

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 550 (Chairman, Appropriations Committee)
(Departmental - Natural Resources)
Appropriations

Department of Natural Resources - Program Open Space - Use of Funds

This departmental bill provides that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) may use up to \$1 million of the State's share of Program Open Space (POS) funds available for capital improvements in fiscal 1998, and \$1.2 million in all subsequent fiscal years, to operate State parks and forests.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The proposed FY 1998 State budget provides that \$1 million of the special funds for the operation of State parks and forests is contingent upon enactment of this legislation.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: The Department of Natural Resources has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small businesses (attached). Fiscal Services concurs with this assessment.

Fiscal Analysis

Background: During the 1996 session, the General Assembly enacted legislation that enables DNR, for fiscal 1997 only, to use approximately \$800,000 in Program Open Space capital development funds to pay operating expenses for State forests and parks.

State Effect: Current law allows DNR to use up to 25% of the State share of Program Open Space funding for capital development projects. \$6.5 million is available for capital development projects in fiscal 1998. Pursuant to this legislation, DNR may use \$1 million of this funding in fiscal 1998, and \$1.2 million in subsequent fiscal years, to operate State

forests and parks. This represents a reallocation of existing resources rather than any change in overall State expenditures. The proposed fiscal 1998 State budget includes \$30.1 million for the operation of State forests and parks of which \$1 million is contingent upon enactment of this legislation.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 11, 1997

ncs

Analysis by: Hiram L. Burch Jr.

Reviewed by: John Rixey

Direct Inquiries to:

John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst

(410) 841-3710

(301) 858-3710