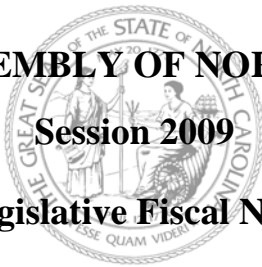


GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA



Session 2009

Legislative Fiscal Note

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 1008 (First Edition)

SHORT TITLE: Antlerless Deer Tag Fee.

SPONSOR(S): Senator Swindell

FISCAL IMPACT					
	Yes (X)	No ()	No Estimate Available ()		
	<u>FY 2009-10</u>	<u>FY 2010-11</u>	<u>FY 2011-12</u>	<u>FY 2012-13</u>	<u>FY 2013-14</u>
REVENUES					
Wildlife Resources					
Commission	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
EXPENDITURES					
Wildlife Resources					
Commission	0	0	0	0	0
POSITIONS (cumulative):					
Wildlife Resources					
Commission	0	0	0	0	0
PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S) & PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED:					
Wildlife Resources Commission					
EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2009					

BILL SUMMARY:

S.B. 1008 amends G.S. 113-270.3(b), creating a fee for bonus antlerless deer licenses. The antlerless deer license allows hunters to take two antlerless deer during hunting season by methods authorized by the Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC). In order to purchase this \$10 license, the licensee must already hold a North Carolina big game hunting license (unless exempt under other statutory provisions). Both residents and non-residents could purchase this license for \$10.

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY:

In FY 2007-08, WRC sold 289,399 short-term, annual, and lifetime hunting licenses that had valid big game hunting privileges. This number is comprised of the following:

- 38,525 stand alone annual big game privilege licenses;
- 4,536 stand alone short-term big game privilege licenses;
- 166,338 annual sportsman and comprehensive hunting licenses, which include big game privileges; and
- 80,000 lifetime holders who received their big game report card (which is required in order to hunt big game).

Big game includes wild turkey, boar, bear, and deer. More people hunt white-tailed deer than any other game species in North Carolina. Each year approximately 250,000 sportsmen/women take more than 2.9 million trips afield in pursuit of deer. A standard big game hunting license allows for the taking of six deer. In eastern North Carolina (i.e. in and east of Vance, Franklin, Wake, Harnett, and Moore counties), the six deer limit includes four antlered deer; in the piedmont and western regions, the limit includes only two antlered deer. Approximately 3.6% of big game hunters take their full allotment of deer each year.

When a big game animal is harvested it must be reported to a Wildlife Cooperator Agent or to WRC. In an effort to control the deer population, WRC instituted antlerless deer report cards (formerly “tag”) in 2007; WRC currently provides this bonus tag free of charge. WRC was given the authority to set up a bonus tag system – or to extend deer hunting season – but the session law did not stipulate the fee to be charged for this tag.

In FY 2007-08, WRC provided 23,430 bonus antlerless harvest report cards. However, only 1,326 hunters reported harvests that exceeded the six deer season bag limit allowed by the standard big game license. WRC believes that this is an underestimate of the number of hunters that harvested deer with the bonus tag because many hunters may have saved traditional big game harvest report cards in order to retain the opportunity to harvest an antlered deer.

WRC estimates that the demand for bonus antlerless deer tags will be approximately 20,000 despite the \$10 fee. This should bring in additional revenue of \$200,000 annually. The \$10 fee for the privilege of taking two additional deer is not excessive relative to other states. The table below provides a comparison of the cost of North Carolina’s bonus license to four other states.

State	Fee per Bonus Taking	
	Resident	Non-resident
<i>North Carolina</i>	\$5.00	\$5.00
Wisconsin	\$15.00	\$24.00
Maine	\$12.00	\$12.00
Maryland	\$10.00	\$25.00
Virginia	\$9.00	\$15.50

Since WRC already has a bonus antlerless tag in place, the costs associated with developing and distributing these licenses, as well as enforcing them, are already included in WRC’s budget. There should be no increase in operating costs due to implementing a fee for this bonus tag.

SOURCES OF DATA:
Wildlife Resources Commission

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS: None

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DATE: May 4, 2009



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