



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

October 22, 2007

H.R. 767
Refuge Ecology Protection, Assistance, and Immediate Response Act

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on October 10, 2007

SUMMARY

H.R. 767 would authorize the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to provide financial assistance for projects that control, mitigate, or eradicate harm from nonnative species to national wildlife refuges and surrounding lands and waters. CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost \$37 million in 2008 and \$257 million over the 2008-2012 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. H.R. 767 would not affect revenues or direct spending.

The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA); any costs to state or local governments to match federal assistance authorized by the bill would be incurred voluntarily.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 767 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

| | By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars | | | | |
|---|--|------|------|------|------|
| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
| CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION | | | | | |
| Estimated Authorization Level | 65 | 65 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Estimated Outlays | 37 | 60 | 60 | 50 | 50 |

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

H.R. 767 would authorize the USFWS to finance projects that help to address the harmful effects of nonnative species on wildlife refuges. Under the bill, the USFWS would provide grants to:

- states to identify harmful species and assess the need for projects to restore native fish and wildlife habitat,
- states, local governments, universities, or other eligible applicants for projects to suppress, reduce, or eradicate nonnative species in wildlife refuges and on adjacent properties, and
- local and state agencies and nongovernmental entities to respond to immediate threats from harmful nonnative species.

Based on information provided by the Department of the Interior, the USFWS, the National Invasive Species Council, and the Fish and Wildlife Foundation, CBO estimates that fully funding the three grant programs authorized by H.R. 767 would require appropriations of nearly \$280 million over the 2008-2012 period. Of that amount, we estimate that the USFWS would need about \$30 million (over the first two years) for state assessments, \$10 million annually for immediate response grants, and \$40 million annually for species control projects. Assuming appropriation of those amounts, we estimate that discretionary outlays would increase by \$37 million in 2008 and \$257 million over the 2008-2012 period.

For this estimate, we assume that H.R. 767 will be enacted near the beginning of fiscal year 2008 and that the amounts estimated to be necessary will be appropriated for each year through 2012. Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for similar grant programs carried out by the USFWS.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

H.R. 767 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA; any costs to state or local governments to match federal assistance authorized by the bill would be incurred voluntarily.

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