
Natural Resources Committee

HB 2626

Brief Description: Creating the evergreen recreation pass.

Sponsors: Representatives McIntire, Doumit, McDermott, Simpson, Linville, Benson, Kagi, Jarrett, Nixon, Edwards, Ogden and Rockefeller.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates an Evergreen recreation pass as an annual renewable pass that can be used by people to access recreation sites owned by the parks and recreation commission, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- Purchase of the Evergreen recreation pass is optional. The pass would be used in lieu of any other day-use pass required by those agencies to access their lands.
- Limits the cost of the annual pass to \$15, plus any increases based upon the fiscal growth factor as determined by the Office of Financial Management.

Hearing Date: 2/6/02

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background:

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Parks and Recreation Commission currently do not charge fees for access to their recreation sites. The Department of Fish and Wildlife charges \$10 for the fish and wildlife lands vehicle use permit that is issued in the form of a decal. One of these decals is issued free with the issuance of each annual saltwater, freshwater, combination, small game hunting, big game hunting, and trapping license.

There is a possibility that the Parks and Recreation Commission or the DNR could charge a day-use fee in the future for access to their recreation sites. There is no mechanism to establish a single pass that could be used at all state-owned sites if these other agencies decided to impose day-use fees.

Summary of Bill:

The Evergreen recreation pass is created as a renewable annual pass that can be used by people to access recreation sites owned by the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). The Evergreen recreation pass would be used in lieu of any other day-use pass required by those agencies to access their lands, including the fish and wildlife lands vehicle use permit. Purchase of the Evergreen recreation pass is optional.

The cost of the Evergreen recreation pass may not exceed \$15, plus any increases based upon the fiscal growth factor as determined by the Office of Financial Management (OFM).

The OFM must consult with the Parks and Recreation Commission, the DNR, and the DFW regarding the development and issuance of an Evergreen recreation pass. If more than one of these three agencies decides to require day-use fees at its recreation sites, then the OFM is directed to require those agencies imposing day-use fees to make the Evergreen recreation pass available for purchase within 90 days after the agency determined to charge day-use fees.

Once the Evergreen recreation pass is available for purchase, a person may either purchase individual day-use passes from the agencies or may purchase the Evergreen recreation pass in lieu of the individual day-use passes. A person who has already purchased an individual day-use pass may exchange it for an Evergreen recreation pass upon payment of any difference in the price of the pass.

Agencies requiring day-use passes must also make the Evergreen recreation pass available for sale. The Evergreen recreation pass must also be made available through the Department of Licensing, which must include a notice of the availability of this pass in the notice of license plate tab renewals. Agencies selling the Evergreen recreation pass are directed to encourage purchasers of the pass to answer optional questions on where they are likely to use the pass, and how often they are likely to use the pass. The agencies must provide the answers to these questions to the OFM. The OFM is required to develop a formula for distributing the revenue from sales of the pass. The OFM is required to consider the information obtained from answers to the optional questions asked to the purchasers in developing the distribution formula.

At least 75 percent of the funds collected from sales of the Evergreen recreation pass must be used for maintenance, repair, and equipment for these agency recreation sites. No more than 25 percent of the proceeds can be used for the costs of collecting the fee.

The Evergreen recreation pass is displayed in the same manner as a fish and wildlife lands vehicle use permit. Nothing in the establishment of an Evergreen recreation pass alters the authority of these agencies to determine at which recreation sites a day-use pass will be required for access.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 31, 2002.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.