

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 219

(Senator Ready, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Environment and Transportation

Carroll County - Turkey Hunting on Private Property - Sundays

This emergency bill authorizes turkey hunting on private land in Carroll County on any Sunday during the spring turkey hunting season.

Fiscal Summary

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

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

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) establishes the open season to hunt forest and upland game birds and mammals by regulation each year. DNR may adopt regulations to enlarge, extend, restrict, or prohibit hunting wildlife. Hunting game birds or mammals on Sundays is generally prohibited, with specified exceptions.

Turkey hunting is authorized on private property in Calvert, Caroline, Charles, Dorchester, and St. Mary's counties on Sundays during the spring turkey hunting season. In Dorchester County, an individual may hunt turkeys on Sundays on public land during the spring turkey hunting season; however, this authorization is limited to public lands designated for hunting by DNR.

Maryland's spring turkey hunting season is generally a five-week period running from mid-April through May. During the spring turkey hunting season, only male wild turkeys may be taken by hunters. In the spring of 2015, turkey hunters in Carroll County harvested 62 turkeys, which is greater than Carroll County's 10-year average spring harvest of 38 turkeys.

DNR's annual hunter mail survey estimates that the number of turkey hunters in Maryland has generally declined over the last 10 years. Spring turkey hunting participation peaked in the mid-1990s when the season was opened statewide and has gradually declined since then. The most recent hunter mail survey estimates that about 9,500 spring turkey hunters hunted 43,700 days during the 2012-2013 hunting season. Approximately 25% of spring hunters are typically successful in taking at least one turkey.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 169 (Carroll County Delegation) - Environment and Transportation.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 1, 2016
md/lgc

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