

Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation

HB 7013 — Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

by Agriculture and Natural Resources Subcommittee; and Rep. Combee and others (CS/SB 1282 by Appropriations Committee; and Senator Dean)

The bill revises statutes within ch. 379, F.S., to consolidate the penalties for violations relating to recreational hunting, freshwater fishing, and saltwater fishing within the four-tier penalty structure.

The bill offers violators of recreational hunting, freshwater fishing, and saltwater fishing the option to purchase the respective license or permit in addition to a civil penalty rather than pay the cost of such license or permit and penalty without actually receiving the license or permit.

The bill increases the fine for illegally killing, taking, possessing, or selling game or fur-bearing animals while committing burglary or trespass from a \$250 fine to a \$500 fine and expands the scope to include illegally killing, taking, possessing, or selling all fish and wildlife.

The bill makes it a third degree felony to knowingly possess marine turtles or the eggs or nests of marine turtles and clarifies that the prohibition on knowingly taking, disturbing, mutilating, destroying, causing to be destroyed, transferring, selling, offering to sell, molesting, or harassing of marine turtles includes the hatchlings or parts thereof.

The bill authorizes, rather than requires, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to retain an administration fee on donations provided by application to the Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2016.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 118-0