

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 325 (Senator Conway, *et al.*)
 Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Natural Resources - State Forests and Parks - Funding

This bill requires the Governor to include in the annual budget bill an increase in the general fund appropriation over the fiscal 2008 budget allowance for the operation of State forests and parks of \$5.5 million for fiscal 2009 and \$4.0 million for fiscal 2010.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditure increase of \$5.5 million in FY 2009 and \$4.0 million in FY 2010 due to the bill’s mandated appropriation. The Governor’s proposed FY 2008 budget includes approximately \$6.5 million in general funds for the operation of State forests and approximately \$16.2 million in general funds for the operation of State parks.

(in dollars)	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	0	5,500,000	4,000,000	0	0
Net Effect	\$0	(\$5,500,000)	(\$4,000,000)	\$0	\$0

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: The Maryland Park Service manages and operates 49 State parks and numerous natural resource management areas, natural environmental areas, historic areas, and roadside picnic areas across the State. About 134,000 acres are under

management. The service estimates that its managed areas received 12 million visitors during 2005. Assateague State Park and Gunpowder Falls State Park are the most visited sites, with 1.7 million and 1.3 million estimated visitors, respectively. Revenue generating operations, which garnered \$1.6 million in fiscal 2005, include camp stores, concession areas, boat rentals, gift shops, and marinas. The Governor's proposed fiscal 2008 budget includes approximately \$33.1 million in funding for the Maryland Park Service: approximately \$16.2 million in general funds, \$16.2 million in special funds, \$0.3 million in federal funds, and \$0.3 million in reimbursable funds. The Governor's proposed budget authorizes 211.75 regular positions and 272.70 contractual positions.

After management restructuring, State forests are now managed by the Forestry Service. According to the Department of Natural Resources' *2006 Acreage Report*, there are 12 State forests on more than 136,000 acres. The Forestry Service also manages the State-owned Chesapeake Forest Lands, which are formerly industrial forests that are now part of a sustainable management project. The Chesapeake Forest Lands encompass 238 parcels totaling more than 58,000 acres in five counties on the Eastern Shore. The Governor's proposed fiscal 2008 budget includes approximately \$11.5 million in funding for the Forestry Service: approximately \$6.5 million in general funds, \$3.2 million in special funds, \$1.4 million in federal funds, and \$0.5 million in reimbursable funds. The Governor's proposed budget authorizes 101 regular positions and 30.24 contractual positions.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

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nas/ljm

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