

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 843 (Delegate Howard)
Environment and Transportation

Anne Arundel County - Natural Resources - Fishing With a Haul Seine

This bill repeals a prohibition against a person setting a haul seine exceeding 50 feet in length in specified waters of Anne Arundel County and, subject to specified provisions, authorizes a person to use a haul seine to fish in the waters of Anne Arundel County. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.**

Fiscal Summary

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

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill repeals a prohibition against a person setting a haul seine exceeding 50 feet in length in the following waters:

- Herring Bay from a line drawn from the extreme projection of Parker’s Island Point into the Chesapeake Bay to the extreme point of Holland Point;
- South River, Rhode River, and West River;
- from a line drawn from the extreme projection from Thomas Point into the Chesapeake Bay to the extreme point of Curtis Point;
- within the headlands of Whitehall Creek; and
- within the headlands of Meredith Creek and Lake Ogleton.

The bill also repeals a criminal penalty applicable to a violation of that prohibition.

Subject to other fishing restrictions in Anne Arundel County, and general provisions governing the use of haul seines, the bill authorizes a person to use a haul seine to fish in the waters of Anne Arundel County.

Current Law: In Anne Arundel County, a person may not set a haul seine exceeding 50 feet in length in the following waters:

- Herring Bay from a line drawn from the extreme projection of Parker’s Island Point into the Chesapeake Bay to the extreme point of Holland Point;
- South River, Rhode River, and West River;
- from a line drawn from the extreme projection from Thomas Point into the Chesapeake Bay to the extreme point of Curtis Point;
- within the headlands of Whitehall Creek; and
- within the headlands of Meredith Creek and Lake Ogleton.

A person who violates that prohibition is guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine of up to \$2,500 with costs imposed in the discretion of the court.

Various general provisions governing the measurements and use of haul seines are established in statute, including a prohibition on fishing with a haul seine on weekends subject to specified exceptions in Baltimore, Harford, and Kent counties and a specified exception for emptying a haul seine during the weekend if it was set on a Friday. Provisions specific to fishing in general in Anne Arundel County establish various, primarily gear-related, restrictions for specific waters in the county.

Small Business Effect: The bill’s removal of haul seine restrictions in the specified waters of Anne Arundel County may have a meaningful impact on small business finfish harvesters. The Department of Natural Resources indicates that the reported harvest by individuals reporting haul seine use in 2017, 2018, and 2019, in “National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) codes” that *overlap* with Anne Arundel County waters, had a value of \$334,136, \$124,601, and \$140,174, respectively. It is unclear, however, how much of that harvest was strictly from within the waters of Anne Arundel County. NOAA codes are statistical reporting areas created for the purpose of reporting fishery harvest.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 95 of 2020 passed the House with amendments and was referred to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken. Its cross file, SB 162, received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Anne Arundel County; Department of Natural Resources; Department of Legislative Services

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md/lgc

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