



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

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ADOPT-A-RIVER, ADOPT-A-BEACH

House Bills 4884 and 4885

Sponsor: Rep. James Middaugh

**Committee: Conservation, Environment,
and Great Lakes**

Complete to 9-1-95

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 4884 AND 4885 AS INTRODUCED 5-23-95

House Bills 4884 and 4885 would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to require the Department of Natural Resources to initiate and administer an Adopt-A-River program and an Adopt-A-Beach program, which would have the purpose of helping to remove litter from and beautifying the state's rivers and beaches.

Although the requirements of the programs would include providing public informational activities, the primary intent of the programs would be to encourage and facilitate the efforts of volunteer groups in litter cleanup efforts and to assign different groups to specific rivers or beaches. In order to accomplish this the department would be required to create and enter into agreements with the different volunteer groups. The agreements between the department and volunteer groups would have to include: 1) identification of the specific river or stream segment, or the specific beach, that the volunteer group would be assigned to care for; 2) the volunteer group's duties, including the removal of litter along the assigned river or beach at least once a year; 3) the responsibilities of the volunteer group, including that the group agreed to follow all of the rules related to the program that had been adopted by the department; and 4) the length of time the volunteer group agreed to care for the river or beach (with a minimum time period of two years).

The department would have the responsibility of assigning each volunteer group to different sections of the state's rivers or beaches. A volunteer group would be able to request a specific section of a river or beach; however, the final decision as to where volunteer groups would be assigned would be at the discretion of the department. In determining the assignments, the department would be required to coordinate and cooperate with the federal, state, and local management agencies, as well as affected private landowners.

The department would have the authority to promulgate rules necessary to implement the programs. Further, the department would be responsible for the creation of a recognition program to acknowledge the efforts of those volunteer groups and their members that had participated in the programs, and for providing the volunteer groups with trash bags, safety information, and assistance as well as providing for the removal of large or heavy items found on the river or beach segments.

House Bills 4884 and 4885 (9-1-95)

The department would also be required to make an annual report on the implementation and progress of the programs to the standing committees of the legislature that primarily deal with issues relating to the protection of natural resources and the environment.

MCL 324.35801 and 324.35901