

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6072

As of April 1, 2020

Title: An act relating to dividing the state wildlife account into the fish, wildlife, and conservation account and the limited fish and wildlife account.

Brief Description: Dividing the state wildlife account into the fish, wildlife, and conservation account and the limited fish and wildlife account.

Sponsors: Senators Rolfes, Braun and Becker; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 1/20/20.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Divides the existing State Wildlife Account into two new accounts—the Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Account and the Limited Fish and Wildlife Account.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Jed Herman (786-7346)

Background: State Wildlife Account. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) have several accounts supporting their operating budget, of which the State Wildlife Account supports approximately 21 percent of its total budget. There are 26 subaccounts used for receiving revenue from specific license sales and, by statute, can only be used for specific purposes. There are funds that come from more general revenue sources, like recreational fishing and hunting licenses, that have less specific statute requirements, thereby allowing greater discretion by DFW for how the money can be used.

2017-19 Budget and Performance Assessment. In the 2017-19 biennial operating budget, the Legislature directed DFW to conduct a budget and performance assessment. The assessment found the current State Wildlife Account receives revenue from sources that are both restricted and non-restricted. The one account does not differentiate the distinction.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill: Changes are made to the way revenue sources are accounted that support the operating budget of DFW. The State Wildlife Account is eliminated and is replaced by two new accounts. The Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Account is used to receive revenue that by statute, is more discretionary in nature. The Limited Fish and Wildlife Account is used to receive revenue that by statute, limits how DFW uses the funds.

Fee rates or amounts of revenue are not changed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2021.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The bill is needed as it will provide greater transparency for people, like legislative staff, who review our account to know what the actual fund balance is with regard to non-restricted funds. Under current law, restricted fund sources can give the appearance that there is healthy fund balance for DFW to use when in reality the non-restricted funds could actually be very low. We believe this bill will help in having others better understand our budget.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Tom McBride, DFW; Morgan Stinson, DFW.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.