

**FINAL
FISCAL NOTE**

Drafting Number: LLS 12-0788	Date: July 3, 2012
Prime Sponsor(s): Rep. Sonnenberg Sen. Schwartz	Bill Status: Signed into Law
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TITLE: CONCERNING THE CREATION OF THE PARKS AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION TO REPLACE THE PARKS AND WILDLIFE BOARD IN THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, DESCRIBING THE COMPOSITION AND TERMS OF THE COMMISSION, AND REDUCING APPROPRIATIONS.

Fiscal Impact Summary	FY 2012-2013	FY 2013-2014
State Revenue		
State Expenditures		
Cash Funds		
Wildlife Cash Fund	(\$11,607)	
State Parks Cash Fund	(6,448)	
FTE Position Change		
Effective Date: The bill was signed into law by the Governor and took effect June 4, 2012.		
Appropriation Summary for FY 2012-2013: See State Appropriations section.		
Local Government Impact: None.		

Summary of Legislation

The bill replaces the Parks and Wildlife Board in the Department of Natural Resources with the Parks and Wildlife Commission. The commission is comprised of 11 voting members to be appointed by the Governor and two nonvoting ex officio members — the Executive Director of the Department of Natural Resources and the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture. The bill specifies that the appointed members must represent various geographical regions in the state and certain areas of interest or knowledge. Initial term lengths are staggered to reduce the impact to the board that results from member turnover. The commission is authorized to meet as often as necessary, but at least two meetings per calendar year must be conducted west of the Continental Divide. The commission must also submit a five-year strategic plan by December 31, 2013. For every year that is included in the strategic plan, the commission is required to submit an annual report to the House Agriculture, Livestock, and Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Energy Committee.

The bill also gives the commission permanent authority to set fees for the use of parks and outdoor recreation facilities and programs. The Parks and Wildlife Board has had fee setting authority since 1996. The authority will expire on July 1, 2012 under current law.

Background

In 2011, Senate Bill 11-208 combined the Division of Wildlife and the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation to form the Division of Parks and Wildlife. In so doing, the existing Wildlife Commission was merged with the existing Board of Parks and Outdoor Recreation to form the 16-member Parks and Wildlife Board.

State Expenditures

The bill is expected to reduce cash fund expenditures in the Department of Natural Resources by \$18,055 in FY 2012-13. Reducing the number of board members to 13 commissioners will result in a decrease in costs for the Division of Parks and Wildlife. In FY 2010-11, the nine-member Wildlife Commission incurred a total of \$53,503 in expenses, or \$5,945 per commissioner including per diem, meals and lodging, mileage, and copies for mailing. Based on these expenses, this fiscal note assumes that the current 16-member board will incur total expenses of \$95,120 ($\$5,945 \times 16$) in FY 2011-12.

If the new commission meets 12 times a year, with one travel day and one preparation day for each meeting, at \$50 per diem per day, the total per diem expenses in FY 2012-13 will be \$23,400. In FY 2010-11, each commissioner incurred an average of \$4,128 in meals and lodging, mileage, and copies. This fiscal note assumes that this number will remain fairly constant, therefore, total expenses for meals and lodging, mileage, and copies for FY 2012-13 are estimated at \$53,665 ($\$4,128 \times 13$). Therefore, total expenses for FY 2012-13, including per diem, will be \$77,065, resulting in a net savings of \$18,055.

The strategic planning and reporting requirements in the bill will result in additional workload, but the division will absorb this within existing appropriations.

State Appropriations

The FY 2012-13 Wildlife Cash Fund appropriation to the Department of Natural Resources will be reduced by \$11,607 and the State Parks Cash Fund appropriation to the Department of Natural Resources will be reduced by \$6,448.

Departments Contacted

Natural Resources