

HB 1199 - AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

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2026 SESSION

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08/06

HOUSE BILL

1199

AN ACT enabling the fish and game department to create a permit and fee for the use of fish and game staff by other state agencies and departments.

SPONSORS: Rep. Spillane, Rock. 2; Rep. Darby, Hills. 11; Rep. DeVito, Rock. 8; Rep. Erf, Hills. 28; Rep. Moffett, Merr. 4; Rep. Ouellet, Coos 3; Rep. Ulery, Hills. 13; Sen. Innis, Dist 7; Sen. Pearl, Dist 17; Sen. Watters, Dist 4

COMMITTEE: Fish and Game and Marine Resources

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill enables the fish and game department to create a permit and fee for the use of fish and game staff by other state agencies and departments.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT enabling the fish and game department to create a permit and fee for the use of fish and game staff by other state agencies and departments.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 New Section; Interagency Support Permit and Reimbursement. Amend RSA 206 by inserting
2 after section 33-h the following new section:

3 206:33-i Interagency Support Permit and Reimbursement.

4 I. The executive director of the fish and game department may establish, after consultation
5 with the fish and game commission, a permit or fee structure for the provision of department
6 personnel, equipment, or expertise to other state agencies or departments, when such support is
7 requested or required for the fulfillment of that agency’s statutory duties, by rule adopted pursuant
8 to RSA 541-A.

9 II. The permit or fee shall be based on the actual cost to the department, including but not
10 limited to:

11 (a) Personnel time, including salary and benefits.

12 (b) Use of department vehicles, vessels, or equipment.

13 (c) Administrative overhead associated with coordination and reporting.

14 III. All revenues collected under this section shall be deposited in the fish and game fund
15 established under RSA 206:33.

16 2 Lifetime Licenses. Amend RSA 214:9-c to read as follows:

17 214:9-c Lifetime Licenses.

18 I.(a) The executive director, at the department of fish and game headquarters only, shall
19 issue lifetime hunting, freshwater fishing, or combination hunting and freshwater fishing licenses
20 similar to that issued on an annual basis under RSA 214:9, III to any resident applicant upon
21 payment of the proper fee, which shall be established by the executive director in accordance with
22 the provisions of paragraph II.

23 (b)(1) In addition, the executive director may issue lifetime licenses to any resident
24 under 16 years of age.

25 (2) In addition further, the executive director may issue discounted lifetime licenses
26 to residents [~~who have not yet reached~~] **at any time on or before** their first birthday. The
27 executive director shall establish the discounted amount of such lifetime licenses in rules adopted
28 under RSA 541-A, except that the fee for a combination hunting and freshwater fishing lifetime
29 license for a resident who has not yet [~~reached~~] **passed** his or her first birthday shall be set by the
30 executive director as prescribed in paragraph II.

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1 (3) The parent or legal guardian of the applicant shall be a resident pursuant to RSA
2 207:1, XXIII. The hunting license or hunting portion of the combination license shall not be valid
3 until the licensee has met the requirements of RSA 214:23-a. Upon meeting the requirements of
4 RSA 214:23-a, the licensee shall have the hunting license or the combination hunting and fishing
5 license validated at the fish and game department headquarters only.

6 (4) The executive director, upon application, may issue a discounted lifetime license
7 to a resident who is a permanently disabled veteran and complies with the provisions of RSA 214:13.

8 II. The discounted amount of a permanently disabled veteran's lifetime license shall be 50
9 percent of the cost of a lifetime license calculated pursuant to paragraph II of this section.

10 III. The executive director shall obtain an actuarial table based on an appropriate annuity
11 from the commissioner of insurance and shall set the fee for the various licenses, including
12 newborns, annually on July 15 of each year for the following year based on the age of the applicant.
13 The fee for any applicant under 16 years of age shall be the same as the fee for a 16-year-old
14 applicant, except for newborns which shall be set by the executive director. In addition the applicant
15 shall pay the agent's fee in accordance with RSA 214-A:4.

16 IV. In no case shall any lifetime license issued be transferable or any portion of the cost of
17 the license refundable.

18 V. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the monies received from the sale of such
19 lifetime licenses shall be deposited with the state treasurer who shall keep the same in a separate
20 fund to be known as the prepaid fish and game license fund. The state treasurer shall invest the
21 monies in the fund and shall annually transfer to the fish and game fund from the prepaid fish and
22 game license fund an amount equal to 9 percent of the principal balance in the fund each year and
23 any interest that accrues to the prepaid fish and game license fund in excess of 5 percent **as**
24 ***unrestricted funds, available for expenditure for any lawful purpose authorized under***
25 ***RSA 206:38.***

26 VI. In addition, the state treasurer shall pay the amount of one annual license fee to the fish
27 and game fund from the proceeds of each lifetime license sold during the current year, the balance
28 going into the prepaid fish and game license fund.

29 ***VII.(a) The state treasurer shall establish a separate, nonlapsing account within***
30 ***the fish and game fund, separate from the amounts transferred pursuant to paragraphs***
31 ***IV and V, to be known as the fish and game modernization and sustainability account. Up***
32 ***to \$600,000 of the principal of the prepaid fish and game license fund may be credited to***
33 ***the fish and game modernization and sustainability account in each of the fiscal years***
34 ***2027 and 2028, and \$50,000 shall be continually appropriated and credited to the account***
35 ***annually beginning in fiscal year 2029, in a single lump sum payment, provided that no***
36 ***such payment shall reduce the balance of the prepaid fish and game license fund below***
37 ***\$1,000,000.***

1 ***(b) Moneys in the fish and game modernization and sustainability account shall***
2 ***be used exclusively for the following purposes:***

3 ***(1) Supporting business operations, technological modernization, and***
4 ***outreach efforts that improve the sale, distribution, and management of hunting, fishing,***
5 ***and trapping licenses.***

6 ***(2) Enhancing digital and operational systems.***

7 ***(3) Advancing public education and engagement on fish, wildlife, and***
8 ***marine resources through technology enabled communication, community outreach, and***
9 ***targeted informational programs.***

10 ~~[VI.]~~ ***VIII.*** Licenses issued pursuant to this section shall entitle the holder thereof to the
11 same privileges and subject the licensee to the same restrictions as a holder of an annual license.

12 ~~[VII.]~~ ***IX.*** The executive director shall issue a bear license and tag upon application by the
13 valid holder of a lifetime hunting or combination license. Such license and tag shall be valid for the
14 current bear season only. The bear license and tag shall be issued at no charge and each shall be of
15 a type and design approved by the executive director. Lifetime licensees holding bear licenses shall
16 comply with all provisions of RSA 208 relative to tagging, transportation and possession of bear.

17 ~~[VII-a.]~~ ***X.*** A person holding a valid lifetime fishing license or lifetime combination hunting
18 and fishing license, issued prior to January 1, 2011, may make an application for a saltwater license
19 at no charge to be issued by the executive director to fish for saltwater smelt, saltwater shad, and
20 saltwater salmonoids only. Such licenses shall be valid for a calendar year only.

21 ~~[VIII.]~~ ***XI.*** The executive director shall, if necessary, adopt rules, pursuant to RSA 541-A,
22 relative to the issuance and validation of the lifetime licenses.

23 3 New Subparagraph; Fish and Game Modernization and Sustainability Fund. Amend RSA
24 6:12, I(b) by inserting after subparagraph (410) the following new subparagraph:

25 (411) Moneys deposited into the fish and game modernization and sustainability
26 account established in RSA 214:9-c.

27 4 Effective Date.

28 I. Sections 2-3 of this act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

29 II. The remainder of this act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

HB 1199- FISCAL NOTE

AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE (AMENDMENT #2026-0527h)

AN ACT enabling the fish and game department to create a permit and fee for the use of fish and game staff by other state agencies and departments.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenue	\$0	Indeterminable		
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	Fish and Game Fund and Prepaid Fish and Game License Fund			
Expenditures*	\$0	Indeterminable Increase		
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	Various Agency Funds, Fish and Game Fund (Fish and Game Modernization and Sustainability Account)			
Appropriations*	\$0	See Methodology Below		\$50,000
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	Fish and Game Modernization and Sustainability Account			

*Expenditure = Cost of bill

*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

METHODOLOGY:

This bill makes various changes, related to the Fish and Game Department:

Section 1 (Effective 60 Days After Passage)

- Authorizes the Fish and Game Department, through rulemaking under RSA 541-A, to establish a permit or fee structure to recover the costs of providing personnel, equipment, or specialized expertise to other state agencies or departments.
 - The Department states it cannot project the frequency with which other agencies would request such assistance or the level at which fees would be set. Accordingly, any resulting revenue to the Department and related expenditures, both for the Department and for requesting agencies, are indeterminable.

Section 2 and 3 (Effective July 1, 2026)

- Expands eligibility for the purchase of a discounted newborn lifetime hunting and fishing license by allowing the license to be sold from the date of birth through the child's first birthday, rather than only up to the day before the first birthday under current law.
 - The Department states it cannot reasonably estimate how many parents would choose to purchase a lifetime license on a child's first birthday. Accordingly, any change in revenue resulting from this provision is indeterminable.

- Provides that interest earned on the prepaid Fish and Game License Fund in excess of 5 percent (5%) be treated as unrestricted funds, available for expenditure for any lawful purpose authorized under RSA 206:38.
 - The Department states this provision would not change the amount of interest earned, but would change the classification of certain interest earnings from restricted to unrestricted. As a result, such funds would become available for general departmental use, and the Department assumes any unrestricted funds realized under this provision could be expended as it becomes available.

- Establishes a separate, nonlapsing Fish and Game Modernization and Sustainability Account (“Account”) within the Fish and Game Fund, distinct from existing transfers under RSA 214:9-c, IV and V. The bill allows up to \$600,000 of principal from the prepaid Fish and Game License Fund to be credited to the account in each of FY 2027 and FY 2028. Beginning in FY 2029, it also provides for a continual annual appropriation of \$50,000, credited in a lump sum, provided the prepaid license fund balance is not reduced below \$1,000,000. This bill does not include clear appropriation (spending) authority for FY 2026 and FY 2027.
 - The Department states the Account would support technology and operational modernization initiatives, including implementation of a customer relationship management system intended to improve customer service, increase operational efficiency, and support long-term revenue growth. The Department assumes the \$600,000 transfers in FY 2027 and FY 2028 would be fully expended in those fiscal years (although this bill may need clarification relative to appropriation authority in those two years). While the Department cannot quantify the precise revenue gains expected from modernization, it anticipates substantial long-term benefits from improved efficiency and accessibility, noting that comparable technology investments typically recover their costs within approximately 12 to 18 months.

It should be noted this bill does not continually appropriate this new Account to the Department, therefore, the Department will need to request the funds be included in the operating budget or need to come before the Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council to request to accept and budget funds from this Account.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Fish and Game Department