§ 9-0113. Adopt-a-natural resource stewardship program.

1. The commissioner may enter into stewardship agreements with any person or persons for the purposes of preserving, maintaining, or enhancing a state-owned natural resource or portion thereof in accordance with the policies of this article.

2. The stewardship agreement shall provide that the natural resource be preserved and maintained in its natural state or managed to enhance or restore the natural resource values they provide, consistent with the provisions of this chapter and purposes of this article. Activities may include: remediating vandalism, picking up litter and trash, establishing or maintaining access or nature trails, providing interpretive services for school groups and other citizens, managing fish and wildlife habitat, and otherwise providing positive benefits to the natural resource.

3. Stewardship agreement with any person or persons may provide for assistance of personnel, facilities and supplies of the department for the purposes of supporting appropriate activities under such stewardship agreement, in accordance with the provisions of this article.

4. The department shall establish procedures by which a person or persons may apply for a stewardship agreement, and shall be responsible for working with such persons to identify specific sections of a state-owned natural resource and specific activities deemed appropriate for such stewardship agreement. The department may consider factors such as safety, environmental sensitivity, need, cost and other factors deemed relevant in determining which natural resource or activities may be eligible or appropriate for a stewardship agreement.

5. Consistent with other laws of the state and regulations of the department, the department shall provide recognition of the stewardship activities by appropriate signage on or near the adopted natural resource, and may provide recognition by such other measures as it may determine to be appropriate, including but not limited to press releases, certificates, newsletters, and articles in the

conservationist.

6. The stewardship agreement may be modified in scope or altered in any other manner at the sole discretion of the department, not inconsistent with the provisions of this section. The person or persons shall have the option of renewing the agreement subject to the approval of the department and the continuation by the department of the adopt-a-natural resource stewardship program. The department may terminate the agreement and remove the signs upon thirty day notice, if in its sole judgment it finds and determines that the person or persons are not meeting the terms and conditions of the agreement.

7. The department shall, to the maximum extent practicable, provide assistance to other state agencies that are interested in developing stewardship programs for natural resources under their jurisdiction.

8. Notwithstanding any inconsistent provision of law, the state and its employees shall not be liable for damages suffered by any person resulting from the actions or activities of such volunteers.