



NOTICE

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Maryland Forest Conservation Act

SB 526 and HB1511 (2023 and 2024 MD General Assembly) Changes that Became Effective July 1st, 2024

By way of the above-referenced Bills, the Maryland General Assembly made significant changes to the Maryland Forest Conservation Act (FCA), some of which became effective statewide on July 1st, 2024. Those changes that became effective on July 1st are as follows:

1. A new [2024 FCA Technical Manual \(v.4.2\)](#) has been released and should be used when preparing and submitting Forest Stand Delineation and Forest Conservation Plans.
2. Solar Photovoltaic facilities are not subject to afforestation requirements. [\(§5-1606 Natural Resources Article\)](#)
3. No greater than 50% of a project's required mitigation may be met offsite through Qualified Conservation. With justification, this percentage can increase to 60% after a public comment period. [\(§5-1607 Natural Resources Article\)](#)
4. A minimum stream buffer of 50 feet, measured from stream channel for intermittent streams, and 100 feet, measured from stream channel for perennial streams, shall be shown on Forest Stand Delineation and Forest Conservation Plans as a State stream buffer. [\(§5-1607 Natural Resources Article\)](#)
5. Green infrastructure that is beyond [§4-203 of the Environment Article requirements](#) may be granted full mitigation credit. [\(§5-1607 Natural Resources Article\)](#)

Preliminary and Final Forest Conservation Plans that were applied for prior to July 1st, 2024, are grandfathered from these regulations and may proceed in accordance with the approved plan.