

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2018 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4607

BY DELEGATES HAMRICK, HIGGINBOTHAM, HOWELL AND

GRAVES

[Introduced February 13, 2018; Referred
to the Committee on the Judiciary.]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §20-5-2 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
 2 to parks and recreation and prohibiting the banning of the use of recreational drones at
 3 state parks except within 150 feet from lodging.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 5. PARKS AND RECREATION.

§20-5-2. Powers of the director with respect to the section of parks and recreation.

1 (a) The Director of the Division of Natural Resources is responsible for the execution and
 2 administration of the provisions in this article as an integral part of the parks and recreation
 3 program of the state and shall organize and staff the section of parks and recreation for the
 4 orderly, efficient and economical accomplishment of these ends. The authority granted in the year
 5 1994 to the Director of the Division of Natural Resources to employ up to six additional
 6 unclassified personnel to carry out the parks' functions of the Division of Natural Resources is
 7 continued.

8 (b) The Director of the Division of Natural Resources shall:

9 (1) Establish, manage and maintain the state's parks and recreation system for the benefit
 10 of the people of this state and do all things necessary and incidental to the development and
 11 administration of the state's parks and recreation system;

12 (2) Acquire property for the state in the name of the Division of Natural Resources by
 13 purchase, lease or agreement; retain, employ and contract with legal advisors and consultants;
 14 or accept or reject for the state, in the name of the division, gifts, donations, contributions,
 15 bequests or devises of money, security or property, both real and personal, and any interest in
 16 the property, including lands and waters, for state park or recreational areas for the purpose of
 17 providing public recreation: *Provided*, That the provisions of section §20-1-1 *et seq.* of this code
 18 are specifically made applicable to any acquisitions of land: *Provided, however*, That any sale,
 19 exchange or transfer of property for the purposes of completing land acquisitions or providing
 20 improved recreational opportunities to the citizens of the state is subject to the procedures of

21 article one-a of this chapter: *Provided further*, That no sale of any park or recreational area
22 property, including lands and waters, used for purposes of providing public recreation on the
23 effective date of this article and no privatization of any park may occur without statutory authority;

24 (3) Approve and direct the use of all revenue derived from the operation of the state parks
25 and public recreation system for the operation, maintenance and improvement of the system,
26 individual projects of the system or for the retirement of park development revenue bonds:
27 *Provided*, That all revenues derived from the operation of the state parks and public recreation
28 system shall be invested by the Treasurer and all proceeds from investment earnings shall accrue
29 for the exclusive use for the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the system, individual
30 projects of the system or for the retirement of park development revenue bonds;

31 (4) Effectively promote and market the state's parks, state forests, state recreation areas
32 and wildlife recreational resources by approving the use of no less than 20 percent of the:

33 (A) Funds appropriated for purposes of advertising and marketing expenses related to the
34 promotion and development of tourism, pursuant to §29-22-18 (j) of this code; and

35 (B) Funds authorized for expenditure from the Tourism Promotion Fund for purposes of
36 direct advertising, pursuant to §5B-2-12 and §29-22A-10 of this code;

37 (5) Issue park development revenue bonds as provided in this article;

38 (6) Provide for the construction and operation of cabins, lodges, resorts, restaurants and
39 other developed recreational service facilities, subject to the provisions of §1-15-20 of this code;

40 (7) The director may sell timber that has been severed in a state park incidental to the
41 construction of park facilities or related infrastructure where the construction is authorized by the
42 Legislature in accordance with §20-1-20 of this code, and the sale of the timber is otherwise in
43 the best interest of park development, without regard to proceeds derived from the sale of timber.
44 The gross proceeds derived from the sale of timber shall be deposited into the operating budget
45 of the park from which the timber was harvested;

46 (8) Propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with the provisions of §29A-3-1 et

47 *seq.* of this code to control the uses of parks: *Provided*, That the director may not permit public
48 hunting, except as otherwise provided in this section, the exploitation of minerals or the harvesting
49 of timber for commercial purposes in any state park: *Provided, however, That the director or Park*
50 *Administrator may not ban the use of recreational drones or drones used for photography or*
51 *videography from use in any state park, except within 150 feet from lodging:*

52 (9) Exempt designated state parks from the requirement that all payments must be
53 deposited in a bank within 24 hours for amounts less than \$500 notwithstanding any other
54 provision of this code to the contrary: *Provided*, That such designated parks shall make a deposit
55 in any amount no less than every seven working days;

56 (10) Waive the use fee normally charged to an individual or group for one day's use of a
57 picnic shelter or one week's use of a cabin in a state recreation area when the individual or group
58 donates the materials and labor for the construction of the picnic shelter or cabin: *Provided*, That
59 the individual or group was authorized by the director to construct the picnic shelter or cabin and
60 that it was constructed in accordance with the authorization granted and the standards and
61 requirements of the division pertaining to the construction. The individual or group to whom the
62 waiver is granted may use the picnic shelter for one reserved day or the cabin for one reserved
63 week during each calendar year until the amount of the donation equals the amount of the loss of
64 revenue from the waiver or until the individual dies or the group ceases to exist, whichever first
65 occurs. The waiver is not transferable. The director shall permit free use of picnic shelters or
66 cabins to individuals or groups who have contributed materials and labor for construction of picnic
67 shelters or cabins prior to the effective date of this section. The director shall propose a legislative
68 rule for promulgation legislative approval in accordance with the provisions of §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of
69 this code governing the free use of picnic shelters or cabins provided in this section, the eligibility
70 for free use, the determination of the value of the donations of labor and materials, the appropriate
71 definitions of a group and the maximum time limit for the use;

72 (11) Provide within the parks a market for West Virginia arts, crafts and products, which

73 shall permit gift shops within the parks to offer for sale items purchased on the open market from
74 local artists, artisans, craftsmen and suppliers and local or regional crafts cooperatives;

75 (12) Provide that reservations for reservable campsites may be made, upon two days'
76 advance notice, for any date for which space is available within a state park or recreational area
77 managed by the parks and recreation section;

78 (13) Provide that reservations for all state parks and recreational areas managed by the
79 parks and recreation section of the division may be made by use of a valid credit card;

80 (14) Develop a plan to establish a centralized computer reservation system for all state
81 parks and recreational areas managed by the parks and recreation section and to implement the
82 plan as funds become available; and

83 (15) Notwithstanding the provisions of §20-2-58 of this code, the Natural Resources
84 Commission is authorized to promulgate rules in accordance with the provisions of §29A-3-1 *et*
85 *seq.* of this code to permit and regulate the hunting of white-tail deer in any state park as ~~deemed~~
86 considered appropriate by the director to protect the ecological integrity of the area.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to prohibit the banning of the use of recreational drones at state parks except within 150 feet from lodging.

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