§ 24-0901. Cooperative agreements.

1. The commissioner shall confer with local government officials in each region to establish a program for the protection of the freshwater wetlands of the state.

2. The commissioner may enter into cooperative agreements with any city, village, town or county, or with an owner of freshwater wetlands or with any one or more of them, for the purpose of preserving and maintaining, in accordance with the policies of this article, those freshwater wetlands which are within the boundaries of such city, village, town or county.

3. The cooperative agreement shall provide that the freshwater wetlands be preserved and maintained in their natural state and may provide for access thereto to be retained by such owner for purposes compatible with the purposes of this article.

4. A cooperative agreement with any such village, town, city or county may provide for the development by personnel and facilities of the department or the payment out of funds appropriated therefor, for the purpose of preserving, maintaining, or enhancing such wetlands in accordance with the policies of this article, and for the furnishing of such personnel, facilities or funds as may be agreed upon by the parties to the cooperative agreement.

5. This section shall not prevent any freshwater wetland from being designated as part of the natural and historic preserves of the state, nor shall it prevent preservation of such lands by dedication as state parks. The office of parks and recreation shall outline to the commissioner its plans to preserve freshwater wetlands as parks and reserves as soon as possible after the effective date of this article.