

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS25393

This bill creates a new fee to increase funding for wildlife depredation compensation, prevention of wildlife damage to private land, and sportsman access programs. Compensation claim procedures are also simplified. In addition, resident license fees that have not been adjusted since 2005, are increased. A new grizzly bear tag and new control hunt application fees for moose, sheep, goat, and grizzly bear are created. Legislative direction to the Fish and Game Commission to implement a Price Lock discount order is provided, which would provide a discount to 2016 fees for eligible resident sportsmen who purchase a season license every year for at least five years and until legislative review is complete. The new revenue will restore inflationary losses in programs and will fund sportsman desired program enhancements. Moneys from pronghorn antelope, deer, and elk tags directed to the fish and game set-aside account for specific uses are increased. These changes do not affect current fees for the affected tags but are a redistribution of dedicated revenue to facilitate administration of these programs. Similarly, moneys in the fish and game account from combination and fishing licenses, authorized for certain fishery functions, are increased to support these functions and fishing access is added as an authorized use. Effective dates are also provided.

FISCAL NOTE

There is no fiscal impact to the state General Fund. The fiscal impact from a new fee required to purchase any annual license will increase the fish and game set-aside account in the dedicated fund by an estimated \$2,000,000 annually. With an effective date of May 1, 2017, the revenue increase in FY 2017 is estimated as \$676,000 based on expected annual license sales in May and June. During July 2017 and annually thereafter, the set-aside account will be reduced by transfer of \$500,000 into the expendable big game depredation account with corollary increase in that account. The estimated fiscal impact to the expendable big game depredation fund from potential increase in compensation payments because of new provisions in this bill are estimated to range up to a \$500,000 decrease in the expendable big game depredation fund. No fiscal effect is expected in FY18 from revision to provisions for unexpended and unencumbered balance of the expendable big game depredation fund. An increase in resident license fees and nonresident daily fishing licenses of generally 20%, adjustment in certain miscellaneous fees, and new trophy species control hunt application fees in combination with legislative direction to the Fish and Game Commission to implement Price Lock discounting to increase annual license purchase is expected to increase revenue in the fish and game account by \$3,000,000 annually, which may be slightly reduced in FY18 because the fee and price lock provisions become effective with sale of 2018 licenses on December 1, 2017. Distribution of funds between the fish and game account and set-aside accounts are revised but there is no fiscal impact to the total amount of dedicated revenue. There would be an estimated increase in the winterfeed account and the control of depredation of private property account of \$249,000 each for a total redistribution of \$498,000, with a corollary decrease in the fish and game account. There would also be an increase of \$793,000 from fishing and combination license revenue in the fish and game account authorized for various fishery purposes with no impact to the total amount of dedicated revenue.

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DISCLAIMER: This statement of purpose and fiscal note are a mere attachment to this bill and prepared by a proponent of the bill. It is neither intended as an expression of legislative intent nor intended for any use outside of the legislative process, including judicial review (Joint Rule 18).