

All those in favor, signify by saying Aye; contrary, No. The Ayes have it. It is so ordered. The Committee of the Whole will please come to order.

(Whereupon, at 10:07 A.M., the Convention resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole.)

(The mace was removed by the Sergeant-at-Arms.)

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
NOVEMBER 14, 1967—10:07 A.M.
PRESIDENT H. VERNON ENEY,
PRESIDING

THE CHAIRMAN: The first item on the general orders is consideration of Committee Recommendation GP-3. That is accompanied by Committee Memorandum GP-3. The Chair recognizes Delegate Boyer, Chairman of the Committee for the purpose of presenting Committee Recommendation GP-3. Come forward, please, Delegate Boyer.

DELEGATE BOYER: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of this Convention, your Committee on General Provisions presents to you for your consideration GP-3, our recommendation on natural resources.

I would like to pay public thanks first to the subcommittee that worked so very hard on this sometimes emotional issue. The subcommittee chaired by Delegate Ritter, included Delegates Jett and Singer.

We feel that there should be some broad policy statement in the constitution concerning natural resources.

There were many interested citizens, intensely interested in the application of sound conservation principles, and it was an undisputed fact that when the present Constitution of Maryland was being formulated, the State abounded in virgin timber so much so that it was being burned away and cleared off for farming spaces. In short, resources in 1867 were in man's way. The vast supply of oysters and other seafood was just then becoming the basis of industry. Again, fish, wildlife, and open spaces were thought to be unlimited in supply, and inexhaustible as far as man was concerned.

Polluted air and water were not yet in the offing, while wetlands were merely nuisance value.

It seemed to appear to the framers of our present Constitution that there was no need of worry about future supply of lumber, firewood and denizens of the forests, fields, and waters. At that time such were present in superabundance, and available merely for the taking. Sole maintenance and protection were not yet of concern in Maryland for several decades, and shore erosion was not yet given the attention that it deserved.

In 1912 the Maryland Extension Service was organized, and from that day forward, there appeared to be a giant step towards conservation of our natural resources.

These challenged backward conditions in the management of natural resources and led to new and better things for the citizen of the State.

With these changes have come more recently new conditions not even considered by the old constitutional delegates, and concerns about conservation, a term that not until this century found its way into the legislative halls.

With that basis and background your Committee felt that there was a need for a broad statement of conservation policy, and for that purpose we submit to you our recommendation GP-3 on natural resources. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions for purposes of clarification? Delegate Willoner.

DELEGATE WILLONER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder what is the legal effect of this. Would this prohibit, for example, the State from selling park land to private enterprise? What would be the effect if you left this provision out?

DELEGATE BOYER: I can see no ill effect from it. It certainly would not prevent the State from selling park land if it so desired for meritorious purposes.

DELEGATE WILLONER: What would be the effect of its being in the Constitution?

DELEGATE BOYER: The effect would be that natural resources and conservation would be blessed by recognition.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Willoner.

DELEGATE WILLONER: It is the contemplation of the Committee then that this particular addition would have no operable effect. It is just a statement of general policy?