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## SENATE BILL NO. 982

Offered January 12, 2011

Prefiled January 11, 2011

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 29.1-563 and 29.1-568 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries; endangered and threatened species.

Patron—Whipple

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 29.1-563 and 29.1-568 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 29.1-563. Definitions.

For the purposes of this article:

"Conservation plan" means a document developed by the Department and approved by the Director that describes the Department's approach to managing and, if possible, recovering an endangered or threatened species of fish or wildlife.

"Endangered species" means any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

"Experimental population" means any population of an endangered or threatened species of fish or wildlife, excluding those species appearing on the federal list specified in § 29.1-564, that is (i) established through deliberate introduction by humans; (ii) designated by regulation of the Board; and (iii) explicitly delineated in a conservation plan.

"Fish or wildlife" means any member of the animal kingdom, vertebrate or invertebrate, except for the class Insecta, and includes any part, products, egg, or the dead body or parts thereof.

"Incidental take" means any taking of an endangered or threatened species of fish or wildlife, excluding those species appearing on the federal list specified in § 29.1-564, that otherwise would be prohibited by this article or by regulation, if such taking is incidental to but not the purpose of an otherwise lawful activity allowed in accordance with regulations adopted pursuant to § 29.1-568.

"Person" means any individual, firm, corporation, association or partnership.

"Threatened species" means any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

§ 29.1-568. When Board may permit taking of endangered or threatened species; designated experimental populations.

A. The Board may permit the taking, exportation, transportation or possession of any fish or wildlife which is listed by the provisions of this article, for zoological, educational, or scientific purposes and for propagation of such fish or wildlife in captivity for preservation purposes.

B. The Board may adopt regulations that:

1. Allow the taking, possession, exportation, transportation, or release of fish or wildlife within or among designated experimental populations of a specific species, within the context of an approved conservation plan for the species. Any regulation designating an experimental population shall (i) specify the circumstances under which taking of an individual member of an experimental population will be exempt from the prohibitions and penalties authorized under this article and (ii) describe the geographic extent of the experimental population, which shall be distinct from naturally occurring populations continuing to be subject to the prohibitions and penalties authorized under this article.

2. Allow incidental take provided such regulations shall (i) describe the allowable circumstances; (ii) include provisions that ensure offsets through the implementation of conservation actions specified by the Department to enhance the long-term survival of the species or population; and (iii) require any actual taking to be at a minimum.

INTRODUCED

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