

FOR the purpose of ~~increasing the minimum acreage permitted to be eligible to qualify for the State forest conservation and management program~~, extending the minimum length of contract for participation in the State forest conservation and management program; clarifying that the rollback penalty applies to landowners not complying with program requirements; and adding a certain penalty for agreements that are terminated for noncompliance.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article - Natural Resources
Section 5-302, 5-304, and 5-306
Annotated Code of Maryland
(1983 Replacement Volume and 1983 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article - Natural Resources

5-302.

The owner of any tract of land in the State which comprises ~~4-5-1~~ 10 or more contiguous acres, by agreement with the Department, may contract to place the tract within the program of forest conservation and management, under circumstances and conditions provided in the program and required by this subtitle. Except for those contracts entered into before July 1, [1978] 1984, [10] 15 years shall be the minimum length of contract.

5-304.

At the end of the period covered by the contract [if less than 15 years], at the time all or part of the timber is harvested unless harvested according to the plan developed by the Department, [or] AT THE TIME all or part of the tract is conveyed to a new owner, OR UPON TERMINATION OF THE AGREEMENT BY THE DEPARTMENT DUE TO NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS BY THE LANDOWNER, there shall be a new valuation of all or part of the tract. If only a part of the tract is conveyed or if only a part of the timber is harvested, the new valuation for purposes of assessment shall be only that part of the tract. Consecutive contracts shall be deemed one contract from the date of the original contract.

5-306.

If the new valuation under § 5-304 is greater than the original valuation under § 5-303, the difference between the two is computed in approximately equal annual steps from lower to higher, covering the number of years elapsed between the two. At the time of the conveyance of all or part of the tract or the harvest of all or part of the timber, [the seller] OR TERMINATION