

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE BILL ANALYSIS

AMENDMENT DATE: June 25, 2008
POSITION: Oppose

BILL NUMBER: SB 1172
AUTHOR: R. Dutton

BILL SUMMARY: Wildlife: Game Management

Existing law establishes the non-dedicated account within the Fish and Game Preservation Fund (FGPF) that can be used for the general purposes of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to implement hunting, fishing, and related programs. There are also 25 dedicated accounts within the FGPF that must be separately accounted for and can only be used for specified purposes. This bill would create or modify dedicated accounts for elk, deer, antelope, and bear hunting tag revenue and create a dedicated account for the wildlife management areas hunting program.

FISCAL SUMMARY

This bill would not adjust the amount of fees paid for a hunting license or various game tags. It would, however, require that revenue from specified permits and tags be deposited into dedicated accounts with restricted uses instead of the non-dedicated FGPF. To the extent that revenue is removed from the non-dedicated FGPF, it places pressure on the General Fund to support broad DFG functions. While the bill would allow dedicated account funds to be used for enforcement and direct administration, it does not appear to allow funds to be used for indirect administration such as accounting, information technology support, etc. These functions support a wide range of DFG programs, including hunting. The DFG estimates that the applicable amount related to elk is \$170,000, \$2 million for wildlife management areas, \$4.1 million for deer, \$750,000 for bear, and about \$10,000 for antelope. This would move a total of \$7 million from the non-dedicated account to dedicated accounts.

The creation of dedicated accounts also increases the complexity of the DFG's fiscal administration which increases the likelihood that not all funds will be appropriately managed.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

Amendments to this bill since our analysis of the April 3, 2008 version do not alter our position. The bill has been amended to allow the dedicated accounts to be used for enforcement and direct administrative costs.

COMMENTS

Finance opposes this bill because it would result in a significant General Fund cost pressure and would complicate the DFG's fiscal management and reduce flexibility in administering hunting programs.

This bill would establish dedicated accounts for elk, deer, antelope, bear, and wildlife management areas. The revenue from tags that would be deposited into these accounts would be restricted to use for habitat improvements and other benefits to the species, to improve hunting opportunities, and for enforcement and direct program administration. Fish and Game Commission approval would be required before any funds could be expended. These restrictions would limit the ability of the DFG to administer its programs in the most efficient manner and unnecessarily complicate their already complex fiscal management system.

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Analyst/Principal (0634) M. Almy	Date	Program Budget Manager Karen Finn	Date
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Department Deputy Director	Date
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Governor's Office:	By:	Date:	Position Approved _____
			Position Disapproved _____

BILL ANALYSIS Form DF-43 (Rev 03/95 Buff)

BILL ANALYSIS/ENROLLED BILL REPORT--(CONTINUED)

AUTHOR

AMENDMENT DATE

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SB 1172

Code/Department Agency or Revenue Type	SO	(Fiscal Impact by Fiscal Year)							Fund Code
	LA	(Dollars in Thousands)							
	CO	PROP							
	RV	98	FC	2008-2009	FC	2009-2010	FC	2010-2011	
3600/Dept FishGam	SO	No		-----	See Fiscal Summary	-----			0200

<u>Fund Code</u>	<u>Title</u>
0200	Fish and Game Preservation Fund