



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

July 24, 1998

S. 2094

Fish and Wildlife Revenue Enhancement Act of 1998

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works on July 22, 1998*

CBO estimates that enacting S. 2094 would increase offsetting receipts and direct spending (of such receipts) by about \$1 million in fiscal year 1999 and less than \$100,000 annually thereafter. Because the bill would affect direct spending, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply, but the net impact on the federal budget would be minimal because both offsetting receipts and spending from such collections would increase by similar amounts each year. S. 2094 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

S. 2094 would allow the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior to spend, without further appropriation, any offsetting receipts earned from the sale of certain items forfeited or abandoned to the United States under laws such as the Endangered Species Act and the Lacey Act. The agencies that administer these laws—the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)—could use the new receipts to pay for costs of storing forfeited and abandoned goods, shipping them to and from storage facilities, appraising their value, selling or otherwise disposing of them, and other related activities.

Under current law, the USFWS and the NMFS may already sell both forfeited and abandoned items. The agencies may only retain and spend the receipts from forfeited goods, however; receipts derived from abandoned goods are deposited into the general fund of the Treasury from which they must be appropriated to be spent. As a consequence, the agencies rarely sell abandoned items. By allowing the agencies to retain and spend the proceeds from sales of both types of items, S. 2094 would provide the incentive and means to auction off both the existing inventory of goods and those collected in the future. Based on information provided by the USFWS, CBO estimates that that agency would raise additional offsetting receipts of about \$1 million in 1999 from selling the existing inventory of abandoned goods. We estimate that future sales (once the existing backlog has been disposed of) would bring in about one-tenth of this amount annually. Information provided by the NMFS indicates that

the effect on its receipts and spending would be much smaller because that agency does not generally seize or keep the types of abandoned goods that could be sold under the bill's authority.

The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis. This estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.