

**SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
FISCAL NOTE**

**BILL NO.** House Bill 1605

**PRINTER NO.** 3691

**AMOUNT**

No Fiscal Impact in FY 2016-17

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

October 7, 2015

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Representative James

**DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL**

House Bill 1605 establishes the Heritage Area Program Act and requires the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to adopt goals, guidelines and policies for the program, and to discuss these annually with each heritage area.

The bill requires DCNR to allocate funds for the management, planning, development and protection of the program, and to establish partnerships between governmental and nongovernmental agencies. Heritage areas may also use funding to provide a grant to another entity for these purposes.

DCNR is to allocate all funds appropriated annually by the General Assembly for the Heritage Areas program and each heritage area is to receive a minimum amount of funding through the program established by the program goals, guidelines and policies. DCNR may not use more than 5% of the funding appropriated annually for administrative purposes. Furthermore, the bill repeals Article XVI-J (relating to Heritage Areas) of the Fiscal Code (Act 176 of 1929) and acts as a continuation of it.

The legislation raises the DCNR per acre payment in lieu of taxes from \$3.60 to \$6.00 effective July 1, 2017.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

SB 1073, the proposed FY 2016-17 General Appropriations Act, includes \$2.875 million for The Heritage and Other Parks appropriation in DCNR.

The payment in lieu of taxes portion of this legislation will increase program costs by \$5.1 million in FY 2017-18.