

NATURAL RESOURCES -- DEPARTMENTWIDE

Recreational Aids and Wildlife Management

Motion:

Move to adopt the following provisions:

All-Terrain Vehicle Safety Enhancement Grant. Restore funding for the all-terrain vehicle (ATV) safety enhancement grant program. Require the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to annually determine the amount necessary to provide funding for the program, and that this amount be the greater of \$297,000 or the amount calculated by multiplying 80¢ by the number of ATVs and utility terrain vehicles (UTVs) registered as of the last day of February of the prior fiscal year. Estimate funding of \$297,000 in each year of the biennium. Specify that if DNR maintains an administrative account that allocates moneys appropriated from the segregated (SEG) conservation fund to programs relating to ATVs, DNR is required to treat the amount appropriated for the ATV safety program as an allocation from the administrative ATV account.

In addition, amend program references to ATVs to also include utility terrain vehicles. Also, amend s. 23.33(5m)(c)5. and 7. of the statutes, regarding duties of ATV/UTV safety enhancement program funding recipients, to: (a) include reference to maintaining relationships with off-highway motorcycle clubs and alliances and other organizations promoting recreational operation of off-highway motorcycles; and (b) require the funding recipients to cooperate with DNR to recruit, train, and manage volunteer trail patrol ambassadors. (This section would adopt provisions of 2017 Assembly Bill 181/Senate Bill 124.)

Snowmobile Trail Aids. Increase the maximum amount awarded for basic snowmobile trail aids from \$250 to \$300 per mile per year, and increase the threshold for eligible supplemental trail aids regarding grooming costs from \$150 to \$200 per mile per year. In addition, eliminate the sunset to make permanent the annual trail use sticker fees currently in effect (\$10, \$30, or \$50 per year, including issuing fees, depending on registration category). Further, eliminate the sunset to make permanent the transfer of \$47 for supplemental trail aids from each trail use sticker issued for a snowmobile exempt from registration. Further, direct the Governor's Snowmobile Recreational Council to study options for ensuring adequate funding for development and maintenance of snowmobile trails in the state, especially currently unfunded trails, and that the council report its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to the Joint Committee on Finance by January 1, 2019. (This section would adopt provisions of 2017 Assembly Bill 180/Senate Bill 188.)

Elk Damage Payments. Specify that fencing to prevent elk damage to cover crops for cover grass grown by an individual who owns a game farm to house birds for hunting purposes is eligible to receive wildlife damage abatement assistance under section 29.889(4)(bn) of the statutes for cover crops destroyed by elk.

Wolf Damage Payments. Specify that DNR may not prorate claims for damage associated with gray wolves. Require that, in each fiscal year, the Department utilize any applicable federal funds for these damage payments. If federal funds are insufficient, require the Department to utilize endangered resources funds from the general fund or from the endangered resources account of the segregated (SEG) conservation fund. Specify that, if these funds are insufficient, the Department may request supplemental funding from other Department appropriations under section 13.10 of the statutes. In addition, amend the appropriation under section 20.370(1)(fs) of the statutes to delete the cap on the amount of endangered resources license plate sales and endangered resources income tax checkoff donations that annually may be used for wildlife damage control and endangered resources wildlife damage claims. Further, specify that DNR pay each claim as soon as the Department determines the claim is eligible for reimbursement. Specify that these provisions apply if the gray wolf is on the federal or state endangered species list.

Eliminate Deer and Wild Turkey Carcass Tags. Eliminate the requirement that DNR issue a deer carcass tag when issuing a deer hunting license (including archer, crossbow, gun, or conservation patron license). In addition, the requirement that a person who kills a deer immediately validate the deer carcass tag would also be eliminated. Also, delete the requirement that the member of a group deer hunting party that may kill a deer for another member must possess a current unused deer carcass tag authorized for use on the deer killed, and that the person who kills the deer ensure that a member of his or her group deer hunting party without delay validates the deer carcass tag.

Further, specify that the Department may not require the possession or validation of a wild turkey carcass tag and may not require that a carcass tag be attached to a lawfully killed wild turkey. Change the references to a wild turkey hunting "tag" to a wild turkey hunting "authorization" but continue to require such an authorization in order to hunt wild turkey in a wild turkey hunting zone or during a wild turkey hunting season. Finally, eliminate the requirement that a person who, while operating a motor vehicle on a highway, accidentally collides with and kills a wild turkey have the carcass tagged immediately by a law enforcement officer or notify a law enforcement officer and follow instructions for having the carcass tagged within 24 hours.

Canada Goose Hunting. Delete registration of each goose killed at a farm on which Canada goose hunting is allowed as a measure by which DNR may regulate and limit the number of hunters and maximum harvest of Canada geese under section 29.192 of the statutes. In addition, prohibit the Department from: (a) requiring a person to indicate on his or her hunting permit or otherwise record each Canada goose killed by the person; or (b) requiring a person to report to the Department more than once annually each Canada goose killed by the person.

Note:

[Change to Base: \$594,000 conservation SEG (ATV account)]

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