

No. 32

(House Joint Resolution 2)

House Joint Resolution requesting the State Planning Department, with the cooperation of the Board of Natural Resources and the Department of Economic Development, to prepare a detailed long-term plan for the optimum use of wetlands in the State of Maryland.

WHEREAS, Wetlands are defined as areas on which standing water, seasonal or permanent, has a depth of six feet or less, and where the wet soil retains sufficient moisture to support aquatic or semi-aquatic plant growth; and

WHEREAS, The State of Maryland possesses more than 300,000 acres of coastal and inland marshes, wooded swamps, and other types of wetlands; and

WHEREAS, The wetlands produce the basic micro-organisms and other foods upon which the commercially important finfish, shellfish, and crabs of Chesapeake Bay are dependent; and

WHEREAS, The wetlands have parallel roles as critical habitat for wildlife, particularly migratory waterfowl and furbearers, and as key areas for fish spawning; and

WHEREAS, The wetlands are essential water storage areas for ground-water recharge and flood prevention; and

WHEREAS, Additionally and of emerging significance, the wetlands have vital outdoor recreation, open space, and aesthetic values to the people of our State, and

WHEREAS, The rapid rate of draining, filling, and other altering of Maryland's wetlands is causing serious disturbance to the economic, biologic, hydrologic, and recreational functions of the wetlands; and

WHEREAS, Projected increases in population and industrial activity indicate that accelerated alteration of wetlands soon will be attempted; now therefore, be it

Resolved by the General Assembly of Maryland, That the State Planning Department, in cooperation with the Board of Natural Resources and the Department of Economic Development, is hereby requested to prepare a detailed long-term plan for the optimum use of all Maryland wetlands, such plan to be based so far as is possible upon the results of economic, biologic, hydrologic, and recreational research previously completed or underway in Maryland and in other states or nations having comparable wetland types and functions; and be it further

Resolved, That the preparation of this plan be scheduled for completion by October 31, 1967, for transmittal to the Legislative Council prior to consideration by the General Assembly; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Public Works is hereby requested to appropriate from the Emergency Fund the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for preparation of the plan; and be it further