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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Gallegos/Lara/Madrid/Lundstrom **LAST UPDATED** _____
ORIGINAL DATE 1/28/23
SHORT TITLE Increase Free Fishing Days **BILL**
NUMBER House Bill 197
ANALYST Gaussoin

REVENUE* (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY23	FY24	FY25		
	Indeterminate but minimally negative		Recurring	Game Protection Fund

Parentheses () indicate revenue decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Relates to Senate Bill 254.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Responses Received From
Department of Game and Fish (DGF)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill 197

House Bill 197 would double the number of days the game and fish director, with approval from the State Game Commission, may designate as free fishing days from two nonconsecutive Saturdays to two nonconsecutive two-day weekends. During free fishing days, residents and nonresidents can exercise the same privileges as those with fishing licenses.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect June 16, 2023, (90 days after the Legislature adjourns) if signed into law.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

DGF says doubling the number of free fishing days would result in a loss of revenue to the game protection fund but the amount is likely to be insignificant. The department reports it sold 38 thousand one-day fishing licenses in license year 2021-2022 at \$12 each. At that relatively small fee, it is unlikely a significant number of one-day anglers would instead take advantage of a free fishing day.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to the website heyitsfree.net, all 50 states have free fishing days; most have one to a few days but anglers can fish for free in California from early July to early September and fishing is always free in Hawaii.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

DGF notes it would have to publicize an expansion of free fishing days but it does not expect that to be an administrative burden for its staff.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

HB197 relates to Senate Bill 254, which would increase fishing license fees.

HG/rl/ne/al