

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly

**FISCAL NOTE**

**Revised**

House Bill 535 (Delegate Weir)

Environmental Matters

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**Natural Resources - Phragmites - Reports**

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This bill provides that it is the intent of the General Assembly that statewide studies be conducted to determine the spread of phragmites and any progress in current management and control programs. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) must ascertain on a per-acre basis the statewide extent of phragmite infestation when necessary data is available. Beginning in 2000 and every five years thereafter, DNR must prepare reports to the Environmental Matters Committee and the Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee on the extent of the infestation.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Minimal special fund increase in FY 1999 associated with preparing the first required report. These costs could be handled with DNR's existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**Background:** DNR has been involved in identifying and eradicating phragmites through herbicide application on State wildlife areas and impoundments since 1987. In 1996, DNR, in conjunction with the Maryland Department of Agriculture and the Maryland Department of the Environment, developed and implemented a cost-share program to eradicate phragmites on private land.

**State Effect:** DNR is currently conducting the GAP Analysis Project to develop a land cover map which classifies various marsh grasses. The methods developed in this project will be the basis for the studies required by the bill. These studies will have to be more extensive than the current one because phragmites will need to be separated from the other types of marsh grasses. However, costs in fiscal 1999 associated with preparing the first report will be minimal as DNR advises that existing data will be used for that report. Future year costs could increase by an indeterminate amount depending on the type and cost of data available at the time.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 16, 1998  
nncs Revised - Enrolled Bill - May 5, 1998

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