A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

Natural Resources – No Net Loss of Forest – Definition

FOR the purpose of altering the standard for achieving a no net loss of forest policy to measure for forest land by altering the definition of “no net loss of forest”; and generally relating to the State’s no net loss of forest policy.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – Natural Resources
Section 5–101(a) and 5–102(b)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2018 Replacement Volume)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Natural Resources
Section 5–101(i)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2018 Replacement Volume)

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

That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Natural Resources

5–101.

(a) In this title the following words have the meanings indicated.
(i) “No net loss of forest” means 40% of all land in Maryland is covered by tree canopy FOREST LAND.

5–102.

(b) It is the policy of the State to encourage the retention and sustainable management of forest lands by:

(1) Achieving no net loss of forest;

(2) Affording due consideration to the protection and retention of forests in the State through existing land conservation programs where they have the highest value in terms of promoting the State’s compliance with its clean water goals under the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and the 2007 Forestry Conservation Initiative;

(3) Enhancing the retention of privately owned forest lands through research–based educational outreach efforts to landowners by the State’s forest conservancy district boards;

(4) Developing financial incentives to encourage landowners to retain and manage their forests sustainably and in a manner that is consistent with a forest stewardship plan;

(5) Promoting renewable energy policies and markets with increased emphasis on the use of in–State produced woody biomass;

(6) Ensuring dual certification of the State’s forests by the Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative;

(7) Recognizing the importance of:

(i) A viable forest products industry to the economies of rural Maryland;

(ii) Continued development of fiber products; and

(iii) Maryland’s green infrastructure; and

(8) Developing and enhancing programs with a sustainable forestry component, including a forest mitigation banking system, a carbon credit or carbon sequestration program, a clean water credit trading system, an environmental services credit trading program, and a renewable energy credit trading system.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2019.