



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Legislative Affairs Office

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2013 Session Legislative Proposals

1. Recreational Hunting and Fishing License Exemptions for Specified Veteran Events

This proposal would provide an exemption from the requirement to purchase a recreational hunting or fishing license to all persons participating in a Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission-permitted event where the primary purpose of the event is rehabilitation or enjoyment of disabled veterans or active duty military personnel, Reservists, Florida National Guard, and U.S. Coast Guard. This issue is supported by the Florida Dept. of Veterans Affairs, and the Florida Dept. of Military Affairs.

2. Commercial Fishing License Veterans' Exemption

This proposal provides assistance to veterans who wish to become commercial fishers by waiving certain income requirements for one year. The proposal:

- Through June 30, 2014, waives the income requirement to acquire a Restricted Species endorsement (RS) issued on a Saltwater Products License (commercial fishing license) for all resident military veterans who have been honorably discharged from any branch of the United States Armed Forces, Reserves, Florida National Guard, and U.S. Coast Guard between September 11, 2001 and June 30, 2014; the waiver would be allowed on an individual Saltwater Products License, not on a crew or vessel Saltwater Products License
- Beginning July 1, 2014, waives the income requirement to acquire an RS for one year for a resident military veteran who applies within 4 years after an honorable discharge from any branch of the United States Armed Forces, Reserves, Florida National Guard, and U.S. Coast Guard; the waiver would be allowed one time per military enlistment, and would be issued on an individual Saltwater Products License, not on a crew or vessel Saltwater Products License
- Waives and reduces the income requirement to acquire an RS for one year for any honorably discharged resident military veteran who is certified to have at least a 10% service-connected disability by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces; the income requirement is reduced in half to \$2500.

This issue is supported by the Organized Fishermen of Florida, the Florida Dept. of Veterans Affairs, and the Florida Dept. of Military Affairs.

3. Increase Free Saltwater and Freshwater Fishing Days

This proposal would authorize the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to increase the

total number of license-free recreational saltwater fishing days from two to four, annually; and it would allow the Commission to increase the total number of license-free recreational freshwater fishing days from two to four, annually.

4. Adjust Hunting and Fishing License Residency Requirements

This proposal would eliminate the six month residency requirement in order to obtain a resident recreational hunting or fishing license. It would require, however, that one of five specified documents that prove residency for other governmental agencies must be provided when acquiring a resident hunting or fishing license.

The proposal would further delete the requirement for a resident saltwater commercial fisherman to prove six months residency in a Florida county in order to obtain a resident Saltwater Products License (commercial fishing license). It retains, however, the requirement that a commercial fisherman prove one year residency in the State in order to obtain the resident license.

5. Authorize Discretionary Fine to Fund Wildlife Alert Program

This proposal would grant trial judges the discretion to assess fines for violations of fish and wildlife laws, over and above those fines already statutorily authorized, to be paid to the Wildlife Alert Reward Association (Wildlife Alert). The amount of the fine, or whether to assess this additional fine at all, would be left to the discretion of the judge, with a cap on the upper limit of the fine. The cap would be the maximum fine authorized by the violation. This fine would not impact funds currently received by the clerks of court, the judiciary, or other state agencies. Wildlife Alert operates a non-profit, reward-based program that offers citizens rewards in exchange for information that leads to the arrest of poachers or others who violate Florida's fish and wildlife laws.

6. Correct Reference to Federal Boating Laws

This proposal would remove antiquated references to Federal law and insert the proper references. The proposal would not change the way any vessel related activities are currently enforced in State waters.