

FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

80th Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2019 Regular Session
Legislative Fiscal Office

Measure: HB 3118

*Only Impacts on Original or Engrossed
Versions are Considered Official*

Prepared by: Krista Dauenhauer
Reviewed by: John Terpening
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Measure Description:

Authorizes State Department of Fish and Wildlife use of appointed agents for purposes of cougar management.

Government Unit(s) Affected:

Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)

Summary of Fiscal Impact:

Costs related to the measure are indeterminate at this time - See explanatory analysis.

Analysis:

The legislation would provide the Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) the authority to appoint agents to take cougars in accordance with the cougar management plan. ODFW would adopt rules and criteria for selecting agents and providing training. ODFW must provide the agents with appropriate credentials and documentation for the assignment.

Fiscal estimates for this legislation are indeterminate at this time as they will depend on the number of agents that will become authorized to take cougars and rulemaking regarding how individual agents will be reimbursed for their costs. Rulemaking and costs associated with printing credentials for agents are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgetary parameters; however, workload associated with training, oversight of the agents, and data collection could have an impact on existing staffing levels depending on the number of agents authorized by the agency. While the measure does not specify, ODFW assumes any taken cougars would be relinquished to the agency and agents may be reimbursed for their costs associated with the hunt, including but not limited to, mileage, veterinarian bills, field supplies, and dog food. Until rules are established, it is indeterminate if potential reimbursements of agent expenses will be made regardless of a taken cougar, or if ODFW will adopt a flat rate reimbursement schedule, or simply reimburse agents on a cost-by-cost basis.

While the costs associated with this legislation could potentially be absorbed with existing staff and budgetary resources, the agency may need to return to the Emergency Board or a subsequent legislative session to request additional resources in order to comply with the provisions of this measure.