

**Department of Legislative Services**  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2011 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Revised**

Senate Bill 937 (Senators Dyson and Colburn)  
 Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs      Appropriations and Environmental  
 and Budget and Taxation      Matters

**Natural Resources Police Force - Number of Officers**

This bill expresses the General Assembly’s intent that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) employ at least 435 Natural Resources Police (NRP) officers by fiscal 2021. Beginning in fiscal 2013, to the extent funds are available, NRP may increase the number of cadets and recruits enrolling in the NRP academy until the size of the NRP force is sufficient to meet DNR’s mission. By June 30, 2012, and annually thereafter until June 30, 2021, NRP must submit a report to the General Assembly on the progress made toward achieving the NRP employment goal.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2011.

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Assuming implementation of the bill’s intent and the availability of funds, DNR general fund expenditures increase by \$3.5 million in FY 2013, \$5.8 million in FY 2014, \$8.3 million in FY 2015, and \$11.0 million in FY 2016 to hire and equip additional NRP officers. Potential increase in general and federal fund revenues due to additional citations and DNR’s expanded eligibility for federal grant funds.

(\$ in millions)	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
GF/FF Rev.	\$0	-	-	-	-
GF Expenditure	\$0	\$3.5	\$5.8	\$8.3	\$11.0
Net Effect	\$0	(\$3.5)	(\$5.8)	(\$8.3)	(\$11.0)

*Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect*

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

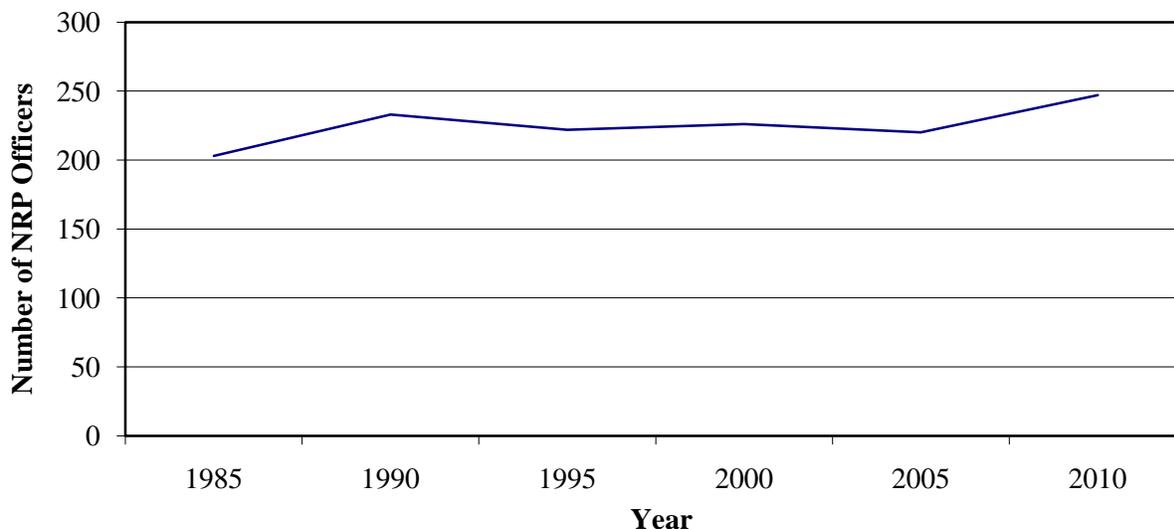
## Analysis

**Current Law/Background:** NRP serves as a public safety agency with statewide authority to enforce all natural resources and conservation laws and regulations relating to seafood harvesting and sport fishing, boating, waterways pollution, wildlife conservation, and enforcement activities in State parks, forests, and other public lands. In addition, NRP is responsible for maritime and rural search and rescue and is the lead agency for maritime homeland security on State waterways. NRP also provides public education in the areas of hunting, boating, and water safety. Each NRP officer has full law enforcement powers statewide. The fiscal 2011 budget and the Governor's proposed fiscal 2012 budget authorize 247 NRP officers; however, 19 of these positions are being held vacant in order to achieve required personnel turnover rates. Thus, to implement the intent expressed in the bill, DNR must hire an additional 207 law enforcement officers to reach the goal of having 435 NRP officers employed by fiscal 2021.

As illustrated in **Exhibit 1**, the number of sworn NRP officers has increased moderately over the past 20 years. The increase in positions after 2005 reflects the consolidation of existing State Forest and Park Service Rangers into NRP, not the addition of new officers.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Natural Resources Police Sworn Officers (1985-2010)**



Source: Department of Legislative Services, Department of Natural Resources

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**State Fiscal Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by \$3.5 million in fiscal 2013 to hire 23 additional NRP officers. This assumes that DNR uses existing resources in fiscal 2012 to expand currently scheduled NRP officer recruitment efforts and develop a plan for future recruitment and training efforts. This estimate is based on the assumption that, beginning in fiscal 2013 and ending in fiscal 2021, 23 NRP officers are hired

annually. It includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, vehicles, vessels, equipment, recruitment costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Positions	23
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$1,815,875
Vehicles/Vessels	775,100
Mobile Data Terminals	142,878
Training	161,299
Other Operating Expenses	<u>566,839</u>
<b>Total FY 2013 State Expenditures</b>	<b>\$3,461,991</b>

Future year expenditures reflect 23 new NRP officers annually, salaries with 4.4% annual increases, 3% employee turnover, and 1% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

This estimate is consistent with the bill's intent to begin hiring additional NRP officers in fiscal 2013 and assumes full employment of at least 435 NRP officers by fiscal 2021. However, depending on the availability of funds, expenditures could be lower or greater each year.

With additional officers, DNR may be able to leverage increased federal funding. To the extent increased NRP staffing results in additional fees and fines from citations, general fund revenues increase.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Budget and Management, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 13, 2011  
mlm/lgc Revised - Senate Third Reader - April 6, 2011

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