

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1255

(Delegate Bartlett, *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

---

Study to Evaluate Strategies to Reduce Deer-Vehicle Collisions

---

This bill requires the Department of Natural Resources, the Maryland Department of Transportation, and the Department of State Police to jointly conduct a study to evaluate strategies to reduce deer-vehicle collisions. Only agency personnel and resources may be used for the study. A report with findings and recommendations is due to the General Assembly by October 1, 2009.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2008, and terminates October 31, 2009.

---

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None. The required study could be handled with existing resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

---

Analysis

**Current Law:** A similar study is not required under State law. DNR establishes the open season to hunt forest and upland game birds and mammals, including deer, by regulation each year. There are three seasons to hunt deer in Maryland: • deer bow hunting season; • deer firearms season; and • deer muzzle loader season.

**Background:** Because white-tailed deer thrive in habitat that is composed of woods and openings and because hunter access in those areas is limited, suburban development has

provided excellent deer habitat in the State, resulting in a significant increase in the deer population. DNR indicates that 11,553 deer were reported killed by vehicles in the State (or about one deer killed for every 23 deer in the population) in 2006. DNR estimates the total number of deer-vehicle collisions each year is between 20,000 and 30,000, with each collision resulting in an average of \$2,000 in damage.

DNR's Deer Project conserves and manages native white-tailed deer and the exotic sika deer. The project, among other things, aims to maintain deer populations at levels that ensure compatibility with human land uses and natural communities. The most recent deer population estimate in Maryland was 234,000 prior to the 2006-2007 hunting season, a decline of 13% from the 2005-2006 estimate of 269,000. During the 2006-2007 bow, firearms, and muzzleloader hunting seasons, Maryland deer hunters harvested 91,930 white-tailed deer, down 2% from the 2005-2006 total harvest of 94,052.

---

### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** HB 1075 of 2007, a similar bill, received an unfavorable report from the House Environmental Matters Committee.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of State Police, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 6, 2008  
mam/lgc

---

Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510