

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

**2024 REGULAR SESSION**

**Committee Substitute**

**for**

**Senate Bill 773**

BY SENATORS WOODRUM AND DEEDS

[Originating in the Committee on the Judiciary;

reported February 20, 2024]



1 A BILL to amend and reenact §20-7-1b of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
2 to requiring the Director of the Division Natural Resources to enter into written agreements  
3 with federal agencies in the state with law-enforcement duties on and in federal lands  
4 located within the boundaries of West Virginia to enforce state laws therein; establishing  
5 the position of special natural resources police officers; establishing authority and  
6 limitations thereon of special natural resources police officers; and setting forth necessary  
7 qualifications of the special natural resources police officers.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

## **CHAPTER 20. NATURAL RESOURCES.**

### **ARTICLE 7. LAW ENFORCEMENT, MOTORBOATING, LITTER.**

#### **§20-7-1b. Designation of certain federal law-enforcement officers as special natural resources police officers.**

1 (a) The Legislature finds that it is in the mutual interest of the division and certain land  
2 management agencies of the United States to cooperate in the enforcement of state statutes and  
3 rules within, and adjacent to, units of the National Park System, national forests, and U.S. Army  
4 Corps of Engineers projects located within the State of West Virginia.

5 (b) ~~Accordingly, the~~ The director of the ~~department of natural resources may~~ Division of  
6 Natural Resources shall enter into a written agreement with a federal agency providing for the  
7 appointment of employees of the federal agency as special natural resources police officers and  
8 setting forth the terms and conditions within which the federal employees may exercise the  
9 powers and duties of special natural resources police officers. The terms and conditions in the  
10 agreement shall grant a special natural resources police officer appointed pursuant to the  
11 agreement the same powers and duties as prescribed for a full-time salaried natural resources  
12 police officer of the division, but shall limit a special natural resources police officer in the exercise  
13 of his or her powers and duties to areas within the boundaries of the federal units to which the

14 officer is assigned in his or her federal employment, and to situations outside the boundaries of  
15 the federal units where the exercise is for the mutual aid of natural resources police officers as  
16 set forth in the agreement.

17 (c) Any federal employee whose duties involve the enforcement of the criminal laws of the  
18 United States and who possesses a valid law-enforcement certification issued by a federal land  
19 management agency which certifies the meeting of requirements at least equivalent to the law-  
20 enforcement officer training requirements promulgated pursuant to §30-29-1 *et seq.* of this code,  
21 may be certified under the provisions of §30-29-1 *et seq.* of this code, appointed as a special  
22 natural resources police officer under the provisions of this section. Any special natural resources  
23 police officer so appointed may not receive compensation or benefits from the state or any political  
24 subdivisions thereof for the performance of his or her duties as a special natural resources police  
25 officer.