

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE
March 31, 2014
6:06 p.m.

6:06:16 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Stoltze called the House Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Alan Austerman, Co-Chair
Representative Bill Stoltze, Co-Chair
Representative Mark Neuman, Vice-Chair
Representative Mia Costello
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Les Gara
Representative David Guttenberg
Representative Lindsey Holmes
Representative Cathy Munoz
Representative Steve Thompson
Representative Tammie Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Michael Paschall, Staff, Representative Eric Feige; Ed Fogels, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Doug Vincent-Lang, Director, Division of Wildlife Conservation, Department of Fish and Game; Bryce Wrigley, President, Alaska Farm Bureau, Delta Junction; Gary Stevens, Member, Board of Directors, Alaska Outdoor Council, Chugiak; Don Quarberg, Self, Delta; Al Barrette, Member, Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee, Fairbanks.

SUMMARY

HB 202 BISON DRAWING PERMIT FEES

HB 202 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

#hb202

HOUSE BILL NO. 202

"An Act raising the application fee for a drawing permit for the hunting of bison to \$20; requiring the game management plan for bison in the Delta Junction Bison Range Area to include mitigation of bison damage to farm crops and farm and personal property; and authorizing the commissioner of natural resources to make grants to mitigate or prevent damage caused by bison."

6:07:40 PM

MICHAEL PASCHALL, STAFF, REPRESENTATIVE ERIC FEIGE, read from a prepared testimony:

In 1928 a group of hunters brought a small number of bison from the National Bison Range in Montana to what is now known as Delta Junction Alaska and released the animals to hopefully one day provide additional hunting opportunities in the state. This magnificent animal is large, elusive, and a prized hunting trophy, as well as a source of excellent meat.

When the animals were brought to Alaska, there was most likely little discussion on the negative impact of interaction between these animals and humans. Nor was there likely any discussion on these animals not being native to Alaska and thus a possible invasive species being introduced into the state.

As the animals adapted to their new home, they looked for the most available sources of food. Unfortunately, some of this food was located at existing settlements in the area along the Tanana River. Documented history shows the bison interacting with humans at Rika's roadhouse shortly after their release, consuming food planted for travelers using the roadhouse.

By the 1950s, the herd had grown to several hundred animals and plans were made to realize the dream of

hunting bison in Alaska. Since the first hunts, the desire to hunt bison has resulted in the development of the most popular draw permit for hunting in Alaska. In 2013, 19,605 applications were received with less than 100 permits issued.

The hunt is not easy. Most of the hunt takes place during the winter when it is cold, dark, and windy in Delta Junction. Fish & Game refers to the hunt as a "challenging endeavor" and requires those that receive a permit to study a package of material and pass a test before being allowed to hunt. The success rate for the hunt averages around 80 percent, depending upon the specific hunt.

Hunting Delta Bison is one of the premier hunts in Alaska.

As mentioned previously, depredation of crops has been a problem since shortly after the bison were released along the Delta River.

Traditionally the largest herds were found along the Delta and Tanana Rivers and animals were often found in Delta Junction. Stories abound of children not being able to go to school because they could not get out of the house because bison were in their yard. Once the herd discovered the presence of grains being grown east of the community center, the herd adjusted its annual migratory route, traveling from the Delta River to the farm area east of Delta Junction. On page 17 of the "Delta Bison Interim Management Plan," you can see that the bison travel over military land from the spring calving area west of the Delta River to the Bison Range and agricultural areas to the east. Today bison are rarely seen in the more heavily developed areas or around Rika's Roadhouse. Two smaller animals were reported near the city limits a few years ago.

Work to determine the damage to crops and other property has only been casually reviewed in the past few years. Up to that point, no known surveys of damage have been done. Most recent surveys have put the damage near \$100,000 annually. Unfortunately, damage isn't spread equally across all producers and can have a significant negative impact on a single producer. Also, loss of opportunity income from higher

dollar crops, that are not planted due to the potential for loss, is not included in the damage estimates.

6:11:40 PM

Co-Chair Stoltze wondered if the \$100,000 was the aggregate for all farms, or per farm. Mr. Paschall replied that that the \$100,000 referred to three years of surveys.

Co-Chair Stoltze restated his question. Mr. Paschall responded that it referred to the aggregate.

Co-Chair Stoltze stressed that he did not make a statement. Mr. Paschall apologized, because he thought that he heard a statement.

Co-Chair Stoltze announced that the \$100,000 was the aggregate for the entire farms combined. Mr. Paschall replied that it was \$100,000 per year that was determined as the amount of damage that occurred.

Mr. Paschall continued with his presentation:

In addition to the problems the bison cause for farmers and the occasional vehicle/bison collision is the problems the animals cause for the military. The military operates under strict rules pertaining to interference with local wildlife. The Donnelly Training Area "Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan" places restrictions on interaction between military training operations and wildlife, including bison.

To help address both the problems with interaction between the military and bison and between farmers and bison, along with improving the condition of the herd, the state has developed the Delta Bison Range and the military has done work to improve the conditions near the calving areas.

The military contracted with the local soil and water conservation district in 2012 to make improvements to food for the bison on land along the Delta River in an attempt to control the location and movement of the bison by keeping the herd nearer the river and on

inactive ranges for a longer period of time, thus keeping the bison off agricultural land.

The bison range, created and funded by the state, has cleared fields where grains and other crops are planted in an attempt to provide the bison with sufficient food and to attempt to keep the bison south of the Alaska Highway until after harvest. The bison range also has wells where water is provided for the bison. The herd is intensely managed, fed, and watered by the state for the benefit of hunters. Similar to how farmers manage their livestock.

During discussion on the management plan for the bison range, the state's wildlife biologist indicated there is no definitive evidence that the natural habitat is sufficient to supply food and water to the herd and, absent the food on the bison range and in farmer's fields, the herd may not be sustainable at its current size.

Questions also arose surrounding the current activities on the bison range as to whether they are having the desired effect of keeping bison south of the highway until later in the farming season or does the feed on the range move up the arrival of the bison in the area. Also, does the feed on the bison range allow a herd to exist that is larger than could exist naturally.

Reducing the herd size was recommended by the state's biologist to determine if such a reduction would reduce damage. The experimental plan that was introduced was rejected by the hunters on the working group.

One consensus that the working group did reach was that fencing was the option that would have the most impact on reducing the amount of damage that occurs. Four major options were considered; fencing the herd in, creating an enclosure to temporarily restrain the herd, placing some type of barrier along the south side of the highway to restrain the herd, and finally, fence the farms. All of which have positive and negative aspects.

Fencing farms solves the immediate problem of keeping bison out of fields while, at the same time, proposes to cause the animals to relocate in search of winter feed.

[6:15:29 PM](#)

Co-Chair Stoltze wondered how many farms he was referencing. Mr. Paschall replied that there were approximately 30 to 40 farms that were impacted currently.

Co-Chair Stoltze queried that number that would potentially be fenced. Mr. Paschall did not know the intention of the individual farmers.

Co-Chair Stoltze stressed that the state would be providing grants. He felt that other committee members may restate the concerns.

Mr. Paschall continued with his presentation:

The idea of having farmers fence in their own fields was mostly supported by hunters. Unfortunately, fencing crops is not normally part of the business plan for farming. Yes, farmers often fence fields to keep animals in and it is a realized cost of raising livestock, it is generally not viable to fence wildlife out of crop fields.

The Delta Bison Interim Management Plan, produced by the Department of Fish & Game and Completed in 2012, introduced four new management objectives directed at addressing bison damage. They are listed on page 3 of the plan.

The first recommendation is to reduce the precalving herd size objective from 360 bison to 275-325. Fish and Game has not implemented this objective.

Second, continue the cooperative program between ADF&G and DNR to annually assess the level of bison caused crop damage. Fish and Game and Natural Resources have discontinued this assessment.

Third, for the legislature to increase the cost of the drawing permit application fee from \$10 to \$20. Section 1 of HB 202 completes this objective.

Fourth, for the legislature to establish a state cost-sharing program to assist farmers with constructing fences to keep bison out of private agricultural lands. Section 3 of HB 202 is the first step to completing this objective.

There has been some misunderstanding about this bill appropriating money from the game fund to be spent on the proposed grant program. As I expect this committee is fully aware, this legislation only creates the ability for the Commissioner of Natural Resources to spend money on the grant program, it does not appropriate funds for this purpose. That would be done through the appropriation process, which would not include a prohibited appropriation from the game fund.

Co-Chair Stoltze surmised that the expectation was to double the bison permit fee, and earmark it for the program. Mr. Paschall replied that the intent was to increase the fee, as recommended by Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to create the ability for the commissioner of DNR to request an appropriation.

Co-Chair Stoltze stressed that there was a linkage in the expectation. Mr. Paschall agreed.

Representative Wilson wondered if the bison originally inhabited the area before the farmers. Mr. Paschall responded that people were farming that area before the bison were introduced. The commercial agricultural projects that were referred in the Sawmill Creek and Barley Way areas were created after the bison were introduced.

Representative Wilson asked if the original farmers were still farming, or if the focus was only on the farmers that came after the bison. Co-Chair Stoltze further queried if timeframe was surrounding the 1970s. Mr. Paschall replied that the timeframe regarding when the bison was introduced, but as the population grew and outside food was introduced to the area, but agriculture was enhanced in the 1970s and 1980s. During that time, the state created a land sale in the area where they sold property in the Delta 1 and Delta 2 projects. The Delta 1 project did not have any notice of the bison, other than it was out as part of the advertising. The Delta 2 project specified that the farmers could not sue the state from damage by the bison. He

stressed that the legislation protected the Delta 1 and 2 projects.

[6:21:11 PM](#)

Representative Wilson looked at the Delta Bison Interim Management Plan 2012 (copy on file), and noted that page 20 discussed fences. The legislative intent stipulated that they would be managed as a free-ranging herd. She wondered if the bill was contradictory to the management plan. Mr. Paschal responded that the legislative intent language that created the Delta Bison Range indicated that the purpose of the bison range was to support a free-ranging herd. This led to dismissing the idea of fencing the bison, but he stressed that the current legislature was not currently restricted by previous legislatures' intent language.

Representative Wilson felt that "fencing out" was also "fencing in", but looked slightly different.

Representative Gara queried the cost of a fence on an average farm. Mr. Paschall replied that // He stressed that the intent of the legislation was to assist the cost, rather than cover the full cost.

Representative Gara queried the cost of an average fence. Mr. Paschall replied that there were two distinctions: bison are not native to Alaska, and were only brought into the state for the purpose of hunting; and there was a policy decision to provide the farmers protection from the bison.

Co-Chair Stoltze felt that the farmers in his district would not ask him to build a fence. He felt that animals many different types of animals destroyed crops.

Representative Gara stressed that he was asking a serious question.

Co-Chair Stoltze felt that his constituency would not ask for fences to be built on their farms.

[6:26:34 PM](#)

Vice-Chair Neuman asked if he had heard from farmers in other areas of the state regarding similar assistance. Mr. Paschall responded that he had discussions with various

farmers across the state regarding assistance from the state.

Vice-Chair Neuman stressed that he had never heard the issue at the forefront. He felt that his constituency would not ask him to ask the state to pay for fencing.

Co-Chair Stoltze stressed that he had never been asked to get the state to pay for fencing.

Vice-Chair Neuman restated that his constituency had never asked to keep moose out of their land. Mr. Paschall stated that the farmers in the Delta Junction area were not asking for funding to keep the moose out of their land. They understand that the moose are a natural animal to the state.

Vice-Chair Neuman felt that fencing out bison would fence out all of the animals. Mr. Paschall replied that most of the farmers wanted to see the bison restrained, but that was not the recommendation of DFG.

DOUG VINCENT-LANG, DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION, DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME (via teleconference), explained that DFG participated in a work group to assess Delta Junction bison management. The department's involvement was to facilitate a discussion regarding bison damage to crops. The meetings led to a publication of an interim management plan, referenced previously. The management plan was published to facilitate a discussion of the options that were identified by that work group. One of the options determined by the work group to address bison damage to agricultural fields was an increase to the application for Delta bison from \$10 to \$20. The funds from the increase would be used to mitigate bison damage to farm crops and farm personal properties. By law, the funds raised by the fee increase must be deposited into the Fish and Game Fund. The department would, in accordance with the plan, determine the best approach to mitigate damage to agricultural interest, which could include fencing or other options such as working on barley fields that provide some diversionary feeding. He urged the inclusion of flexibility in the legislation regarding development of management options to address the issue.

[6:31:45 PM](#)

Co-Chair Stoltze felt that the legislature should make the decisions regarding the action. Mr. Vincent-Lang remarked that he facilitated the discussion, and there were options regarding fee increases for the construction of fences.

Co-Chair Stoltze stressed that a fee increase for hunters should be backed up with a specific use of the additional fee.

Representative Wilson queried what other diversionary feed the state used for other animals. Mr. Vincent-Lang replied that DFG used forest cutting to create browse for moose

Co-Chair Stoltze interjected that DFG used browse for moose.

Mr. Vincent-Lang announced that the animals were not being fed across the landscape with the type of program at the Delta Bison Range.

Representative Wilson queried the cost of the barley field. Mr. Vincent-Lang agreed to provide that information.

Representative Wilson asked if the diversionary feeding was effective. She remarked that if it were working, the fences would be unnecessary. Mr. Vincent-Lang felt that the barley field was effective, however the bison were transient. He stated that the bison could not be contained to one area of feeding.

Representative Wilson wondered if the uneaten barley was sold. Mr. Vincent-Lang responded that the barley was not sold.

Representative Wilson stressed that barley could be used in wood stoves, and burn cleaner than wood. Mr. Vincent-Lang responded that the bison's barley would not be competing with the farmers.

Representative Gara understood that the bison were introduced to the state over 100 years ago, and wondered if the state had spent money to encourage the moose population. Mr. Vincent-Lang stressed that the bison were introduced to Alaska, before Alaska became a state.

Representative Gara felt that the financing of fences should be used for farmers who want to keep the moose of their crops.

[6:36:54 PM](#)

Co-Chair Stoltze asked for the two different bison projects. Mr. Vincent-Lang replied that the bison that were identified in the bill were Delta bison, which were brought up from the Lower 48 approximately 100 years prior. The wood bison was a sub-species of bison from the woodland areas of Canada, but were not introduced to Alaska because of the Endangered Species Act.

Co-Chair Stoltze restated that there were two different types of bison in Alaska, and should not be confused with one another.

ED FOGELS, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, testified in support of HB 202. He felt that the legislation would stem a long-standing problem. He understood that farms in other parts of the state had experienced damage from wildlife. He stressed that the sport hunt was maintained by the bison's ability to eat the high value food. He remarked that the main focus of his department was to ensure the protection of Alaska's natural resources.

Co-Chair Stoltze understood the frustration of getting one's crops destroyed.

Representative Thompson wondered how many acres were producing barley for the bison. Mr. Fogels agreed to provide that information.

Representative Thompson noted that there were 5000 acres producing barley on Fort Greely. He stressed that most farms were approximately 1000 acres each.

Representative Thompson wondered if there was a current cost sharing program for fencing. Mr. Fogels responded that the Delta Soil and Water Conservation District had a cost sharing program. The intent of the program outlined in the legislation was to pass the money to that district to augment their cost sharing program. He stressed that DNR did not intend to begin a grant program.

[6:41:42 PM](#)

Representative Thompson noted that there were areas that did not have any bison, and wondered if the fencing would move the bison to undesirable locations. Mr. Fogels responded that the program was intended to be ongoing. He stated that there would be constant work with the farmers in order to determine the best course of action.

Representative Thompson noted that the report from the Division of Wildlife Conservation indicated problems about more animals hit by vehicles, because they could not get across fences. He encouraged the committee to examine that report.

Co-Chair Stoltze wondered if Mr. Fogels was familiar with the Conservation Range Protection Program from the federal government. Mr. Fogels replied that he was not very familiar with that program.

Co-Chair Stoltze explained that the program paid landowners to leave portions of their land. He wondered if any of the farmers participated in that program. Mr. Fogels replied that there were farmers that took advantage of the program, but did not know the numbers of acreages. He agreed to provide that information.

Co-Chair Stoltze shared program's website.

Vice-Chair Neuman stressed that the program required public access on the land. He wondered how the fenced in land would allow for public access. Mr. Fogels responded that the program was for ongoing mitigation for the bison problem. He explained that there would probably be a focus on the fields that held higher value crops.

Vice-Chair Neuman understood that the barley was a large part of the bison's diet. He wondered if there was enough food for the animals to live off of, outside of the fenced in areas. Mr. Vincent-Lang responded that the bison may be impacted by the restricted area. He felt that the bison would be diverted to other food crops.

[6:46:19 PM](#)

Vice-Chair Neuman remarked that the legislation did not have an end date. If the bill was enacted, and five farms

were fenced in, and people continue to pay a \$230 fee after every farm was fenced in, he wondered if there were be a decision to lower the fee. Mr. Vincent-Lang replied that feed associated with drawing permits were legislative decisions.

Vice-Chair Neuman stressed that the amount of money would be substantial after the fee raise.

Representative Guttenberg expressed concern regarding the bison interfering with the safety of the bison on the highway. Mr. Vincent-Lang replied that there were two types of bison in the world: ranched bison and free range bison. He stated that Alaska's bison were free range. He noted that there were some bison ranches, which held fenced bison.

Representative Guttenberg wondered if there were other mitigating programs. Mr. Vincent-Lang was not aware of any large agricultural fencing projects to restrict bison access.

Representative Guttenberg wondered if there were other places in the U.S. that mitigated the ruined crops. Mr. Vincent-Lang replied that there were some projects in the lower 48 that dealt with wolf purgation. He was not aware of other programs where farmers were paid for damage from bison.

Representative Thompson wondered if the passage of the bill would require changing AS 16.23.20. Mr. Fogels replied that he was not very aware of Title 16 statutes. He furthered that the intent of the project was to fence property, not fencing public lands.

[6:52:32 PM](#)

Co-Chair Austerman wondered if the area where the bison were located was open range. Mr. Vincent-Lang replied that the area was for free-range bison.

Co-Chair Austerman understood that the Kodiak farmer referenced had his bison on open range. Mr. Vincent-Lang responded that there was an expectation for him to keep the bison on his property, and have control of his herd.

BRYCE WRIGLEY, PRESIDENT, ALASKA FARM BUREAU, DELTA JUNCTION (via teleconference), testified in support of the legislation. He remarked that the working group was intended to address the bison damage to the crops, and there was agreement on the success of fencing. The bison range was created around the same time that farms were put into production. At that time, the legislature provided funding for a drift fence. The drift fence would go on the south side of the Alaska Highway, which would have kept the bison off of the developing farm land. The governor at that time stripped the funding for the drift fence. He stated that, at the time, the bison were considered a free range herd. The legislature at that time, however, did not feel that a drift fence violated the free range designation. He stated that the exclusion of the drift fence created an inevitability that the bison would venture to the crops at the same time of harvest. He stressed that the bison travel in herds, which was a greater burden than lone moose. He announced that the Delta Junction farmers had no issue with the native wild animals. He objected to the fact that the bison were so intensively managed by the state, but the farmers were unable to receive high impact solutions. He acknowledged that the bison were there before the farmers, but stressed that the farmers were an important part of the economy. He stated that the large farms would require a fence that would cost approximately \$100,000 to \$110,000 per farm. The cost share program paid for half of that cost, at a rate of \$1.25 per quarter foot. He remarked that there were many farmers that could not afford their portion of the cost share, so there were many farms that would not be fenced.

[7:00:33 PM](#)

Co-Chair Stoltze referred to HB 121 that had enhanced ability for commercial loans for farming. He wondered if Mr. Wrigley had examined that legislation. Mr. Wrigley was not aware of that bill. He furthered that there were some loans that ranged from 3 to 4.5 percent, which was fairly low. He stressed that many farmers borrowed money for operating expenses. He felt that farmers would utilize all resources to protect their crops.

Co-Chair Stoltze stressed that the legislation would provide a loan not a grant. Mr. Wrigley agreed.

GARY STEVENS, MEMBER, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ALASKA OUTDOOR COUNCIL, CHUGIAK (via teleconference), testified very strongly against the legislation. He felt that the state should find a different source of funding, if the state wanted to support private for-profit businesses. Revenue from hunting permits should be spent on game management and habitat by DFG. He remarked that the legislation raised the price on all permits, not just Delta Bison. He shared that the state had a unique system in fish and game management in that there were regional and local advisory committees. The Delta Advisory Committee expressed opposition on the legislation.

Vice-Chair Neuman wondered if any other outdoor groups opposed the legislation. Mr. Stevens responded that the thought the Rough Grouse Society probably opposed the bill.

[7:05:11 PM](#)

DON QUARBERG, SELF, DELTA (via teleconference), spoke in opposition the legislation. He shared that he had been a resident of Delta Junction for a long time. He served on the Delta Bison Working Group since the group's inception. He understood that the \$20 fee for the application of a bison hunting permit would be used to manage the Delta Bison Range. The \$10 fee that existed previously was enacted in the 1980s, so there was 20 years of flat funding. He felt that it was time to increase the fee. He shared that there was approximately 1000 acres of crop land that was destroyed by the bison. He shared that the legislation was written and presented by the Delta Chapter of the Alaska Farm Bureau of which Mr. Paschall is the chair. He felt that Mr. Paschall had worked to eliminate the species. The Delta land purchasers signed a contract with the state acknowledging the presence of bison, and the likelihood that the bison would cause damage.

[7:12:00 PM](#)

AL BARRETTE, MEMBER, FAIRBANKS FISH AND GAME ADVISORY COMMITTEE, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), testified in opposition to the legislation. He looked at AS 16.05.130, and stressed that money collected from hunting licenses could not be used for a purpose other than protection, investigation, and restoration of game resources. The revenue from the sales of hunting licenses and tags were intended to benefit the license purchasers. He felt that

the legislation was against statute. He stressed that the intent of the working group was to create a management plan within the 90,000 acres of the Delta Bison Management Range. He felt that the discussion of fencing was out of the working group's jurisdiction.

Co-Chair Stoltze CLOSED public testimony.

[7:15:49 PM](#)

Mr. Paschall agreed to answer any questions.

Co-Chair Stoltze wondered if Mr. Paschall could respond to the concerns of the testifiers.

Mr. Paschall stated that he would provide a written response to the inaccuracies.

Co-Chair Stoltze felt that Mr. Paschall had responded by saying that the testimony was "inaccurate." Mr. Paschall announced that he was attempting to complete a statement.

Co-Chair Stoltze did not want to get in a combative discussion.

Mr. Paschall announced that he would provide a written response to the testifiers.

Representative Wilson wondered how many of the farmers would be impacted by the legislation. Mr. Paschall replied that the geographic area would include all producers that received any form of federal payment under any of the farm programs.

Representative Wilson queried the exact number of farms that were being discussed. She also wondered why the state should manage the bison in this legislative manner. Mr. Paschall responded that he did not know what loans were forgiven. The herd was managed as the millions of dollars the state spends on managing wildlife throughout the state.

Representative Thompson noted that there were some diversion mechanisms including the creation of watering holes. He wondered if the revised language would allow the ability to build more wells. Mr. Paschall responded the language was removed by the Legislative Legal.

7:20:25 PM

Representative Thompson felt that the removal of the phrase, "but not limited to" would restrict the ability to build a well. Mr. Paschall replied that he understood that the removal of the term "but not limited to" was done every time there was a revision of statute. He deferred to Legislative Legal for more information, but assumed that the removal of the phrase had no impact.

Vice-Chair Neuman agreed that the removal of the phrase had a significant impact.

Representative Gara felt that Mr. Paschall did not need to respond to the testimony. Co-Chair Stoltze agreed.

Mr. Paschall announced that he would not respond to the testifiers unless his boss advised him to do so.

Co-Chair Austerman felt that after hearing the public testimony, he felt that he was not in favor of the bill. He expressed concern regarding using the DFG receipts to fund the program.

Co-Chair Stoltze wondered if there was a consideration of proposing the project as a capital budget request. Mr. Paschall replied that there was not a discussion to include the request in a capital project.

Co-Chair Stoltze assumed that the proposal would be funded through fees, the Fish and Game Fund, and the farmers. Mr. Paschall responded in the affirmative, because that was the recommendation of DFG.

Co-Chair Austerman stated he fenced his own property, in order to protect his land.

Co-Chair Stoltze felt that there was always a risk with land ownership.

7:24:49 PM

Representative Thompson stated that he did not take issue with an application fee, but rather took issue with some other concerns that were expressed.

Co-Chair Stoltze remarked that there was some discussion regarding increasing DFG licenses as a conservation method. He was a strong supporter of the agriculture industry. He felt that the legislation proposed a very awkward mechanism.

Mr. Paschall thanked the committee for hearing the legislation.

[7:28:51 PM](#)

RECESSED

[7:55:12 PM](#)

RECONVENED

HB 202 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

#

ADJOURNMENT

[7:55:37 PM](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.