

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 229

(Chair, Environmental Matters Committee) (By Request –
Departmental – Natural Resources)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Fishing - Reciprocal Angler's Licenses

This bill specifies that reciprocal fishing privileges that may be available under an agreement between the Department of Natural Resources and Virginia, West Virginia, or Pennsylvania to fish in specified waters only apply to residents of those states and not to *any* person possessing a valid Virginia, West Virginia, or Pennsylvania fishing license. The bill also specifies that any reciprocal fishing privileges for Virginia and West Virginia residents only apply with respect to fishing on the Maryland shore of specified portions of the Potomac River (including, in the case of West Virginia residents, the North Branch of the river and the Jennings Randolph Reservoir) opposite the person's state of residency.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2008.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal increase in special fund revenues resulting from any increase in angler's licenses issued.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: DNR has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment. (The attached assessment does not reflect amendments to the bill.)

Analysis

Current Law/Background: A person possessing a valid Virginia or West Virginia fishing license may fish in nontidal waters of the Potomac River without obtaining a Maryland angler's license if Virginia or West Virginia enters into and maintains specified reciprocal agreements with DNR. A similar provision exists with respect to the Conowingo and Youghiogheny Reservoirs pertaining to persons possessing a valid Pennsylvania fishing license. Any reciprocal privileges granted are valid only for the main stem of the Potomac River and Conowingo and Youghiogheny Reservoirs.

Maryland and West Virginia are subject to a fishing privileges agreement incorporated in the Jennings Randolph Lake Project Compact, an agreement between Maryland and West Virginia, that generally provides for joint natural resource management and enforcement of natural resources, criminal, and boating laws and regulations with respect to Jennings Randolph Lake. DNR indicates that providing reciprocal fishing privileges only to West Virginia residents and not *any* person possessing a valid West Virginia fishing license would make State law consistent with the reciprocity provisions in the Jennings Randolph Lake Project Compact. The bill would similarly make any reciprocal fishing privileges with Virginia and Pennsylvania only applicable to residents of those states.

State Fiscal Effect: Special fund revenues could increase to the extent the bill's changes cause some people who have previously fished in Maryland waters under a Virginia, West Virginia, or Pennsylvania license to purchase a Maryland angler's license. DNR is unable to determine how many people would purchase a Maryland license but believes the number would be negligible. The license fee for an annual resident license is \$20.50 and the license fee for an annual nonresident license is the greater of \$30.50 or a fee equal to the fee charged a Maryland resident by the nonresident's home state for a similar license. Other fees apply for short-term licenses. License fees are paid into the State Fisheries Management and Protection Fund.

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 4, 2008
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