

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1528 (Delegate O'Donnell)
Environmental Matters

Natural Resources - Patuxent River - Drifting Gill Nets

This bill authorizes the setting or hauling of a drifting gill net to catch white perch in the Patuxent River (1) south of the Benedict Bridge or (2) in any creek, cove, or tributary south of the Benedict Bridge.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect State finances.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect local finances.

Small Business Effect: Meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: A person may not set or haul any (1) seine or gill net in any creek, cove, or tributary of the Patuxent River if the mouth of the creek or tributary is less than 200 feet wide or (2) drifting gill net in the Patuxent River south of the Patuxent River Bridge or in any creek, cove, or tributary of the river south of the Patuxent River Bridge at any time.

Background: The Secretary of Natural Resources is responsible for conservation management of the fish, fisheries, fish resources, and aquatic life within the State. The Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Fisheries Service is responsible for managing commercial and recreational fishing in the State. The Fisheries Service seeks to develop a management framework for the conservation and equitable use of fishery resources; manage fisheries in balance with the ecosystem for present and future generations;

monitor and assess the status and trends of fishery resources; and provide high quality, diverse, and accessible fishing opportunities.

The Benedict Bridge (MD Route 231) crosses over the Patuxent River in Southern Maryland between Calvert and Charles counties. DNR advises that there are approximately 10 watermen who currently use gill nets to fish for white perch near the Patuxent River waters affected by the bill.

Small Business Effect: Small fishing businesses benefit to the extent they catch and sell additional white perch as a result of the bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 18, 2013
ncs/lgc

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