WEST VIRGINIA CODE CHAPTER 20 ARTICLE 17A

WV Legislature

§20-17A-1. Legislative findings; purpose.

The Legislature further finds that, with the cooperation of private landowners, there is an opportunity to provide trail-oriented recreation facilities primarily on private property in the mountainous terrain of the Potomac Highlands and north central West Virginia and that the facilities will provide significant economic and recreational benefits to the state and to the communities in the Potomac Highlands and north central West Virginia through increased tourism in the same manner as whitewater rafting, snow skiing, and utility terrain motor vehicle riding benefit the state and communities surrounding those activities.

The Legislature further finds that the creation and empowering of a joint development entity to work with the landowners, county officials and community leaders, state and federal government agencies, recreational user groups, adjacent neighboring states and counties, and other interested parties to enable and facilitate the implementation of the facilities will greatly assist in the realization of these potential benefits.

The purpose of this article is to provide additional opportunities and regulatory authorization for recreational trail networks and to provide for increased access to recreational areas, including, but not limited to, creating a contiguous trail system that connects to the Upper Ohio Valley Trail Network Recreation Authority, the Elk River Trail, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Tow Path and any other trails in adjacent neighboring states that can be feasibly connected.

WV Legislature

§20-17A-2. Continuation of Mountaineer Trail Network Recreation Authority and establishment of recreation area.

(a) There is hereby continued the Mountaineer Trail Network Recreation Authority consisting of representatives from the counties of Barbour, Doddridge, Grant, Harrison, Lewis, Marion, Mineral, Monongalia, Preston, Randolph, Ritchie, Taylor, Tucker, Upshur, and Wood organized pursuant to the provisions of §20-17-1 *et seq*. of this code. This authority is authorized to establish a Mountaineer Trail Network Recreation Area within the jurisdictions of those counties and the authority shall be subject to the powers, duties, immunities, and restrictions provided in §20-17-1 *et seq*. of this code. Visitors and participants in recreational activities within the trail network shall, in similar respects, be subject to the user requirements and prohibitions of §20-17-7 of this code.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, an adjacent county may join the Mountaineer Trail Network Recreation Authority pursuant to the procedures set forth in §20-17-3(b) of this code.

(c) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the Mountaineer Trail Network Recreation Authority may merge with another multicounty trail network authority, pursuant to the procedures set forth in §20-17-3(c) of this code.

(d) The Mountaineer Trail Network Recreation Authority may set goals of connecting to the Upper Ohio Valley Trail Network Recreation Authority, the Elk River Trail, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Tow Path and any other trails in adjacent neighboring states that can be feasibly connected.

WV Legislature

§20-17A-3. Recreational purposes.

The permitted recreational purposes for the Mountaineer Trail Network Recreation Area include, but are not limited to, any one or any combination of the following recreational activities: Hunting, fishing, swimming, boating, camping, picnicking, hiking, bicycling, mountain bicycling, running, cross-country running, nature study, winter sports and visiting, viewing or enjoying historical, archaeological, scenic, or scientific sites.

WV Legislature

§20-17A-4. Governing body and expenses.

(a) The governing body of the authority shall be a board constituted according to the provisions of §20-17-4 of this code.

(b) All costs incidental to the administration of the authority, including office expenses, personal services expenses and current expenses, shall be paid in accordance with guidelines issued by the board from funds accruing to the authority.

(c) All expenses incurred in carrying out the provisions of this article shall be payable solely from funds provided under the authority of this article and according to the requirements of §20-17-1 et seq. of this code. No liability or obligation may be incurred by the authority under this article beyond the extent to which moneys have been provided under the authority of this article.

WV Legislature

§20-17A-5. Protection for private landowners.

Owners of land used by the authority shall have the full benefit of the limitations of liability provided in §20-17-8 of this code.

WV Legislature