



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE
STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT
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This fiscal impact statement is produced in compliance with the South Carolina Code of Laws and House and Senate rules. The focus of the analysis is on governmental expenditure and revenue impacts and may not provide a comprehensive summary of the legislation.

Bill Number:	H. 5007	Signed by Governor on May 13, 2024
Author:	Caskey	
Subject:	Lower Saluda River Hook Size Restriction	
Requestor:	House of Representatives	
RFA Analyst(s):	Daigle	
Impact Date:	June 11, 2024	

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill amends the restrictions and limits on striped bass fishing in Section 50-13-230 to include a limit on the hook gap, the distance from hook to point of shank, in the Lower Saluda River at certain times of the year.

The bill will have no expenditure impact on the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) because enforcement activities are already in place for striped bass limits across the state and enforcing a hook gap limit in the Lower Saluda River can be accomplished with existing staff and resources.

Under Section 50-13-30, unless otherwise provided, a person convicted of a violation of Chapter 13 of Title 50 is guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction, must be fined \$25 to \$500 or imprisoned up to thirty days, or both. This bill may affect local expenditures due to a potential increase in the number of court cases and a potential increase in the local jail populations for violations of the hook gap limit. We anticipate that any increase in caseloads will be managed with existing resources. As hook gap limits are new and have not previously been patrolled by DNR, the potential expenditure impact to local jails is undetermined and will depend on the number of violations and sentencing.

This bill may increase local revenues from the increase in fines for violations of the new hook gap limit. Per Section 50-9-910, any revenue from these fines is credited to the County Game and Fish Fund subaccount. This bill may also increase General Fund, Other Funds, and local revenues from court fines and fees due to violations of the new hook gap limit. However, as the hook gap limit is new, the number of violations that may occur is unknown, and the amount of fines that may be generated is undetermined.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Signed by Governor on May 13, 2024

State Expenditure

This bill sets a limit on the hook gap, the distance from hook to point of shank, when fishing on the Lower Saluda River from June sixteenth to September thirtieth. Currently, on the lower reach of the Saluda River from June sixteenth through September thirtieth, it is unlawful to take or

possess striped bass and striped bass taken must be returned immediately to the waters it came from, but there are no limits on hook gap. DNR indicates that this bill will not increase the agency's expenses because enforcement activities are already in place for striped bass limits across the state and enforcing a hook gap limit on the Lower Saluda River can be accomplished with existing staff and resources.

State Revenue

This bill may result in an increase in the fines and fees collected in court. Court fines are distributed to the General Fund, Other Funds, and local funds. However, as the hook gap limit on the Lower Saluda River between June sixteenth and September thirtieth is new, the number of fines that will be assessed is unknown, and the amount that may be generated is undetermined.

Local Expenditure

This bill may result in an increase in local expenditures due to a potential increase in the number of court cases and a potential increase in the local jail populations for violations of the new hook gap limit on the Lower Saluda River. We anticipate that any increase in caseloads will be managed with existing resources. However, as the number of such offenses that might occur in a given year for violating the new hook gap limit is unknown, the potential increase in the local jail population and local expenditure is undetermined.

Local Revenue

This bill may increase local revenues from the increase in fines for violations of the new hook gap limit. Per Section 50-9-910, any revenue from these fines is credited to the County Game and Fish Fund subaccount. This bill may also result in an increase in the local revenue from fines and fees collected in court for violations of the new hook gap limit on the Lower Saluda River between June sixteenth and September thirtieth. The amount of increase is undetermined and will depend on the number of violations.



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director