

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2001 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**

House Bill 947 (Delegates W. Baker and McClenahan)  
Environmental Matters

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**Department of Natural Resources - Oysters - Harvesting Areas and Seed Areas**

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This bill provides that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) may designate oyster seed areas for aquaculture purposes and designate portions of oyster seed areas established pursuant to current law for the production of seed for use on private aquaculture grounds. The bill also authorizes DNR to plant oysters, shells, or other cultch or take any other restorative measures on designated areas, not just natural oyster bars. The bill amends current law to specify that the first million bushels of seed oysters planted on natural oyster bars must be produced in seed areas designated by DNR for the public fishery. Finally, the bill reduces the percentage (from 50% to 10%) of seed oysters in excess of one million bushels produced annually that DNR may sell to specified citizens and provides that those seeds must come from areas designated by DNR for the public fishery.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2001.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill would not materially affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** DNR must take measures that in its judgment seem best calculated to increase the productivity or utility of any part of the natural oyster bars of the State. DNR may plant oysters, shells, or other cultch, or take any other restorative measures, which it deems advisable, on natural oyster bars. DNR may select and reserve for its own use areas within the waters of the State for the propagation of seed oysters. DNR must determine the number, size, and location of these areas from time to time. No more than 5% of the natural oyster bars of the State shall be designated as seed areas. The first million bushels of seed oysters produced in seed areas shall be planted on the natural oyster bars of the State. The State may sell no more than 50% of seed oysters in excess of one million bushels produced annually in seed areas to citizens who hold specified leases for no less than the prevailing price of seed oysters of similar quality in nearby states.

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### Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

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

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Analysis by: Lesley Frymier

Direct Inquiries to:  
John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510