

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee

BILL: CS/SB 2150

INTRODUCER: Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation and Senator Bennett

SUBJECT: Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commssion

DATE: March 25, 2009 REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Hennigan	Kiger	EP	Fav/CS
2.			GA	
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

**Please see Section VIII. for Additional Information:**

- |                              |                                     |   |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| A. COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE..... | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Statement of Substantial Changes        |
| B. AMENDMENTS.....           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Technical amendments were recommended   |
|                              | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Amendments were recommended             |
|                              | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Significant amendments were recommended |

**I. Summary:**

CS/SB 2150 directs the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to create a voluntary \$2 contribution check-off option on all recreational activity licenses issued under Part VI, Ch.379 F.S. for the purposes of providing funds to Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc. a non-profit organization located in Palmetto, Florida. The contributions will be used to breed, raise, and train guide dogs for the blind.

The committee substitute would take effect on July 1, 2009.

This committee substitute creates an unnumbered section of Florida law.

**II. Present Situation:**

Part VI, of Chapter 379, Florida Statutes details the duties of the FWC with regards to issuing recreational licenses. Specific recreational licenses found in these provisions are:

- Sportsman – which includes hunting, freshwater and saltwater fishing licenses, Wildlife Management Area, archery, muzzleloading gun, crossbow, turkey, Florida waterfowl, snook and lobster permits;
- Hunting – which includes hunting License, Wildlife Management Area, archery, muzzleloading gun, crossbow, turkey and Florida waterfowl permits;
- Freshwater Fishing
- Saltwater Fishing

For each license the FWC provides that they may be issued for an: annual, 5-year, or lifetime term. Costs of licenses are:

- Sportsman – \$100 annually/\$1,001.50 lifetime (5-year is not available)
- Hunting – \$17 annually / \$77.50 5-year / \$501.50 lifetime
- Freshwater Fishing – \$17 annually / \$77.50 5-year / \$301.50 lifetime
- Saltwater Fishing – \$17 annually / \$77.50 5-year / \$301.50 lifetime

The specific license fees are established by the Legislature and the revenues are deposited in various trust funds utilized by the FWC.

Sales of the licenses are handled by the FWC through a variety of outlets. These are: county tax collectors; sporting goods stores; other retailers that may sell hunting or fishing gear; internet; and by phone. The FWC has outsourced the licensing programming.

### **FWC Check-off Option**

Presently, the FWC does not have a voluntary contribution check-off option listed on their recreational activity licenses. According to s. 379.352(13) F.S., the FWC allows residents and nonresidents to make a donation of \$5 or any amount to any FWC agency run programs such as hunting and fishing. In 2007-08, approximately 19% (22,475 individuals) chose to donate to youth hunting and fishing programs at the time they purchased a recreational license. In fiscal year 2007-08, FWC collected \$100,233 in youth hunting and fishing donations from 22,475 individuals. A comparison between FY 2007-08 and FY 2008-09 for July 1 through Feb. 28 indicates that donations are down by about 10% this year. If this trend holds, future collections may be reduced.

The FWC uses an outsourced vendor to manage their license sales and donations. The cost reported by the vendor for adding a check-off box is \$0.90 per license sold. Presently, FWC's vendor has waived the transaction fee for the youth hunting and fishing donations since FWC encourages the purchase of lifetime licenses. While the vendor has waived the fee for youth hunting and fishing donations, the vendor indicated that they would not continue to do so for other donations in the future.

Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc., established in 1982 and located in Palmetto, Florida, is one of only 13 guide dog schools in the United States to be certified by the National Association of Guide Dog Users. It is the only one located in the Southeastern United States. The next nearest

Guide Dog school to Florida is located in Texas, making Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc. the only guide dog option for residents of Florida.

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

**Section 1:** Creates a provision directing the FWC to create a voluntary contribution option of \$2 for Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc. on all recreational activity licenses issued under Part VI, ch.379 F.S. Funds raised from the contribution are to be distributed quarterly by the FWC to Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc. for the purposes of breeding, raising, and training guide dogs for the blind.

**Section 2:** Provides that the committee substitute will take effect July 1, 2009.

### IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

### V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Applicants for FWC recreational licenses would have an option to donate \$2 by selecting a check-off on the form. It is unknown how many individuals would voluntarily contribute.

The Southeastern Guide Dogs Corporation would see some positive fiscal impact. The FWC estimates approximately 22,000 donations from the check-off option, totaling \$44,000 annually. Based on the costs incurred to FWC, the net donation to Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc. is an estimated \$19,140 (\$44,000 - \$24,860) annually.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The direct cost FWC will have to pay to their vendor is a \$0.90 for every \$2 donated to Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc. The actual cost per unit, which includes the cost of

administrative staff incurred by the FWC, is \$1.13 for every \$2 donated to Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc.

The FWC estimates donations to the Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc. will be approximately \$44,000 annually. Given their unit cost of \$1.13 for every \$2 donated the FWC anticipates spending \$24,860 annually to implement the committee substitute, unless the vendor waives the \$0.90 per transaction fee.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Additional Information:**

**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

**CS by Environmental Preservation and Conservation on March 24, 2009:**

The only difference is the CS increases the voluntary contribution check-off option on all recreational activity licenses from \$1 to \$2.

**B. Amendments:**

None.