



## Ohio Revised Code

### Section 1517.02 Chief of division - powers and duties.

Effective: October 24, 2024

Legislation: Senate Bill 156

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(A) There is hereby created in the department of natural resources the division of natural areas and preserves, which shall be administered by the chief of the division of natural areas and preserves. The chief shall take an oath of office and shall file in the office of the secretary of state a bond signed by the chief and by a surety approved by the governor for a sum fixed pursuant to section 121.11 of the Revised Code.

(B) The chief shall administer a system of nature preserves. The chief shall establish a system of nature preserves through acquisition and dedication of natural areas of state or national significance, which shall include, but not be limited to, areas that represent characteristic examples of Ohio's natural landscape types and its natural vegetation and geological history. The chief shall encourage landowners to dedicate areas of unusual significance as nature preserves, and shall establish and maintain a registry of natural areas of unusual significance.

(C) The chief shall administer a system of wild, scenic, and recreational rivers. The chief shall supervise, operate, protect, and maintain wild, scenic, and recreational rivers, as designated by the director of natural resources; with the approval of the director of natural resources, cooperate with federal agencies administering any federal program concerning wild, scenic, or recreational river systems; and participate in watershed planning activities with other states, local or federal agencies, or other state agencies.

(D) The chief shall do the following:

(1) Formulate policies and plans for the acquisition, use, management, and protection of nature preserves;

(2) Formulate policies for the selection of natural areas of unusual significance suitable for registration;



- (3) Formulate policies for the dedication of areas as nature preserves;
- (4) Formulate policies for the declaration of wild, scenic, and recreational rivers;
- (5) Prepare and maintain surveys and inventories of wild, scenic, and recreational rivers and natural areas and assist the division of wildlife in preparing and maintaining surveys and inventories of rare and endangered species of plants and animals, and other unique natural features. The information shall be entered in the Ohio natural heritage database, established under section 1531.04 of the Revised Code.
- (6) Adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code establishing all of the following:
  - (a) Requirements governing the use, visitation, and protection of nature preserves and natural areas owned or managed through easement, license, or lease by the department and administered by the division;
  - (b) Requirements governing the use, visitation, and protection of scenic river lands and of publicly owned lands that are administered by the division that are within the watersheds of wild, scenic, and recreational rivers;
  - (c) Fees and charges for conducting stream impact reviews of any planned or proposed construction, modification, renovation, or development project that is subject to approval under section 1517.15 of the Revised Code and may potentially impact a designated wild, scenic, or recreational river. Such fees and charges shall be credited to the natural areas and preserves fund created in section 1517.11 of the Revised Code.
- (7) Provide facilities and improvements within the state system of nature preserves, wild, scenic, and recreational rivers, scenic river lands, and publicly owned lands that are administered by the division and are within the watersheds of those rivers that are necessary for their visitation, use, restoration, and protection and do not impair their natural character;
- (8) Provide interpretive programs and publish and disseminate information pertaining to nature



preserves and natural areas, scenic river lands, and publicly owned lands that are administered by the division and are within the watersheds of wild, scenic, and recreational rivers for their visitation and use;

(9) Conduct and grant permits to qualified persons for the conduct of scientific research and investigations within nature preserves, wild, scenic, and recreational rivers, scenic river lands, and publicly owned lands that are administered by the division and are within the watersheds of those rivers;

(10) Establish an appropriate system for marking nature preserves, wild, scenic, and recreational rivers, scenic river lands, and publicly owned lands that are administered by the division and are within the watersheds of those rivers;

(11) Provide wild, scenic, and recreational river conservation education;

(12) Provide for protection, restoration, habitat enhancement, and clean-up projects in wild, scenic, and recreational rivers, scenic river lands, and publicly owned lands that are administered by the division and are within the watersheds of those rivers;

(13) Publish and submit to the governor and the general assembly a biennial report of:

(a) The status and condition of each nature preserve, activities conducted within each preserve, and plans and recommendations for natural area preservation;

(b) The status and condition of each wild, scenic, and recreational river and activities conducted within each river corridor.

(E) The chief, in carrying out sections 1517.14 to 1517.19 of the Revised Code, may accept, receive, and expend donations, gifts, devises, or bequests of money, lands, or other properties as authorized under section 9.20 of the Revised Code. If the donations, gifts, devises, and bequests are monetary in nature, the money shall be credited to the scenic rivers protection fund created in section 4501.24 of the Revised Code.