

Introduced by Senators Johannessen, Alpert, and Figueroa
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Leach)

February 23, 2001

An act to add Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 2220) to Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code, relating to wild animals, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1093, as introduced, Johannessen. Wild animals: domestic ferrets.

Existing law prohibits the importation, transportation, possession, or release into this state of certain wild animals without a permit issued by the Department of Fish and Game.

This bill would provide, notwithstanding any other provision of law, that any person who owns a domestic ferret on April 20, 2001, is deemed to own the ferret legally on and after January 1, 2002, if on or before July 1, 2002, the owner of the ferret maintains, and is able to produce, documentation showing that the ferret has been vaccinated against rabies with a vaccine approved for use in ferrets by the United States Department of Agriculture and administered in accordance with the recommendations of the vaccine manufacturer, and if the ferret is spayed or neutered. The bill would authorize a county to adopt an ordinance that provides for licensing requirements, enforcement methods, and other regulatory measures related to the ownership or possession of a ferret in that county.

The bill also would require the Department of Fish and Game, in consultation with other state agencies, to conduct a study to determine the current and potential impacts, if any, of ferrets on the environment, native wildlife, agriculture, and public health and safety, relative to

other domesticated animals. The bill would require submission of the report to the Legislature and the Fish and Game Commission on or before April 1, 2003. The bill would require the commission, based on the report, other relevant information, and public testimony, to make a determination whether to remove the ferret from the list of prohibited species. The bill would prohibit the Department of Fish and Game and the consulting departments from releasing ferrets into the wild for purposes of the study.

Existing law continuously appropriates money in the Fish and Game Preservation Fund to the commission and the department to pay all necessary expenses incurred in carrying out any law for the protection and preservation of birds, mammals, reptiles, and fish.

By imposing new duties on the commission and the department, this bill would make an appropriation.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 2220) is
2 added to Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code, to read:

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CHAPTER 2.5. DOMESTIC FERRETS

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6 2220. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any
7 person who owns a domestic ferret (*Mustela furo*) on April 20,
8 2001, shall be deemed to own the ferret legally on and after
9 January 1, 2002, if all of the following conditions are met:

10 (1) On or before July 1, 2002, the owner of the ferret shall
11 maintain, and be able to produce, documentation showing that the
12 ferret has been vaccinated against rabies with a vaccine approved
13 for use in ferrets by the United States Department of Agriculture
14 and administered in accordance with the recommendations of the
15 vaccine manufacturer.

16 (2) If the ferret is over the age of six months, it is spayed or
17 neutered. If the ferret is spayed or neutered in California, the
18 procedure shall be performed by a licensed veterinarian.

19 (b) Any county may adopt an ordinance that provides for
20 licensing requirements, enforcement methods, and other



1 regulatory measures related to the ownership or possession of a
2 ferret in that county.

3 2221. (a) The Department of Fish and Game, in consultation
4 with the State Department of Health Services and the Department
5 of Food and Agriculture, shall use existing resources to conduct a
6 study to determine the current and potential impacts, if any, of
7 ferrets on the environment, native wildlife, agriculture, and public
8 health and safety, relative to other domesticated animals. The
9 department shall also include in the study an estimate of the
10 number of ferrets in California and relevant information from
11 other states.

12 (b) Neither the Department of Fish and Game nor the
13 consulting departments shall release ferrets into the wild for
14 purposes of the study.

15 (c) The report shall be submitted to the Legislature and the Fish
16 and Game Commission on or before April 1, 2003.

17 (d) The commission, based on the report, other relevant
18 information, and public testimony, shall make a determination
19 whether to remove the ferret from the list of prohibited species.
20 The commission shall commence public testimony by October
21 2003.

