



NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Session 2021

Legislative Fiscal Note

Short Title: Wildlife Resources Comm'n. Amendments.-AB
Bill Number: House Bill 181 (Seventh Edition)
Sponsor(s): Representatives Adams, Yarborough, and Wray

SUMMARY TABLE

	FISCAL IMPACT OF PCS H.B. 181, V.7				
	<u>FY 2021-22</u>	<u>FY 2022-23</u>	<u>FY 2023-24</u>	<u>FY 2024-25</u>	<u>FY 2025-26</u>
State Impact					
General Fund Revenue	10,925	10,925	10,925	10,925	10,925
<u>Less Expenditures</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
General Fund Impact	10,925	10,925	10,925	10,925	10,925
Special Fund Revenues	(86,686)	(86,686)	(86,686)	(86,686)	(86,686)
<u>Less Expenditures</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Special Fund Impact	(86,686)	(86,686)	(86,686)	(86,686)	(86,686)
NET STATE IMPACT	(\$75,761)	(\$75,761)	(\$75,761)	(\$75,761)	(\$75,761)

FISCAL IMPACT SUMMARY

Sections 4, 5, 8, 8A, and 9 of H.B. 181, Wildlife Resources Comm'n. Amendments.-AB, would create fiscal impacts for the Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC). Section 4 would increase receipts to the General Fund by \$10,925 through the creation of a new certification. Sections 5, 8, 8A, and 9 provide exemptions or discounts to license fees and would reduce special fund receipts by a total of \$86,686 and would not impact the General Fund.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Section 4: Wildlife Control Technician Certification Amendments

Section 4 creates a Wildlife Technician Certification, which would be an annual certification issued by WRC to an individual under the direct supervision of a licensed wildlife control agent. The fee

for certification is \$25. The number of wildlife technicians working for licensed wildlife control agents is not known. However, there are currently 437 licensed wildlife control agents in the State. WRC anticipates wildlife control agents may employ up to five technicians each. If so, WRC would collect \$54,625 each year (5 times 437 times \$25). This estimate is based on the number of licenses sold to wildlife control agents since November 2020 when the license was first enacted. Little is known about how wildlife control agents operate their businesses. A more conservative estimate assumes that each wildlife control agent would hire one technician. If every wildlife control agent hires one wildlife technician, WRC would collect \$10,925 each year (437 times \$25). WRC currently collects the receipts for the Wildlife Control Agent License in its General Fund budget code and would do the same for the Wildlife Control Technician Certificate receipts. Therefore, Section 4 would have an impact of \$10,925 on the General Fund.

Section 5: Veterans Exemption for Mountain Heritage Trout Waters License

Section 5 waives the fee for the Mountain Heritage Trout fishing license for people who served as a member of the Armed Forces. The Mountain Heritage Trout fishing license is a three-day license allowing anglers to fish in a stream designated as a Mountain Heritage Trout Water. The fee for the license is \$8. The table below shows the average number of Mountain Heritage Trout fishing licenses sold to residents and nonresidents for the last five fiscal years.

Mountain Heritage Trout Fishing Licenses Sold, 2015-2020

	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	Average
Residents	433	577	710	667	1,039	685
Nonresidents	2,654	3,584	4,159	4,161	5,414	3,994
Total	3,087	4,161	4,869	4,828	6,453	4,679

The US Census Bureau website provides data on the number of veterans living in the State and the US.

Veterans as a Percentage of Total Populations, 2020

	NC	US
Total Number of Veterans	828,559	22,648,527
Total Population	10,488,084	328,239,523
Percentage	7.9%	6.9%

The table below applies the percentage of veterans in NC and the US to the average number of licenses sold to residents and nonresidents respectively to estimate the number veterans purchasing Mountain Heritage Trout Fishing Licenses each year.

**Estimated Number of Veteran
Mountain Heritage Trout Fishing Licenses**

	Residents	Nonresidents
Average Number of Licenses Sold	685	3,994
Veteran Percentage	7.9%	6.9%
Total	54	276

The total estimated number of veterans purchasing Mountain Heritage Trout Fishing Licenses is 330 (54 plus 276). Since each Mountain Heritage Trout Fishing License costs \$8, the total reduction to WRC's special funds for the veteran exemption in H.B. 181 is \$2,640 (330 licenses times \$8).

Section 8: Half-Priced Lifetime Licenses for Certain Residents

Section 8 provides fifty percent discounts to residents between 50 and 70 years of age when purchasing Adult Resident Lifetime Sportsman Licenses (Sportsman Licenses) or Resident Adult Lifetime Unified Sportsman/Coastal Recreational Fishing Licenses (Unified Sportsman Licenses).¹

The table below shows the average number of Sportsman and Unified Sportsman licenses sold to individuals between 50 and 70 years old for the last five fiscal years.

Licenses Sold to Residents Between 50 and 70 Years Old, 2015-2020

License	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	Average
Sportsman	95	73	89	113	139	102
Unified Sportsman	133	131	134	167	188	151
Total	228	204	223	280	327	253

The average number of Sportsman licenses sold to people between 50 to 70 years old is 102. The current price of the Sportsman License is \$530; half price is \$265. The total estimated reduction to WRC's special fund for the Sportsman License is \$27,030 (102 licenses times \$265).

The average number of Unified Sportsman licenses sold to people between 50 to 70 years old is 151. The current price of the Unified Sportsman License is \$716; half price is \$358. The total estimated reduction to WRC's special fund for the Unified License is \$54,058 (151 licenses times \$358).

Altogether, the changes in Section 8 of H.B. 181 would result in a loss of \$81,088 to WRC's special funds (\$27,030 plus \$54,058).

¹ Section 8 includes an exception for individuals qualifying for a discounted Sportsman and Unified Sportsman license due to G.S. 113-276(o) which provides a fifty percent discount to eligible firefighters. The numbers of Sportsman and Unified Sportsman licenses listed here do not include residents between 50 and 70 years of age who already qualify for a discount due to their status as a firefighter.

Section 8A: Extend Eligibility for Reduced Price Lifetime Hunting and Fishing Licenses to Rescue Squad and EMS

Section 8A provides a fifty percent discount for all adult resident lifetime licenses for members of the North Carolina Association of Rescue and Emergency Medical Services (Association). The Association’s January 23, 2021 meeting minutes state its membership includes 29,014 people, which represents 0.3% of the population of North Carolina (29,014 divided by 10,488,084).

Association Members as a Percentage of Total State Population, 2020

	NC
Total Number of Association Members	29,014
Total State Population	10,488,084
Percentage	0.3%

The table below shows the average number of adult resident lifetime licenses sold over the last five years.

Adult Resident Lifetime Licenses Sold, 2015-2020

License	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	Average
Coastal Fishing License (CRFL)	243	272	326	309	417	313
Comprehensive Inland Fishing	506	569	632	686	1,196	718
Unified Inland/CRFL	417	429	523	596	903	574
Sportsman	852	714	779	832	1,011	838
Unified Sportsman/CRFL	1,127	1,098	1,181	1,218	1,443	1,213
Comprehensive Hunting	493	477	474	503	635	516
Trapping ²					60	60
Total	3,638	3,559	3,915	4,144	5,665	4,232

Applying the average number of each adult resident lifetime license sold to the percentage of Association members in North Carolina (0.3%) provides an estimate of the number of Association member licenses that may be sold as a result of Section 8A.

² Lifetime Trapping Licenses were first made available for purchase in FY 2019-20.

Estimated Number of Association Member Licenses

License	Average Number of Licenses Sold	Association Member Percentage	Estimated Number of Association Member Licenses
Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL)	313	0.3%	1
Comprehensive Inland Fishing	718	0.3%	2
Unified Inland/CRFL	574	0.3%	2
Sportsman	838	0.3%	3
Unified Sportsman/CRFL	1,213	0.3%	4
Comprehensive Hunting	516	0.3%	2
Trapping	60	0.3%	0

The table below estimates the revenue loss to WRC for the Association member licenses. The current license costs are listed, as well as the half price proposed for Association members. The estimated revenue loss is the estimated number of Association member licenses sold multiplied by the Association member price.

Estimated Revenue Loss for Association Member Licenses

License	License Cost	Association Member Price	Estimated Number of Association Member Licenses	Estimated Revenue Loss
Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL)	\$265	\$133	1	(\$124)
Comprehensive Inland Fishing	\$265	\$133	2	(\$285)
Unified Inland/CRFL	\$477	\$239	2	(\$411)
Sportsman	\$530	\$265	3	(\$666)
Unified Sportsman/CRFL	\$716	\$358	4	(\$1,303)
Comprehensive Hunting	\$265	\$133	2	(\$205)
Trapping	\$300	\$150	0	(\$27)
Total				(\$3,022)

The total estimated reduction to WRC's special funds if every Association Member purchases an adult resident lifetime license is \$3,022.

Section 9: Reduce Controlled Rabbit Hunting Preserve Operator License Fee

Section 9 reduces the price for the annual Controlled Hunting Preserve Operator License for Rabbits from \$100 to \$25. There are three types of hunting preserves: one for game birds, one for rabbits, and one for foxes and coyotes. The operator license for each type of controlled hunting preserve

currently costs \$100. H.B. 181 would differentiate the operator license fee by controlled hunting preserve type: \$100 for game birds, \$25 for rabbits, and \$100 for foxes and coyotes. The table below shows the average number of Controlled Hunting Preserve Operator Licenses sold by controlled hunting preserve type for the last five fiscal years.

Controlled Hunting Preserve Operator Licenses, 2015-2020

Preserve Type	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	Average
Game Birds	224	242	215	212	224	223
Rabbits	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foxes and Coyotes	118	131	146	127	131	131
Total	342	373	361	339	355	354

Since no licenses have been sold to controlled rabbit hunting preserve operators in the last five fiscal years, there is no estimated reduction and therefore no expected fiscal impact to WRC's special fund receipts due to the changes in Section 9.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

N/A.

DATA SOURCES

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL NOTE – PURPOSE AND LIMITATIONS

This document is an official fiscal analysis prepared pursuant to Chapter 120 of the General Statutes and rules adopted by the Senate and House of Representatives. The estimates in this analysis are based on the data, assumptions, and methodology described in the Fiscal Analysis section of this document. This document only addresses sections of the bill that have projected direct fiscal impacts on State or local governments and does not address sections that have no projected fiscal impacts.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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