

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2005 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 380

(Delegate Hennessy, *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Natural Resources - Wild Waterfowl Hunting - Tidal Potomac River**

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This bill decreases the minimum distance, from 800 to 400 yards, that a person hunting wild waterfowl in specified tidal waters of the Potomac River while standing in water on the natural bottom, from a boat drifting or being sculled, or from an anchored boat, must be from shore.

The bill applies to tidal waters of the Potomac River that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) by regulation prescribes for hunting while standing on the natural bottom, from a boat drifting or being sculled, or from a boat that is anchored.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill's changes could be handled with existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** The bill would not directly affect local government operations or finances.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** DNR is authorized to establish by regulation areas within the waters of the State where an individual may hunt waterfowl from a boat or while standing on the natural bottom. In areas so designated, the individual generally must remain at least 800 yards from shore (except on the Susquehanna Flats, where the distance requirement is 400 yards) and at least 250 yards from all offshore stationary blinds or blind sites or another person hunting wild waterfowl offshore. On the tidal Potomac River, the area from the Route 301 bridge to the mouth of the Potomac is currently open for this purpose.

The minimum distance from shore does not apply to a person standing in water on the natural bottom while hunting at a licensed blind or blind site or a person hunting wild waterfowl from a boat anchored at a licensed blind or blind site.

**Background:** Chapter 183 of 2003 decreased the minimum distance from shore, from 800 to 400 yards, on the Susquehanna Flats. Chapter 703 of 1999 standardized the minimum distance from shore at 800 yards, except in the nontidal waters of the Potomac River. Prior to that, the distance was 800 yards on the Susquehanna Flats (pursuant to regulation) and 1,200 yards in all other areas.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 2, 2005  
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