

offset by the savings incurred by not having to pay an application or renewal fee in the years when the permit would not have to be renewed. The overall effect on local entities would be neutral.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

Wild animal collecting permits

Under current law, any person desiring to collect or possess wild animals that are protected by law, or their nests or eggs, for the purposes of scientific study, school instruction or other educational uses, or rehabilitation, must apply for a permit through the Division of Wildlife within the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Permits are valid for one year, and applicants for a new permit or for renewal must pay a fee of \$25, with the exception of applicants wishing to rehabilitate wild animals, who are not charged.

Effect on the state

The bill extends the period of a permit's validity to three years and increases the application/renewal fee from \$25 to \$75. There would still be no charge for permits for animal rehabilitation. The fiscal effect of the bill would be to reduce the costs to the Division of Wildlife in approving and issuing the permits, since they would not have to be renewed as often, and to reduce the costs to permit holders, who would not be subject to the costs of applying for the permits as often. DNR estimates that the Division of Wildlife would experience savings of between \$45,000 and \$55,000 over the initial three-year period for which new permits would be valid. DNR indicates that these savings would be attributable to lower personnel costs for administering the permit program, as well as a reduction in costs such as postage, special paper stock, envelopes, printing, and publications. These savings would be reflected in reduced expenditures from the Division's operating costs in line item 740-401, Division of Wildlife, in the Wildlife Fund (Fund 015).

DNR estimates that approximately 450 to 500 wild animal collecting permits are issued annually. At the current rate of \$25, this results in income of between \$11,250 and \$12,500 to the Division of Wildlife. Under the bill, permits would be valid for three years instead of one year. Rather than require a continuing annual fee of \$25, the bill would require a single fee of \$75 to be paid for the three-year permit. All current permit holders would have to apply to renew their permits for the three-year period at the \$75 rate. Assuming 450 to 500 permits would have to be renewed, this would result in revenue of between \$33,750 and \$37,500 to the Division. However, these greater revenues would be brought in only every three years. The net result would be the same as charging current permit holders \$25 per year for three years. In the first two intervening years, these current permit holders would not be required to renew, so the only new income from application fees would be from new applicants. There is no estimate as to how many new applicants might apply for a wild animal collecting permit in these "off-years."

Effect on local entities

According to DNR, approximately 60% of wild animal collecting permit holders are local governments or political subdivisions. The permits are issued to individuals representing these entities, and are paid for by the public entities. These may include county or city park districts, universities, and local school districts. Some federal and state agencies also hold permits, as well as environmental consulting firms, private colleges and schools, private educational facilities, and independent researchers. It is not expected that the bill will impose any cost on local governments that already hold permits, due to the higher initial cost of renewing the permits being offset by the savings in the years in which the permits do not have to be renewed. The overall effect on local governments would be neutral.

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