



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF
BUDGET AND PROGRAM PLANNING

Fiscal Note 2027 Biennium

Bill#/Title: HB0829.01: Generally revise laws related to aquatic invasive species.

Primary Sponsor: Neil Duram 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 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2027 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2028 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2029 Difference</u>
Expenditures				
State Special Revenue (02)	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580
Revenues				
State Special Revenue (02)	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580
Net Impact	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
General Fund Balance				

Description of fiscal impact

HB 829 requires the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to create an aquatic invasive species awareness training video and test. The completion of this training would be required for anyone who purchases a fishing license, and any vessel (motorized and nonmotorized) that is used on any waters in Montana. HB 829 also adds the requirement for resident-owned motorized and non-motorized vessels to purchase an annual aquatic invasive species prevention pass for each vessel.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Assumptions

Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP)

1. Currently, only nonresidents are required to purchase the annual aquatic invasive species prevention pass (AIS vessel pass) for each vessel that is used on any Montana waters. HB 829 would require residents to purchase the AIS vessel pass. The resident and nonresident vessel pass fee would be the same, \$10 for nonmotorized and \$30 for motorized as it is currently.
2. Based on the Motor Vehicle Division's (MVD) annual registration report, there are currently 162,230 motorized vessels in Montana. Assuming all of these boats are actively used in Montana, that would create an annual increase in revenue of \$4,866,900 (or 162,230 motorized resident vessels X \$30).
3. Registration is not required for nonmotorized boats, so there is no available data from MVD. The most recent data the FWP has to estimate resident nonmotorized vessels is from a survey completed in 2018 titled "Survey of Montana Households Regarding the Topic of Aquatic Invasive Species and Boating/Fishing Use in Montana." This survey estimated there were approximately 317,268 nonmotorized vessels owned by households in Montana. Using that estimate, this would result in an annual increase in revenue of \$3,172,680 (or 317,268 X \$10).
4. HB 829 creates the requirement for anyone who purchases an AIS vessel pass or a fishing license to

- complete an AIS training video and test beginning January 1, 2026. The bill authorizes FWP to adopt rules regarding how to implement this requirement.
5. FWP would create this training using a similar system to the bear identification test the agency currently provides. A person would take the course online, providing their ALS number, and this would record the completion of the AIS training requirement in their ALS account. The AIS training would only be required once, and would be valid for a lifetime, similar to the hunter's education requirement.
 6. FWP would contract the work to create the AIS training video and test. Based on similar contracts, FWP estimates this would be a one-time cost of \$25,000.
 7. There will be some development work needed to integrate completion of the course with ALS in order for the system to recognize whether or not a person has completed it and also stop those who haven't taken it from purchasing their license or vessel pass. FWP estimates this would take a total of 255 hours of contracted work to complete, at a rate of \$120 per hour for a cost of \$30,600.
 8. Revenues would be deposited in the Invasive Species State Special Revenue Account provided for in 80-7-1004, MCA, and expended for projects that prevent or control any nonnative, aquatic invasive species.
 9. FWP does not know how many residents and nonresident vessel owners would choose to comply with the added requirement to complete the AIS training video and test as required by HB 829, so the agency anticipates these vessel revenue estimates are higher than what will actually be collected.
 10. Current law directs the fines from civil penalties for purposely or knowingly attempting to introduce an invasive species in Montana to be deposited in the general fund. HB 829 would require these fines to be deposited into FWP's aquatic invasive species fund. FWP does not know of any recent civil penalties collected under this statute, and assumes these fines would be a rare occurrence.

Fiscal Analysis Table

Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks				
	FY 2026 Difference	FY 2027 Difference	FY 2028 Difference	FY 2029 Difference
Fiscal Impact				
Expenditures				
Operating Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Video	\$55,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Operating	\$7,984,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580
TOTAL Expenditures	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580
Funding of Expenditures				
State Special Revenue (02)	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580
TOTAL Funding of Expenditures	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580
Revenues				
State Special Revenue (02)	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580
TOTAL Revenues	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580	\$8,039,580
Net Impact to Fund Balance (Revenue minus Funding of Expenditures)				
State Special Revenue (02)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Technical Concerns

Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

1. The AISPP is not only required for fishing licenses, but also required when applying for a nonresident combination license which have an application deadline of April 1 because they are issued through a drawing. This puts nonresident hunters at risk of missing the deadline application if they are unaware of the AIS training requirement. For example, if a nonresident hunter logs in to their ALS account to apply for a combination license on April 1 at 11:15pm and they still need to take the AIS training course, they may not make the 11:45pm deadline to apply. In 2024, there were 32 nonresidents who completed an application for a combination license in that time frame on April 1.
2. This video training requirement could cause long wait times at license providers for customers who did not anticipate needing to take the AIS training course. It could also put 1 day, 2 day, or 5 day nonresident fishing license sales at risk.
3. The effective date of HB 829 is January 1, 2026 which falls in the middle of license year 2025 (from March 1, 2025 through February 28, 2026). This would create an inconsistency for the purchasing requirements of a fishing license in license year 2025 for January and February.


Sponsor's Initials

3-17-2025
Date


Budget Director's Initials

3/17/2025
Date