
Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee

HB 2485

Brief Description: Regarding the purchase of land by the department of fish and wildlife.

Sponsors: Representative Kretz.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Limits the ability of the Department of Fish and Wildlife to purchase private land greater than five acres in size in counties where more than 70% of the land is in public or tribal ownership.
- Requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife to financially guarantee that any new land purchases will be managed for the control of noxious weeds and the maintenance of forest health.

Hearing Date: 1/12/10

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) has the authority to acquire various property rights in the name of the state for purposes consistent with the other legislative authorities of the Commission. The Commission may acquire lands, buildings, water rights, rights-of-way, and other property through gift, lease, condemnation, or purchase from a willing seller.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is prohibited from purchasing any real estate from a private seller that is greater than five acres in size, or multiple parcels that add up to five acres, in any county that has a combined ownership of public and tribal land that exceeds seventy

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percent of the county's land base unless the purchase has been specifically directed by the Legislature and the local county authority consents to the transaction.

Any new land purchased by the WDFW must be accompanied with a bond or other financial guarantee that assures the land will be managed for the control of noxious weeds and the maintenance of forest health. The size of the financial guarantee must be decided upon by the local county and be based on the size of the parcel.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.