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## BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 940 (Substitute S-1)  
Sponsor: Senator George A. McManus, Jr.  
Committee: Appropriations

Date Completed: 5-14-96

### CONTENT

Senate Bill 940 (S-1) represents a proposal by the Department of Natural Resources to generate sufficient revenues to support current Game & Fish Protection Fund program levels and allow for revenue increases over the next five years. The bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to increase and decrease fees for resident and nonresident hunting and fishing licenses beginning March 1997, with additional increases in 1999 and 2001; specify that senior citizen and certain junior licenses would be discounted by 50%, with other junior licenses set at \$1; provide for technical definitions; and allow the Director discretion to defer implementation of the 1999 and 2001 increases.

Table A lists the individual license fees in the bill for the first year, and for the years beginning in 1999 and 2001.

### FISCAL IMPACT

For FY 1996-97, the bill would generate approximately \$3 million to \$4 million in additional revenues to the Game & Fish Protection Fund (from fishing licenses purchased after the March 1997 effective date). For the first full year, the bill would generate approximately \$5.7 million over the current fiscal year. Assuming similar sales volumes over time, there would be further revenue increases of approximately \$6.5 million in 1999 and \$4.3 million in the year 2001; for a total revenue increase after five years of approximately \$16.5 million over the current level.

The Legislature last authorized an increase in hunting and fishing license fees in 1986. For the past three years, the Legislature has addressed revenue shortfalls within the Game & Fish Protection Fund by program reductions, supplemental General Fund deposits, and funding shifts. For FY 1996-97 (H.B. 5587), the Department of Natural Resources anticipates a Game & Fish Protection Fund revenue shortfall of approximately \$2 million.

Senate Bill 940 (S-1) also would adjust the source of fee revenues to reflect hunting and fishing program appropriations. Currently, the Game & Fish Protection Fund receives 49% of its revenue from hunting fees, 38% from fishing fees, and 13% from sportsperson licenses. The first full year fee schedule in Senate Bill 940 (S-1) would result in a 48% contribution from hunting fees, 41% from fishing fees, and 11% from sportsperson licenses.

Table B outlines the anticipated changes in revenues from different categories of hunting and fishing licenses.

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