

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

House Bill 290 (Delegate Weir)
Environmental Matters

Referred to Economic & Environmental Affairs

Hunting Wild Waterfowl - Blind Site Licenses - Fees and Conditions

This amended bill limits resident nonowners to two blind site licenses on any one day and increases the license fee for a stationary blind or blind site license from \$5.50 to \$11.00. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) must provide each participating county with maps designed for public display and indication of purchased sites.

The bill is effective July 1, 1997.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Special fund revenues could increase by \$17,200 in FY 1998. Future year revenues assume a constant number of licenses will be sold. Minimal increase in special fund expenditures.

| (in dollars) | FY 1998 | FY 1999 | FY 2000 | FY 2001 | FY 2002 |
|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| SF Revenues | \$17,200 | \$17,200 | \$17,200 | \$17,200 | \$17,200 |
| SF Expenditures | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Net Effect | \$17,200 | \$17,200 | \$17,200 | \$17,200 | \$17,200 |

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

Local Effect: Revenues could increase by \$1,700. Expenditures would not be affected.

Small Business Effect: Minimal effect on small businesses as discussed below.

Fiscal Analysis

State Revenues: Stationary blind and blind site licenses are issued by the clerks of the circuit courts, who retain a \$.50 fee from each license. During 1995 (the last year for which

this information was available), 2,171 blind site licenses and 1,261 stationary blind site licenses were sold. Based on this, DNR would realize \$17,200 in additional special funds revenues each year. These revenues accrue to the State Wildlife Management and Protection Fund.

Since there has been competition to acquire the licenses available, it is assumed that raising the cost of the license should not significantly decrease the number of blind site or stationary blind licenses sold. Additionally, limiting the number of licenses sold per individual per day should not result in a decrease in the number of licenses sold, but rather increase the number of individuals able to purchase licenses.

DNR advises that expenditures could increase by up to \$17,200 if they need to provide the circuit courts with a computerized mapping display system. However, the Department of Fiscal Services advises that the bill's requirements could be met by providing a hard copy map with pins to indicate site locations. This would only result in a minimal expenditure increase; in fact, such a map and pin system has been provided in some prior years, though not consistently.

Small Business Effect: Small businesses that purchase blind site or stationary blind licenses would pay an additional \$5.50 per license. According to DNR, a number of farmers in the State purchase these licenses and then rent the rights to hunt for a season; a farmer can receive approximately \$1,500 for two or three blind sites. In addition, any bed and breakfast type facilities that purchase these licenses for the use of their patrons would also pay the increased fee. The \$5.50 fee increase is not expected to significantly impact these businesses. These businesses should not be impacted under the license limitation provision since it does not limit the total number of licenses bought, only the number given out per day. Riparian landowners continue to have first priority in the issuance of these licenses.

Since the fee increase and license limitation discussed above are not expected to alter the total number of licenses issued per season, small businesses that sell hunting gear and otherwise accommodate hunters should not be impacted under this bill.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 27, 1997
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