



SB18-143

SHORT TITLE: Parks and Wildlife Measures to Increase Revenue

LONG TITLE: Concerning measures to increase revenue for the parks and wildlife division, and, in connection therewith, setting certain hunting, fishing, parks, and recreation fees.

SPONSORS: Sen. Fenberg and Coram/Rep. Arndt and Wilson.

COMMITTEES: Senate Committees – Finance; Appropriations. House Committees – Agriculture, Livestock, & Natural Resources; Finance; Appropriations.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL: To allow the Division of Parks and Wildlife to set and increase fees for hunters and anglers, stamp fees, surcharges and apply a CPI index to provide stable funding for the programs which include: attraction of more hunters and anglers; modernization and improvement of fish hatcheries; dam repair and maintenance; reduction of maintenance and construction backlog; planning and acquisition of another state park; continued development of Cameo shooting range; grants to non-profits for migratory bird programs.

PROPOSERS OF THE BILL: Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS: Hunters, anglers, campers, and park users including those purchasing day or annual passes.

BACKGROUND: CPW is a cash-funded agency with enterprise status (TABOR exempt). It operates 41 state parks some including reservoirs, and manages wildlife programs including wildlife management programs and issuance of hunting and fishing licenses. To combat shortage of funds and rising inflation, the division has cut \$40 million from the wildlife program and cut 50 positions. Current funding does not allow the division to plan for future programs or adequately maintain existing ones.

Is this bill necessary this year? There is no specific deadline; however, CPW states that it has a \$30 million deficit in operating funds as well as significant backlog in construction and maintenance which continues to increase.

How does the bill change current law? Fees set in current law have not been increased for over a decade. This bill sets higher fee limits as well as allowing the wildlife commission to apply a CPI to help the division keep up with inflation. The bill requires those entering a state park by means other than a motor vehicle to purchase a pass, and directs the Commission to establish rules. The bill requires the division to provide an accounting showing a list of non profit organizations that received grant money in the previous 12 months from sale of the migratory waterfowl stamp. The bill prohibits non-profits from using grant money for lobbying or political purposes.

Does the bill affect the prior appropriations system? No

How is the bill implemented? The division and wildlife council will adopt new regulations to implement statutory changes

Practical considerations: At what point would fee increases discourage park attendance or hunting and fishing activities? Is this a greater consideration for non-residents (for hunting licenses)? Fees will be imposed on youth (16-17) and seniors who were previously free in order to access federal funds. Will this decrease participation? How can the many non-consumptive users of CPW facilities help with additional funding? Although the bill sets forth goals for various programs and activities, it does not appear to prioritize those for spending purposes once the money is received.

Fiscal Impact: According the legislative council fiscal note, the bill will increase revenue to the CPW by approximately \$8.8 million in FY 2018-19 and approximately \$19.4 million in FY 2019-20. These will be deposited into the funds shown in Table 2 below. By changing the fee charged for senior fishing licenses from free to \$8.00, the CPW will be eligible for a federal match of up to \$1.7 million from the federal Pittman-Robertson Act. It is not clear at the present time how much federal funding will be received, so no figure is included in the fiscal note.