

TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

The Committee on Natural Resources and Energy to which was referred House Bill No. 636 entitled “An act relating to miscellaneous fish and wildlife subjects” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends that the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended by striking out Sec. 19 (effective dates) in its entirety and its reader assistance heading and inserting in lieu thereof three sections to be Secs. 19–21 to read as follows:

* * * Fish and Wildlife Access Areas * * *

Sec. 19. 10 V.S.A. § 4145 is amended to read:

§ 4145. ACCESS, LANDING AREA RULES

(a)(1) The Board may adopt rules, under 3 V.S.A. chapter 25, to regulate the use by the public of access areas, landing areas, parking areas, or of other lands or waters acquired or maintained pursuant to section 4144 of this title. ~~Such~~ The rules adopted under this section shall be posted in the areas affected and shall permit the launching of one or more of the following:

(A) all vessels that have a Vermont registration certificate required by 23 V.S.A. chapter 29 and the parking of vehicles and boat trailers used by these vessels. The rules shall not preclude the authorization to launch vessels not registered in Vermont. These rules also shall permit the launching of all nonmotorized vessels not used for commercial purposes and the parking of vehicles and boat trailers used by these vessels or a valid registration from another State;

(B) any vessel the owner or operator of which holds a valid Vermont fishing, hunting, or trapping license; or

(C) a nonmotorized vessel displaying a nonmotorized vessel access area program sticker issued under subsection (b) of this section.

(2) The rules shall allow the parking of vehicles and boat trailers for any vessel permitted to launch at an area under this section.

(b) The Commissioner may enter into agreements with owners of land, which shall not involve payment to the landowner, in order to allow public access for launching of nonmotorized vessels in public waters. The Commissioner may agree to upgrade the land area in a minor way; for example, the Commissioner may agree to build a footpath to the water, build and maintain a small parking area, or perform minor grading to improve boat access. The Commissioner may not agree to major upgrading, such as building a launching ramp or paving a parking area. A landowner who enters into an agreement under this subsection shall be afforded the landowner liability protections of 12 V.S.A. § 5793. The Commissioner shall post signs in these areas, inviting private contributions to the Fish and Wildlife Fund for the purpose of building and maintaining nonmotorized vessel access areas, and shall issue to any person contributing; a sticker that may be placed on a vessel and that identifies the person as a contributor to the nonmotorized vessel access area program.

(c) The Commissioner shall keep account of funds, including private donations and State appropriations, which are deposited into the Fish and Wildlife Fund for the purpose of building and maintaining access areas and

shall annually, on or before January 15, report to the House Committee on ~~Fish, Wildlife and Water Resources~~ Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife, the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy, and the Senate and House Committees on Appropriations; concerning the use of those funds in the past year and plans for use of the funds for the coming year. The provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d) (~~expiration of required reports~~), shall not apply to the report to be made under this subsection.

(d) The Board shall allow the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation to post aquatic nuisance signs pursuant to subdivision 1453(b)(6) of this title.

Sec. 20. 10 V.S.A. § 4252 is amended to read:

§ 4252. ACTIVITIES PERMITTED UNDER LICENSES

* * *

(c) In addition to the activities authorized under subsection (a) of this section and the rules authorized under this part, the holder of a valid license listed under subsection (a) shall be authorized to launch a vessel at an access area, landing area, parking area, or at other land or water acquired or maintained pursuant to section 4144 of this title.

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 21. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Secs. 10 (incidental trapping), 12 (definitions), 13 (trapping rules amendment), and 15–16 (coyote-hunting competition prohibition; points) shall take effect on January 1, 2019.

(b) Sec. 11 (trapping for compensation) shall take effect on January 1, 2020.

(c) This section and all other sections shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

(Committee vote: _____)

FOR THE COMMITTEE

Senator _____