINANT TREES IS PRESENT; AND

21 5. PIT AND MOUND TOPOGRAPHY CAN BE OBSERVED.

22 (3) ~~(I) “STATE CONSERVATION LAND” MEANS LAND THAT IS~~  
23 ~~PROTECTED UNDER A LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE~~  
24 ~~DEPARTMENT OR THE MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST.~~

25 ~~(II)~~ “STATE CONSERVATION LAND” INCLUDES:

26 ~~1. (I)~~ STATE PARKS; AND

27 ~~2. STATE FOREST RESERVES;~~

28 ~~3. (II)~~ WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS~~;~~

~~4. NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AREAS;~~

~~5. STATE WILDLANDS; AND~~

~~6. LAND SUBJECT TO A CONSERVATION EASEMENT;~~

~~A. WITHIN A DESIGNATED RURAL LEGACY AREA;~~

~~B. HELD BY THE MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST;~~

~~OR~~

~~C. FUNDED UNDER PROGRAM OPEN SPACE.~~

(B) WHENEVER THE DEPARTMENT ~~OR THE MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST~~ IDENTIFIES AN OLD-GROWTH FOREST ON STATE CONSERVATION LAND, THE LAND SHALL BE MANAGED IN A MANNER THAT: PROHIBITS LOGGING.

~~(1) MINIMIZES DISTURBANCE TO THE OLD GROWTH FOREST;~~

~~(2) PRIORITIZES PASSIVE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES;~~

~~(3) PROHIBITS LOGGING OR THE CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC AMENITIES WITHIN THE OLD GROWTH FOREST; AND~~

~~(4) MINIMIZES RISKS TO THE OLD GROWTH FOREST POSED BY DISEASE AND INVASIVE SPECIES.~~

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

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker of the House of Delegates.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Senate.