



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 2169

PRINTERS NO. 3718

PRIME SPONSOR: Gabler

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15
General Fund	\$0	\$0
Game Fund	\$0	\$0

SUMMARY: Amends Title 34 (Game and Wildlife Code) re-authorizing the Special Elk Conservation License and auction, and authorizing a second special license to be awarded via fundraiser in conjunction with the PA-based non-profit elk organization that manages and operates the Elk Country Visitor's Center in Benezette Township, Elk County.

ANALYSIS: HB 2169 amends Section 2706.2 (relating to elk hunting licenses) section (a) to require that the PA Game Commission (PGC) hold their random drawings of application for the issuance of elk licenses at the Elk Country Visitor Center in the Township of Benezette. Additionally, Section (b) (relating to license auction), which expired July 1, 2013, is amended to reauthorize the Special Conservation License auction, which allows the PGC to auction off one special license annually to resident or non-resident hunters interested in the opportunity to harvest one elk. PGC may contract with a wildlife conservation organization to implement and conduct the auction, and promulgate regulations necessary for implementation.

The contracted organization may retain administrative costs associated with the auction, to be determined by contract with the PGC, and must report to the PGC on the use of the proceeds. The remaining proceeds shall be returned to the PGC and used pursuant to the contract, and in a manner consistent with the PGC's elk management plan. The use of the proceeds shall be included in the PGC's annual report to the General Assembly. All license fees shall be paid to the PGC.

A new subsection (c) provides for a separate Special-license fundraiser, under which the PGC is authorized to hold an annual special-license fundraiser for resident or non-resident hunters interested in the opportunity to hunt one elk. The PGC must contract with a Pennsylvania-based nonprofit organization whose mission is the advancement of education stewardship and habitat for the elk population in the Commonwealth, and who also is a participant in a public-private partnership for the management and operation of the Elk Country Visitor's Center in Benezette Township, Elk County, to auction or raffle one elk license annually.

The organization that contracts with the PGC may conduct a fundraiser for the opportunity for interested hunters to purchase the elk license. The fundraiser will be open to all residents and nonresidents of the Commonwealth who wish to obtain the license, and the subsequent use of the license must meet Federal and State hunting regulations. The contracted organization may retain administrative costs from the fundraiser. The administrative costs shall be determined and agreed to by the organization receiving the license prior to the license being awarded. The proceeds remaining after retention of administrative costs must be returned to the PGC and shall be used pursuant to the contract in a manner consistent with the PGC's elk management plan. The contracted organization must report annually to the PGC on the use of the funds, and the PGC shall include the use of the funds in its annual report to the General Assembly. All license fees must be paid to the PGC.

A new subsection (d) is added to provide that a recipient of either the Special Conservation License or the Special-license fundraiser tag must be subject to a background check. If one or more serious game law violations are found as a result of the background check, the license will not be awarded to that recipient and another will be chosen.

Effective date: Immediately

FISCAL IMPACT: Enactment of this legislation will have no adverse impact on Commonwealth funds.

PREPARED BY: Thomas Gwinn
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 30, 2014

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.