



Great Maryland Outdoors Act

House Bill 727/Senate Bill 541

DID YOU KNOW?

- Maryland State Park attendance increased dramatically. In 2021, and due to insufficient staffing and infrastructure, there was a 45% increase in instances of parks needing to limit capacity.
- Unequal access to parks and changes in demographics such as increasing diversity and more seniors have made it necessary to change park policies, disability access, park locations, and funding.
- The State Park Investment Commission reported that "much of the park system infrastructure is over 40 years old and in dire need of ongoing reinvestment."¹
- There is strong public support for expansion and improvements in the park system.



What This Bill Will Do:

- Address issues identified by the State Park Investment Commission, including access via transit.
- Establish a Parks and Recreation Commission to replace the Parks Advisory Commission, to provide oversight of the Maryland Park Service.
- Survey and track infrastructure and critical maintenance needs, and establish a nonlapsing Park System Critical Maintenance Fund.
- Inventory all state lands managed by the Department of Natural Resources.
- Survey historical and cultural resources.

¹ Report of the State Park Investment Commission (2021), p. 9.



- Increase the number of full-time Maryland Park Service employees, and improve salaries and benefits for park personnel.
- The bill will develop a capital improvement plan and comprehensive long-range strategic plan and establish a funded nonlapsing Capital Improvements and Acquisition Fund for capital improvement projects and acquisition of land.
- Fund the Rural Legacy program, the Agricultural Land Preservation Fund, and the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation.
- Adopt design principles to make the parks more accessible and inclusive, and consider the location of parks.
- Use a scientifically-derived Equity Mapping tool to improve equity of park facilities.

What are the Bill's Benefits?

- More numerous, more equitably distributed and more accessible parks for the public.
- Better planning structure for long-term health of parks.
- Better work environment for park service employees.
- Nonlapsing increased funding for park staff and infrastructure.
- Increased conservation of natural places and agricultural lands.
- More seniors, children, people with disabilities, and everyone reconnecting with nature.

Ask your legislators to support the Maryland Great Outdoors bill!

Maryland Sierra Club
 P.O. Box 278
 Riverdale, MD 20738-0278
 (301) 277-7111
www.sierraclub.org/maryland/zero-waste

sierraclub.org/maryland
facebook.com/SierraClubMaryland/
twitter.com/sierraclubmd

Email: legislation@mdsierra.org

