

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 572 (Senator Middleton)

Economic and Environmental Affairs

Agricultural Land Preservation - Sand and Gravel Pilot Program

This bill authorizes the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) to establish a pilot program to determine the impact of the extraction of sand and gravel from land in not more than three agricultural districts established under the MALPF program, and to adopt regulations to implement the pilot program. The pilot program may include (1) identification of areas in which sand or gravel underlie land in an agricultural district; (2) assessment of compatibility between particular agricultural activities and extraction of sand and gravel; (3) assessment of potential impacts of sand and gravel extraction on agricultural activities, including particulate generation, noise generation, and the availability and quality of water; (4) assessment of the agricultural productivity of the reclaimed land after the extraction of sand and gravel; (5) limitation of areas subject to easement from which sand and gravel may be extracted; (6) best management practices to limit the impact of sand and gravel extraction on agricultural activities; and (7) evaluation of the pilot program. The foundation shall consult with the Maryland Department of the Environment in developing regulations.

Under the pilot program, any extraction of sand and gravel from land in an agricultural district must be done in accordance with surface mining law. The foundation is required to submit a report evaluating the pilot program to the Governor and General Assembly by January 1, 2004.

This bill takes effect July 1, 1999 and sunsets June 30, 2004.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential indeterminate increase in MALPF expenditures if a pilot program is established.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Effect: MALPF expenditures could increase by an indeterminate amount if a sand and gravel pilot program is implemented. MALPF is not currently conducting any of the activities that might make up the pilot program. Costs associated with implementing such a program could include the purchase of special equipment, monitoring activities, and data collection and analysis. In addition, the foundation may have to hire staff with specific technical expertise to collect and analyze the data required to conduct the assessment studies. In the absence of a specific plan to conduct such assessment studies, however, a precise estimate of the bill's fiscal effect cannot be made at this time.

Information Source(s): Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation,
Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 26, 1999
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