

Initials

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Initiative Petition for a Law

Version B

Be it enacted by the People, and by their authority:

A Law to Protect Water and Nature

SECTION 1.

Chapter 29 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following section:

Section 2EEEEEE. (a) There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate fund to be known as the nature for all fund. There shall be credited to the fund an amount equivalent to 50% of all monies received by the commonwealth from the receipts from taxes on sales and use of sporting goods, recreational vehicles, and golf courses as classified under the 2022 revision of the North American Industry Classification Codes under chapter 64H and 64I. The amount credited to the fund under this subsection shall be net of the dedicated sales tax revenue amount transferred under sections 35T and 35BB of chapter 10. The fund may accept public and private gifts, grants and donations to further the purposes of this section, and any other monies credited to or transferred from any other source pursuant to state law. The fund shall not be subject to section 5C of this chapter.

(b) The executive office of energy and environmental affairs shall make expenditures from the nature for all fund for the purposes of natural resource conservation.

(c) There shall be a 15-member board called the nature for all board comprised of the secretary of energy and environmental affairs, commissioner of fish and game, the commissioner of conservation and recreation, the secretary of housing and livable communities, and the climate chief, and ten members of the public to be appointed by the Governor. The ten public members shall include representatives of underserved communities and indigenous peoples, and one or more persons with expertise or experience in natural resource conservation. The executive office of energy and environmental affairs may make expenditures from the fund to hire staff necessary to manage and make expenditures from the fund. The board shall promulgate regulations for expenditures from the nature for all fund by the executive office of energy and environmental affairs, including, but not limited to: (i)

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requirements for natural resource conservation that support and align with environmental justice principles, as defined in section 62 of chapter 30; (ii) requirements for access and restoration of lands and natural resources of indigenous cultural significance, (iii) guidelines to promote natural resource conservation in concert with affordable housing development; (iv) guidelines that prevent expenditures from supplanting or otherwise resulting in a decrease in bond cap spending on existing capital programs; and (vi) guidelines for the scope and prioritization of special obligation bonds issued to support natural resource conservation.

(d) State agencies, municipalities or groups of municipalities, regional governments, other regional public entities including, but not limited to, regional planning agencies, economic development districts, and water districts, operating public charities with purposes involving natural resource conservation, and tribal governments shall be lawful recipients of such expenditures.

(e) The executive office of energy and environmental affairs shall submit annually to the board, the environmental justice council established in section 62L of chapter 30, the House and Senate Committees on Ways & Means, and the Joint Committee on Environment & Natural Resources a report of the proportion of funds expended from the nature for all fund that are dedicated to the acquisition or improvement of land in cities or towns containing environmental justice populations as defined in section 62 of chapter 30.

(f) All of the provisions of this section shall be subject to appropriation by the legislature.

SECTION 2.

Subsection 2EEEEEE(a) of chapter 29 of the General Laws is hereby amended in the second sentence by striking out the words "50% of".

SECTION 3.

Section 1 shall take effect on July 1, 2027.

SECTION 4.

Section 2 shall take effect on July 1, 2028.

[Signatories begin on the following page]