

HOUSE BILL NO. 449

INTRODUCED BY M. BLASDEL

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING PENALTIES FOR THE INTENTIONAL, UNLAWFUL IMPORTATION, INTRODUCTION, AND TRANSPLANTATION OF FISH; AND AMENDING SECTION 87-5-721, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 87-5-721, MCA, is amended to read:

"87-5-721. Penalty -- license and permit revocation and denial. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), a person ~~who violates a provision~~ convicted of a violation of this part is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable as provided in 87-1-102, ~~and~~ In addition, the department, upon conviction of the person, shall revoke any license or permit issued by it under this title to the person and deny any application by the person for a license or permit under this title for a period not to exceed 2 years from the date of the conviction.

(2) A person who intentionally imports, introduces, or transplants fish in violation of this part:

(a) is guilty of an offense punishable by a fine of not less than ~~\$500~~ \$2,000 or more than ~~\$5,000~~ \$10,000 and imprisonment for up to 1 year. A sentencing court may consider an appropriate amount of community service in lieu of imprisonment. A sentencing court may not defer or suspend ~~\$500~~ \$2,000 of the fine amount.

(b) is civilly liable for the amount necessary to eliminate or mitigate the effects of the violation. The damages may be recovered on behalf of the public by the department or by the county attorney of the county in which the violation occurred, in a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction. Money recovered by the department or a county attorney must be deposited in the state special revenue fund as provided in 87-1-601(1).

(c) upon conviction or forfeiture of bond or bail, shall forfeit from the date of conviction or forfeiture any current hunting, fishing, or trapping license issued ~~under this title by this state~~ and the privilege to hunt, fish, or trap in this state for not less than ~~24 months~~ 5 years or more than 10 years. If the time necessary to eliminate or mitigate the effects of the violation exceeds ~~24 months~~ the imposed forfeiture period, a person may be required to forfeit the privilege to hunt, fish, or trap in this state for ~~more than 24 months~~ an additional period of time. If the effects of the violation cannot be eliminated or mitigated, a person may be required to forfeit the privilege to hunt, fish, or trap in this state for ~~the lifetime of that person life~~.

1 (3) Any exotic wildlife held in violation of this part must be shipped out of state, returned to the point of
2 origin, or destroyed within a time set by the department, not to exceed 6 months. The person in possession of
3 the exotic wildlife may choose the method of disposition. If the person in possession of the exotic wildlife does
4 not comply with this requirement, the department may confiscate and then house, transport, or destroy the
5 unlawfully held exotic wildlife. The department may charge any person convicted of a violation of this part for the
6 costs associated with the handling, housing, transporting, or destroying of the exotic wildlife."

7

8 NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Saving clause.** [This act] does not affect rights and duties that matured,
9 penalties that were incurred, or proceedings that were begun before [the effective date of this act].

10

- END -