

FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Measure: HB 3399 - A

Seventy-Sixth Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2011 Regular Session
Legislative Fiscal Office

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Date: 4-1-2011

Measure Description:

Authorizes State Department of Fish and Wildlife, State Marine Board and State Department of Agriculture to require person to stop and submit recreational or commercial watercraft to inspection for aquatic invasive species.

Government Unit(s) Affected:

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Department of Agriculture, Oregon State Marine Board, Oregon State Police, Judicial Department, Local Government

Local Government Mandate:

This bill does not affect local governments' service levels or shared revenues sufficient to trigger Section 15, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

Analysis:

The measure authorizes the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB), and the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to require a person to stop at a check station and submit to inspection of recreational and commercial watercraft for aquatic invasive species. The measure requires all persons to stop at the check stations and the agencies to inspect all watercraft and allows safe harbor for any persons found to be carrying an invasive species. Failure to stop and submit to an inspection at a check station commits a Class D violation.

Currently, ODFW operates voluntary watercraft inspection stations at eight roadside checkpoints and 48 various boat ramps across the state. In 2010, using five two-person teams rotating among the roadside checkpoints and boat ramps, the Department inspected 2,852 watercrafts. ODFW estimated voluntary compliance with the inspections at approximately 27% and estimates that mandatory inspection of all watercraft will result in approximately 1,500 additional inspections at each inspection station.

ODFW estimates that if the same number of checkpoints were operated under the new mandatory stop provisions included in the bill, additional staffing and equipment would be required at each inspection station to accommodate the increased workload for a total cost of \$645,775 Other Funds in the 2011-2013 biennium. Included in these costs are eight part-time Fish and Wildlife Technician positions and one supervisory Fish and Wildlife Biologist position, totaling 3.78 FTE, in order to double the staffing of each team rotating to the various checkpoints and boat ramps. Additional costs include decontamination equipment, vehicle and trailer maintenance, signage, and fuel. ODFW notes that increasing staffing levels would mirror the mandatory inspection stations implemented in Idaho.

The Legislative Fiscal Office assumes that if no additional staff is added to handle the increased workload, ODFW will need to reduce the total number of manned checkpoints in operation on any given day. Depending on traffic flow at that particular checkpoint, there may be an increase in the total number of watercraft inspected per day, only not occurring at as many checkpoints throughout the state. If ODFW does not reduce the number of daily operated checkpoints and maintains current staffing levels at each checkpoint, there could be increased wait times for watercraft inspections, and may or may not be an increase in the number of watercraft being inspected per day depending on the current capacity of inspection staff and traffic flow.

Currently, the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) provides funding for the ODFW operated checkpoints through the Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Permit Program which is funded through boater registration fees. OSMB states that no fees will be increased as a result of this measure.

The measure will have a minimal expenditure impact to the Oregon State Police, Oregon Judicial Department and local government for increased costs related to the establishment and enforcement of a Class D violation.