

HB 2914 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

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Meeting Dates: 5/31, 6/2

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes the Oregon Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Program in the Department of State Lands. Requires the program to address abandoned and derelict vessels and ensure that state-owned submerged and submersible lands are managed for the public interests in fisheries, navigation, commerce, and recreation. Directs the department to identify and work with stakeholders to develop a policy framework for program implementation. Authorizes department rulemaking. Creates the Oregon Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Fund in the State Treasury. Allows the department to accept moneys for deposit in the fund. Requires the department to submit a program progress report to committees of the Legislative Assembly on or before February 15, 2024. Sunsets reporting requirements on January 2, 2025. Declares emergency, takes effect on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Funding source for Oregon Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Fund.

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Abandoned vessels are left without authorization on public or private land, or in state or other waters. Derelict vessels are often sinking, actively polluting or obstructing a waterway, endangering life or property, or in a dilapidated condition and in danger of becoming a significant hazard. Abandoned or derelict vessels (ADV) can cause negative impacts on water quality, damage floats and docks, and can impact safe navigation for other water users. According to statute, an enforcement agency that has responsibility for land or water has the authority to seize these vessels with or without notice depending on the hazards involved.

In a 2022 memo to then-Governor Kate Brown, the Director of the Oregon Department of State Lands noted there were at least 19 known ADV commercial vessels of concern statewide and 175 recreational ADVs in the Portland metro area that were of concern, but no statewide recreational ADV information was currently available.

House Bill 2914 A establishes the Oregon Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Program in the Department of State Lands and the Oregon Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Fund in the State Treasury. The measure requires the program address abandoned and derelict vessels and ensure that state-owned submerged and submersible lands are managed for the public interests in fisheries, navigation, commerce, and recreation.