



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF  
BUDGET AND PROGRAM PLANNING

## Fiscal Note 2027 Biennium

Bill#/Title: **HB0762.01: Require the department of fish, wildlife, and parks to publish a report on river usage**

Primary Sponsor: Joshua Seckinger Status: As Introduced

☐ Included in the Executive Budget ☒ Needs to be included in HB 2 ☐ Significant Local Gov Impact  
☐ Significant Long-Term Impacts ☐ Technical Concerns ☐ Dedicated Revenue Form Attached

### FISCAL SUMMARY

	<u>FY 2026</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2027</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2028</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2029</u> <u>Difference</u>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
General Fund (01)	\$1,250,354	\$1,190,354	\$200,000	\$0
<b>Revenues</b>				
General Fund (01)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Net Impact</b>	<u>(\$1,250,354)</u>	<u>(\$1,190,354)</u>	<u>(\$200,000)</u>	<u>\$0</u>
<b>General Fund Balance</b>				

### Description of fiscal impact

HB 762 requires the department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to publish a biennial river-use report showing the number and purpose of all watercraft between May 15 through September 15/October 31 on 15 stretches of river. FWP will publish a biennial report no later than October 1 of even-numbered years. HB 762 falls under Title 87 and the assumed funding would be general license dollars. This creates a diversion and violates 87-1-708, MCA, causing a loss of \$37 million dollars annually in federal funds. Therefore, it is assumed the fiscal impact would be funded from the general fund.

### FISCAL ANALYSIS

#### Assumptions

#### Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

- HB 762 amends the current statute 87-1-201, MCA, requiring the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) to publish a biennial report showing the number and purpose of all watercrafts between May 15 – September 15 and/or October 31 of even-numbered years.
- HB 762 requires the data and survey of 15 river stretches, totaling 898 miles.
- HB 762 requires the number of private watercrafts (canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, tubes, drift boats, rafts) along with commercial watercrafts (for fishing, outfitting, floating, sightseeing, white water rafting, and guiding) to be counted weekly from May 15 through September 15 and/or October 31.
- Upon HB 762 effective passage and approval, FWP will assess and determine the most cost-effective approach to surveying and collecting data, whether it be internally or contracted out.
- For HB 762, the in-house random sampling design will consist of 2 years of survey on each river stretch, 1 sample season per stretch with the estimated cost of \$2.6 million (see chart below).

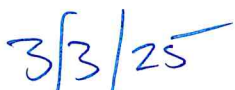
<b>In-House Budget Summary</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
27 Seasonal Recreation Technicians/Field Workers	\$819,428.80
3 Supervising Technicians/Biologist 1	\$323,654.83
1 Biologist 3	\$197,857.68
30 Monthly per diem - rec tech/field workers	\$60,000.00
31 Cell Phones	\$51,460.00
15 Satellite Communication Devices	\$23,400.00
31 Computer Tablets/computers	\$24,800.00
Tech Equip Set Up Time (180 hrs)	\$21,600.00
15 Vehicles and Travel (Fleet Rental, Shuttle, Mileage)	\$402,936.00
4 Raft Packages and Trailers	\$60,000.00
31 Uniforms	\$13,440.00
(6) Housing Costs (1 per geographic area @ \$3,000/mo)	\$144,000.00
Postcards (For hard to reach access sites)	\$29,833.89
Other Supplies (PFD,backpacks,notebooks, etc)	\$75,000.00
10% Contingency	\$393,296.96
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,640,708.16</b>

6. This on-site sampling of recreational use is personnel-intensive. The total FTE will include 27 seasonal recreation technicians, 3 supervising technicians, and 1 biologist.
7. The (27 FTE) recreation technicians (field workers) will gather data on the ground or afloat for 8 months (May – September) in a 2-year term. The technicians will work in groups of two collecting data on 60 river miles per season. The (3.0 FTE) supervising technicians will supervise the project and technicians on the ground for 8 months in a 2-year term. The (1.0 FTE) biologist will manage the project, test the sampling, and report and publish the data for a 2-year term.
8. Although HB 762 is effective upon passage, the data collection and survey will most likely not start until the 2026 season due to the recruiting and procurement process.
9. HB 762 will terminate on October 2, 2028, after the results are published.
10. HB 762 falls under Title 87, the assumed funding would be general license dollars. This creates a diversion and violates 87-1-708, MCA.
11. HB 762 would cause a loss of \$37 million dollars annually in federal funds from the Wildlife Sports Fish Restoration Program if general license dollars are used to fund this bill.
12. For the reasons in assumptions 10 and 11, it is assumed the general fund would be used to fund the required costs.

## Fiscal Analysis Table

	<u>FY 2026</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2027</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2028</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2029</u> <u>Difference</u>
<b><u>Fiscal Impact</u></b>				
<b><u>Expenditures</u></b>				
Personal Services	\$620,471	\$620,471	\$100,000	\$0
Operating Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operating Expenses SSR	\$569,883	\$569,883	\$100,000	\$0
Equipment	\$60,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL Expenditures</b>	<b><u>\$1,250,354</u></b>	<b><u>\$1,190,354</u></b>	<b><u>\$200,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$0</u></b>
<b><u>Funding of Expenditures</u></b>				
General Fund (01)	\$1,250,354	\$1,190,354	\$200,000	\$0
<b>TOTAL Funding of Expenditures</b>	<b><u>\$1,250,354</u></b>	<b><u>\$1,190,354</u></b>	<b><u>\$200,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$0</u></b>
<b><u>Revenues</u></b>				
<b><u>Net Impact to Fund Balance (Revenue minus Funding of Expenditures)</u></b>				
General Fund (01)	<u>(\$1,250,354)</u>	<u>(\$1,190,354)</u>	<u>(\$200,000)</u>	<u>\$0</u>


  
 Sponsor's Initials


  
 Date


  
 Budget Director's Initials

 3/3/2025  
 Date