



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 2177

PRINTERS NO. 3676

PRIME SPONSOR: James

COST / (REVENUE)

FUND	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15
General Fund	See Fiscal Impact	See Fiscal Impact

SUMMARY: House Bill 2177, Printer's Number 3676, establishes the Heritage Area Program Act and the process of funding distribution to heritage regions within the Commonwealth.

ANALYSIS: This bill creates the Heritage Area Program Act to establish the Heritage Area Program within the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The purpose of the program is to identify, protect, develop, enhance and promote the historic, recreational, natural, cultural and scenic resources of this Commonwealth and to stimulate community revitalization and economic development through regional heritage conservation, recreation, tourism and partnerships.

The department shall adopt program guidelines and policies to implement and administer the program, as well as consult with the heritage areas on an annual basis to discuss program goals, guidelines and policies.

Funds appropriated to the department for the program shall be for the following purposes:

- (1) Management, administration, operation and marketing of heritage areas.
- (2) Planning, implementation, technical assistance and educational projects and programs related to heritage areas.
- (3) Development, construction, rehabilitation, repair, acquisition, preservation and enhancement of lands, buildings and other structures related to heritage areas.
- (4) Protection, documentation, interpretation and promotion of the cultural, natural, scenic, recreational and historic resources of heritage areas.
- (5) Establishment of partnerships and coalitions of governmental and nongovernmental agencies and organizations to assist heritage areas with the implementation of management action plans.
- (6) Any other activities deemed appropriate by the department.

DCNR shall distribute those funds appropriated annually based on established program goals, guidelines and policies. Each State-designated heritage area shall receive a minimum amount established by the program goals, guidelines and policies.

DCNR may use no more than 5% of the funding appropriated annually for administrative purposes, including the development of a strategic plan or other appropriate initiative related to the program.

The bill also repeals Article XVI-J (relating to Heritage Areas) of the Fiscal Code (Act 176 of 1929), but acts as a continuation of it.

This shall take effect immediately upon enactment.

FISCAL IMPACT: Enactment of this bill will have no fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds. While the Heritage Parks Program currently operates within and is administered by the department, this legislation formally establishes the program, its purpose and process by which funding is distributed to the twelve existing heritage regions within the Commonwealth. It does not provide any additional funding or revenue sources for the program.

It should be noted that there is a current year General Fund appropriation under DCNR for the Heritage Parks program totaling \$2.250 million, while initial funding for the program dates back to 1989 when it received \$1.1 million.

PREPARED BY: Jeffrey Clukey
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 16, 2014

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.