

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2017 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 589

BY SENATORS MAYNARD AND CLINE

[Introduced March 13, 2017; Referred
to the Committee on Natural Resources]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §20-1-7 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
 2 to requiring the Director of the Division of Natural Resources to study the feasibility of
 3 using a nonemployee workforce to perform improvements in state parks and forests.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

1 That §20-1-7 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted
 2 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 1. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION.

§20-1-7. Additional powers, duties and services of director.

1 In addition to all other powers, duties and responsibilities granted and assigned to the
 2 director in this chapter and elsewhere by law, the director is hereby authorized and empowered
 3 to:

4 (1) With the advice of the commission, prepare and administer, through the various
 5 divisions created by this chapter, a long-range comprehensive program for the conservation of
 6 the natural resources of the state which best effectuates the purpose of this chapter and which
 7 makes adequate provisions for the natural resources laws of the state;

8 (2) Sign and execute in the name of the state by the Division of Natural Resources any
 9 contract or agreement with the federal government or its departments or agencies, subdivisions
 10 of the state, corporations, associations, partnerships or individuals;

11 (3) Conduct research in improved conservation methods and disseminate information
 12 matters to the residents of the state;

13 (4) Conduct a continuous study and investigation of the habits of wildlife and, for purposes
 14 of control and protection, to classify by regulation the various species into such categories as may
 15 be established as necessary;

16 (5) Prescribe the locality in which the manner and method by which the various species of
 17 wildlife may be taken, or chased, unless otherwise specified by this chapter;

18 (6) Hold at least six meetings each year at such time and at such points within the state,

19 as in the discretion of the Natural Resources Commission may appear to be necessary and proper
20 for the purpose of giving interested persons in the various sections of the state an opportunity to
21 be heard concerning open season for their respective areas, and report the results of the meetings
22 to the Natural Resources Commission before such season and bag limits are fixed by it;

23 (7) Suspend open hunting season upon any or all wildlife in any or all counties of the state
24 with the prior approval of the Governor in case of an emergency such as a drought, forest fire
25 hazard or epizootic disease among wildlife. The suspension shall continue during the existence
26 of the emergency and until rescinded by the director. Suspension, or reopening after such
27 suspension, of open seasons may be made upon twenty-four hours notice by delivery of a copy
28 of the order of suspension or reopening to the wire press agencies at the State Capitol;

29 (8) Supervise the fiscal affairs and responsibilities of the division;

30 (9) Designate such localities as he or she shall determine to be necessary and desirable
31 for the perpetuation of any species of wildlife;

32 (10) Enter private lands to make surveys or inspections for conservation purposes, to
33 investigate for violations of provisions of this chapter, to serve and execute warrants and
34 processes, to make arrests and to otherwise effectively enforce the provisions of this chapter;

35 (11) Acquire for the state in the name of the Division of Natural Resources by purchase,
36 condemnation, lease or agreement, or accept or reject for the state, in the name of the Division
37 of Natural Resources, gifts, donations, contributions, bequests or devises of money, security or
38 property, both real and personal, and any interest in such property, including lands and waters,
39 which he or she deems suitable for the following purposes:

40 (a) For state forests for the purpose of growing timber, demonstrating forestry, furnishing
41 or protecting watersheds or providing public recreation;

42 (b) For state parks or recreation areas for the purpose of preserving scenic, aesthetic,

43 scientific, cultural, archaeological or historical values or natural wonders, or providing public
44 recreation;

45 (c) For public hunting, trapping or fishing grounds or waters for the purpose of providing
46 areas in which the public may hunt, trap or fish, as permitted by the provisions of this chapter and
47 the rules issued hereunder;

48 (d) For fish hatcheries, game farms, wildlife research areas and feeding stations;

49 (e) For the extension and consolidation of lands or waters suitable for the above purposes
50 by exchange of other lands or waters under his or her supervision;

51 (f) For such other purposes as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter;

52 (12) Capture, propagate, transport, sell or exchange any species of wildlife as may be
53 necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter;

54 (13) Sell timber for not less than the value thereof, as appraised by a qualified appraiser
55 appointed by the director, from all lands under the jurisdiction and control of the director, except
56 those lands that are designated as state parks and those in the Kanawha State Forest. The
57 appraisal shall be made within a reasonable time prior to any sale, reduced to writing, filed in the
58 office of the director and shall be available for public inspection. The director must obtain the
59 written permission of the Governor to sell timber when the appraised value is more than \$5,000.
60 The director shall receive sealed bids therefor, after notice by publication as a Class II legal
61 advertisement in compliance with the provisions of article three, chapter fifty-nine of this code and
62 the publication area for such publication shall be each county in which the timber is located. The
63 timber so advertised shall be sold at not less than the appraised value to the highest responsible
64 bidder, who shall give bond for the proper performance of the sales contract as the director shall
65 designate; but the director shall have the right to reject any and all bids and to readvertise for
66 bids. If the foregoing provisions of this section have been complied with and no bid equal to or in

67 excess of the appraised value of the timber is received, the director may, at any time, during a
68 period of six months after the opening of the bids, sell the timber in such manner as he or she
69 deems appropriate, but the sale price shall not be less than the appraised value of the timber
70 advertised. No contract for sale of timber made pursuant to this section shall extend for a period
71 of more than ten years. And all contracts heretofore entered into by the state for the sale of timber
72 shall not be validated by this section if the same be otherwise invalid. The proceeds arising from
73 the sale of the timber so sold shall be paid to the Treasurer of the State of West Virginia and shall
74 be credited to the division and used exclusively for the purposes of this chapter: *Provided, That*
75 nothing contained herein shall prohibit the sale of timber which otherwise would be removed from
76 rights-of-way necessary for and strictly incidental to the extraction of minerals;

77 (14) Sell or lease, with the approval in writing of the Governor, coal, oil, gas, sand, gravel
78 and any other minerals that may be found in the lands under the jurisdiction and control of the
79 director, except those lands that are designated as state parks. The director, before making sale
80 or lease thereof, shall receive sealed bids therefor, after notice by publication as a Class II legal
81 advertisement in compliance with the provisions of article three, chapter fifty-nine of this code,
82 and the publication area for such publication shall be each county in which such lands are located.
83 The minerals so advertised shall be sold or leased to the highest responsible bidder, who shall
84 give bond for the proper performance of the sales contract or lease as the director shall designate;
85 but the director shall have the right to reject any and all bids and to readvertise for bids. The
86 proceeds arising from any such sale or lease shall be paid to the Treasurer of the State of West
87 Virginia and shall be credited to the division and used exclusively for the purposes of this chapter;

88 (15) Exercise the powers granted by this chapter for the protection of forests and regulate
89 fires and smoking in the woods or in their proximity at such times and in such localities as may be
90 necessary to reduce the danger of forest fires;

91 (16) Cooperate with departments and agencies of state, local and federal governments in
92 the conservation of natural resources and the beautification of the state;

93 (17) Report to the Governor each year all information relative to the operation and
94 functions of the division and the director shall make such other reports and recommendations as
95 may be required by the Governor, including an annual financial report covering all receipts and
96 disbursements of the division for each fiscal year, and he or she shall deliver such report to the
97 Governor on or before December 1, next after the end of the fiscal year so covered. A copy of
98 such report shall be delivered to each house of the Legislature when convened in January next
99 following;

100 (18) Keep a complete and accurate record of all proceedings, record and file all bonds
101 and contracts taken or entered into and assume responsibility for the custody and preservation of
102 all papers and documents pertaining to his or her office, except as otherwise provided by law;

103 (19) Offer and pay, in his or her discretion, rewards for information respecting the violation,
104 or for the apprehension and conviction of any violators, of any of the provisions of this chapter;

105 (20) Require such reports as he or she may deem to be necessary from any person issued
106 a license or permit under the provisions of this chapter, but no person shall be required to disclose
107 secret processes or confidential data of competitive significance;

108 (21) Purchase as provided by law all equipment necessary for the conduct of the division;

109 (22) Conduct and encourage research designed to further new and more extensive uses
110 of the natural resources of this state and to publicize the findings of such research;

111 (23) Encourage and cooperate with other public and private organizations or groups in
112 their efforts to publicize the attractions of the state;

113 (24) Accept and expend, without the necessity of appropriation by the Legislature, any gift
114 or grant of money made to the division for any and all purposes specified in this chapter and he

115 or she shall account for and report on all such receipts and expenditures to the Governor;

116 (25) Cooperate with the state historian and other appropriate state agencies in conducting
117 research with reference to the establishment of state parks and monuments of historic, scenic
118 and recreational value and to take such steps as may be necessary in establishing such
119 monuments or parks as he or she deems advisable;

120 (26) Maintain in his or her office at all times, properly indexed by subject matter and also
121 in chronological sequence, all rules made or issued under the authority of this chapter. Such
122 records shall be available for public inspection on all business days during the business hours of
123 working days;

124 (27) Delegate the powers and duties of his or her office, except the power to execute
125 contracts not related to land and stream management, to appointees and employees of the
126 division, who shall act under the direction and supervision of the director and for whose acts he
127 or she shall be responsible;

128 (28) Conduct schools, institutions and other educational programs, apart from or in
129 cooperation with other governmental agencies, for instruction and training in all phases of the
130 natural resources programs of the state;

131 (29) Authorize the payment of all or any part of the reasonable expenses incurred by an
132 employee of the division in moving his or her household furniture and effects as a result of a
133 reassignment of the employee: *Provided*, That no part of the moving expenses of any one such
134 employee shall be paid more frequently than once in twelve months; ~~and~~

135 (30) Promulgate rules, in accordance with the provisions of chapter twenty-nine-a of this
136 code, to implement and make effective the powers and duties vested in him or her by the
137 provisions of this chapter and take such other steps as may be necessary in his or her discretion
138 for the proper and effective enforcement of the provisions of this chapter; and

139

140 (31) In conjunction with the Natural Resources Commission, conduct a survey of any
141 improvements that would benefit any state parks or forests and whether these improvements
142 could be accomplished using a Civilian Conservation Corps with an emphasis on using persons
143 who are unemployed as opposed to permanent employees or contractors. The study should
144 include an identification of possible sources of funding such an operation especially from federal
145 funds or private sources, how to identify persons eligible to participate in the program and any
146 administrative activities that might be necessary to accomplish this goal. The director shall report
147 to the Legislature his findings and any recommended law changes or funding that would be
148 needed from the state.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require the Director of the Division of Natural Resources to study the feasibility of using a nonemployee work force to perform improvements in state parks and forests.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.