

1 _____ BILL NO. _____

2 INTRODUCED BY _____

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4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM FOR IMPROVING WILDLIFE
5 HABITAT ON STATE LANDS; AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EXISTING FUNDS TO FUND THE PROGRAM;
6 ESTABLISHING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS; PROVIDING A DEFINITION; AND PROVIDING AN
7 EFFECTIVE DATE."

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

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11 NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Projects located on state lands.** (1) The department, in cooperation
12 with lessees of state lands and the department of natural resources and conservation, shall establish a grant
13 program and solicit projects and proposals for cooperative programs for improving wildlife habitat on state
14 lands.

15 (2) Grant applications may be submitted by lessees and permittees of state lands,
16 nongovernmental organizations, and state agencies, including the department of natural resources and
17 conservation.

18 (3) An applicant for a grant under this section:

19 (a) shall describe the project, the location of the project on state lands, the estimated cost of the
20 project, and the benefits of the project to wildlife. A project may include agreements with lessees to cost share
21 or undertake specific items of the proposal, including water development, seeding, implementation of grazing
22 plans, or other wildlife habitat practices that meet the requirements of the accounts from which the project is
23 being funded as required under subsection (5).

24 (b) must include the concurrence or participation of the lessee leasing the state lands on which the
25 project is proposed and the concurrence of the department of natural resources and conservation.

26 (4) On receipt of an application, the department shall forward the application to the department of
27 natural resources and conservation to ensure appropriate coordination between the agencies.

28 (5) On approval of a project, the department may enter into agreements with other state and

1 federal agencies and nongovernmental organizations necessary for the implementation of the project. The
2 department may not approve projects that do not meet the wildlife requirements of the accounts from which the
3 project is being funded.

4 (6) Approved projects must be funded through the following accounts:

5 (a) the upland bird habitat enhancement account provided for in 87-1-246;

6 (b) the state wetland account provided for in 87-2-411; and

7 (c) the wildlife habitat improvement account provided for in 87-5-805.

8 (7) The department shall provide a report to the legislature, in accordance with 5-11-210,
9 describing projects funded pursuant to this section.

10 (8) For the purposes of this section, "state lands" has the same meaning as provided in 77-1-101.
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12 NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an
13 integral part of Title 87, chapter 1, part 2, and the provisions of Title 87, chapter 1, part 2, apply to [section 1].
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15 NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2025.

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