

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
85R6764 AAF-F

S.B. 573  
By: Estes  
Agriculture, Water & Rural Affairs  
3/22/2017  
As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The freshwater fish stamp, and its associated fee (\$5), was established by H.B. 1989, 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003. The driving force behind this legislation was the need for a financing source to help fund critical capital improvements and repairs at Texas' outdated and aging freshwater fish hatcheries. Ongoing renovation and maintenance needs at all five Inland Fisheries hatcheries will persist into the foreseeable future.

The freshwater fish stamp funds the purchase of fish for stocking in Texas waters. As the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) looks to meet the desires of its constituents in the coming years, there are fisheries management challenges that cannot be addressed solely through stocking. Aging reservoirs and degraded rivers will likely require habitat enhancement to enable stocked and resident fish populations to thrive. TPWD currently has available funding mechanisms for boater access (primarily through Federal Aid - Sportfish Restoration funds), but a glaring need exists for enhancing shoreline-based access and angling opportunities. TPWD Inland Fisheries also has renovation and maintenance needs for some of its fisheries management and research facilities that are not eligible under current freshwater stamp statute language.

S.B. 573 expands the authorized uses of funds received from the sale of freshwater fish stamps and, newly, collectable freshwater fish stamps. Under current law, collected funds may only be used to enhance hatcheries or purchase fish stock. So that TPWD may better address ongoing freshwater fishing needs, S.B. 573 allows funds collected to support management and research of freshwater fish hatcheries and habitats, improve freshwater fishing access, and support the administration and operation of fish hatcheries.

As proposed, S.B. 573 amends current law relating to the disposition of proceeds from the sale of freshwater fishing stamps issued by the Parks and Wildlife Department.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Section 43.805(b), Parks and Wildlife Code, as follows:

(b) Authorizes the net receipts from freshwater and collectable freshwater fishing stamp sales to be spent only for the repair, maintenance, renovation, or construction of freshwater fish hatcheries in this state and facilities supporting the management of and research related to freshwater fisheries; purchase of game fish that are stocked into the public water of this state; restoration, enhancement, or management of freshwater fish habitats; development of shoreline-based projects allowing freshwater angler access; and administration and operation of freshwater fish hatcheries in an amount not to exceed 20 percent of the average annual net receipts in a state fiscal biennium, rather than authorizes the net receipts from freshwater fishing stamp sales to be spent only for the repair, maintenance, renovation, or replacement of freshwater fish hatcheries in this state or for the purchase of game fish that are stocked into the public water of this state. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Repealer: Section 43.805(c) (relating to the required use of net receipts from collectible freshwater fishing stamp sales), Parks and Wildlife Code.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2017.