

SB 373 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/13, 3/30

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs State Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) to develop and adopt by rule a pilot program for urban deer population control. The program must allow a city to petition the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) for a determination that deer populations within city limits have risen to levels that constitute a public nuisance. If ODFW makes such determination, the program must allow a local government body or agent to take deer to reduce populations within the city limits. In developing pilot program, the Commission is directed to consult with governing bodies of cities where urban deer populations are a concern and food banks or other charitable organizations that serve such cities. Program rules adopted by the Commission must include, but not be limited to, provisions for means and manner by which deer may be taken, including a prohibition on darts and lethal injection; provisions to ensure to extent feasible that edible portions of deer taken under program are distributed at expense of local government to local food bank or charitable organization; requirement that if deer hides and antlers are not sold by local government to persons licensed to purchase hides and antlers, they are surrendered to ODFW; and provisions for ensuring number of deer taken does not exceed number necessary to reduce deer population to level that no longer constitutes a public nuisance. Prior to exercising any authority under bill, requires local government to adopt ordinance restricting use of materials to lure, attract or entice deer. Directs ODFW to first allow local governments to engage in activities under pilot program no later than January 1, 2019. Directs ODFW to submit report on program to Legislature during 2027 legislative session. Repeals pilot program on January 1, 2029.

FISCAL: Has minimal fiscal impact

REVENUE: No revenue impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Requires city to first adopt an ordinance, resolution, or order declaring that deer populations have risen to levels that constitute a public nuisance prior to petitioning the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) for assistance in reducing those populations. Removes requirement that hides be surrendered to ODFW.

BACKGROUND:

Individual deer can consume 5-10 pounds of forage per day, depending on the season. In urban and neighborhood settings, browsing can impact flower and vegetable gardens, damage landscapes and empty bird feeders. Browsing can damage economically valuable trees and other plants and reduce the yield of fruit trees. Bucks can damage shrubs and saplings by rubbing the bark with their antlers. Increased deer populations can also spread tick-borne illnesses, such as Lyme disease, in addition to other diseases and parasites. There have been cases of deer attacking people and pets, and in some cases killing small pets. Increased deer population in urban areas can also lead to increased vehicle accidents.

Senate Bill 373 would direct the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to establish a pilot program to control urban deer populations in cities where deer constitute a public nuisance.