

**§480-A. Findings; purpose; short title**

The Legislature finds and declares that the State's rivers and streams, great ponds, fragile mountain areas, freshwater wetlands, significant wildlife habitat, coastal wetlands and coastal sand dunes systems are resources of state significance. These resources have great scenic beauty and unique characteristics, unsurpassed recreational, cultural, historical and environmental value of present and future benefit to the citizens of the State and that uses are causing the rapid degradation and, in some cases, the destruction of these critical resources, producing significant adverse economic and environmental impacts and threatening the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of the State. [PL 1987, c. 809, §2 (NEW).]

The Legislature further finds and declares that there is a need to facilitate research, develop management programs and establish sound environmental standards that will prevent the degradation of and encourage the enhancement of these resources. It is the intention of the Legislature that existing programs related to Maine's rivers and streams, great ponds, fragile mountain areas, freshwater wetlands, significant wildlife habitat, coastal wetlands and sand dunes systems continue and that the Department of Environmental Protection provide coordination and vigorous leadership to develop programs to achieve the purposes of this article. The well-being of the citizens of this State requires the development and maintenance of an efficient system of administering this article to minimize delays and difficulties in evaluating alterations of these resource areas. [PL 1987, c. 809, §2 (NEW).]

The Legislature further finds and declares that the cumulative effect of frequent minor alterations and occasional major alterations of these resources poses a substantial threat to the environment and economy of the State and its quality of life. [PL 1987, c. 809, §2 (NEW).]

This article is known and may be cited as "the Natural Resources Protection Act." [PL 2007, c. 290, §1 (NEW).]

**SECTION HISTORY**

PL 1987, c. 809, §2 (NEW). PL 2007, c. 290, §1 (AMD).

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