



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

June 27, 2006

S. 1496

Electronic Duck Stamp Act of 2005

As ordered reported by House Committee on Resources on June 21, 2006

S. 1496 would authorize the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to conduct a three-year pilot program to distribute federal duck stamps electronically. CBO estimates that implementing the legislation would cost the federal government \$750,000 over the next three years, assuming the availability of appropriated funds.

The act would authorize the USFWS to allow up to 15 states to sell electronic versions of federal duck stamps, which serve as annual hunting permits for federal lands. Nearly all states use their own versions of duck stamps as hunting permits, and most of these states also have electronic licensing or online sales systems. The pilot program authorized by S. 1496 would help to coordinate the sale of federal and state permits using the state systems. CBO estimates that the USFWS would spend about \$250,000 annually to carry out the three-year project, assuming the availability of appropriated funds. We expect that such amounts would be used by the agency to process applications from states that participate in the program, to collect duck stamp receipts from those states, and to evaluate program results.

Because S. 1496 would not change the current \$15 price of the federal duck stamp, enacting the legislation would not affect revenues. The act would allow the states to collect a surcharge for each electronic duck stamp sold. A portion of such fees would be transferred to the USFWS (along with the sales proceeds from the electronic duck stamp) and would be credited to the agency's operating account. CBO estimates that such offsetting collections would have a minimal effect on annual discretionary spending. Enacting S. 1496 would not affect direct spending.

The legislation contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. Any state that chooses to participate in this pilot program would do so voluntarily. The act would allow states to charge fees to cover any costs that they might incur.

On December 1, 2005, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for S. 1496, the Electronic Duck Stamp Act of 2005, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on November 17, 2005. The two versions of the legislation are identical, as are the estimated costs.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. The estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.