

in Maryland for the protection of woodlands and the advancement of forestry. By Chapter 294, Acts of 1906, approved on April 5, 1906, the General Assembly created a Board of Forestry to manage the acreage.

The Board of Forestry was succeeded in 1941 by the present Department of Forests and Parks, which was established "to promote, administer and manage all State-owned forests, parks, scenic preserves, parkways, historic monuments and recreation areas." The Department is responsible for the administration of all laws, rules, and regulations relating to such properties (Chapter 508, Acts of 1941).

The Director, who is the administrative head of the Department, has responsibility for the seven major divisions.

The Administration Division ties the other six divisions into a cohesive, coordinated unit and provides the services required for their support. All divisions are interwoven in their scope of operations, and the Administration Division is concerned with every phase of departmental activities. The four district offices at La Vale, Laurel, Salisbury, and Bel Air are a part of the Administration Division and function as arms of the office of the Director.

Some 2,600,000 acres of forest land are located in Maryland. About 125,000 acres of this total are State-owned, and comprise the ten State forests administered by the Department at Savage River, Cedarville, Doncaster, Elk Neck, Green Ridge, Pocomoke, Potomac, Swallow Falls, Wicomico and Seth. These multiple-use forest areas produce wood fiber for industry and provide hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, wildlife habitat, soil and water protection and areas for research and demonstration. Such studies encompass projects on insects and diseases, plant genetics, site studies, and various elements of timber management.

Maryland's forest acreage is distributed among three topographic regions. The Appalachian Province of the State contains 588,000 acres. The Piedmont Province has 515,000 acres, and the Coastal Plain Province, 1,535,000 acres. Since the initial gift from the Garrett Brothers, the Department has acquired, through gift and purchase, approximately 160,000 acres of land.

The Department has established a nursery capable of producing ten million seedlings annually for reforestation. Through the four districts, the Department is developing modern forest culture and protection for every forested area of the State. In cooperation with County Forestry Boards, it administers Maryland's Forest Conservancy Districts Act and cooperates with State and Federal agencies and the wood-using industry in the many facets of a complete public forestry program.

Since 2,586,000 acres are covered by timber, forest lands in Maryland are of great economic importance and the proper management of this valuable natural resource is imperative.

Reforestation is vital to a continuous supply of marketable timber. During the 1966 fiscal year, the Department of Forests and Parks produced and distributed more than five million seedlings which were used to plant six thousand acres of private forest land.

The Forest Division manages the South Mountain-Catoctin watershed. A watershed is a natural collection area for rain and snow, much of which eventually contributes to the supply of water in main streams. Well-managed watersheds have trees, shrubs and ground cover which intercept and hold this precipitation. The Forest Division also implements a comprehensive fire control program for the protection of Maryland's woodlands. Without this forest protection, there