

new sections to be known as Sections 648A to 648R, inclusive, to follow immediately after Section 648 thereof, to be under the sub-title "Mining" and under the new sub-heading "Strip Mining", providing generally for the regulation of so-called strip mining operations and to the mining of coal by the open pit or stripping method.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That eighteen new sections be and they are hereby added to Article 66C of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1951 Edition), title "Natural Resources", said new sections to be known as Sections 648A to 648R, inclusive, to follow immediately after Section 648 thereof, to be under the sub-title "Mining" and under the new sub-heading "Strip Mining" and to read as follows:

#### *Strip Mining*

648A. *This sub-title shall be deemed to be an exercise of the police powers of the State for the general welfare of the people of the State, by providing for the conservation and improvement of areas of land affected in the mining of bituminous coal by the open pit or stripping method, to aid thereby in the protection of birds and wild life, to enhance the value of such land for taxation, to decrease soil erosion, to aid in the prevention of the pollution of rivers and streams, to prevent combustion of unmined coal, and generally to improve the use and enjoyment of said lands.*

648B. *Definitions. The following words and phrases, unless a different meaning is plainly required by the context, shall have the following meanings:*

*"Open pit mining" shall mean the mining or recovery of bituminous coal by removing the strata or material which overlies or is above the coal deposit or seam in its natural condition.*

*"Pit" shall mean the place where bituminous coal is being mined by the open pit mining methods.*

*"Operation" shall mean the pit or pits located upon a single tract of land or a continuous pit embracing or extending upon two or more contiguous tracts of land.*

*"Land" shall mean the surface of the land upon which open pit mining is conducted.*

*"Tract" shall mean a single parcel of land or two or more contiguous parcels of land with common ownership.*

*"Operator" shall mean a person, firm, corporation or partnership engaged in open pit mining, as a principal as distinguished from an agent or independent contractor, and, who is or becomes the owner of such coal as a result of such mining.*

*"Landowner" shall mean the person, firm, corporation or partnership, or the persons, firms, corporations or partnerships in whom the legal title to the land is vested.*

*"Overburden" shall mean the strata or material over-lying a bituminous coal deposit in its natural state and shall mean such material before or after its removal by open pit mining.*