

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to nonnative animals; amending s.  
 3           379.231, F.S.; directing the Fish and Wildlife  
 4           Conservation Commission, in consultation with the  
 5           Department of Environmental Protection, to establish a  
 6           pilot program for the eradication of specific species;  
 7           providing legislative findings; providing goals for  
 8           the pilot program; requiring the commission to enter  
 9           into specified contracts; specifying parameters for  
 10          the implementation of the pilot program; requiring the  
 11          commission to submit a report to the Governor and the  
 12          Legislature by a specified date; providing an  
 13          appropriation for the implementation of the pilot  
 14          program; providing an effective date.

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 16   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 18           Section 1.   Section 379.231, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 19   to read:

20           379.231   Regulation of nonnative animals.—

21           (1)   It is unlawful to import for sale or use, or to  
 22   release within this state, any species of the animal kingdom not  
 23   native to Florida unless authorized by the Fish and Wildlife  
 24   Conservation Commission.

25           (2)   A person in violation of this section commits a Level

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

26 Three violation under s. 379.4015.

27 (3) The commission, in consultation with the Department of  
28 Environmental Protection, is directed to establish a pilot  
29 program to mitigate the impact of lizards of the genus  
30 Tupinambis, also known as tegu lizards; finfish of the genus  
31 Pterois, also known as lionfish; and species listed in s.  
32 379.372(2)(a) on the public lands and waters of this state.

33 (a) The Legislature finds that tegu lizards, lionfish, and  
34 species listed in s. 379.372(2)(a) continue to expand their  
35 range and to decimate the fauna and flora of the Everglades and  
36 other natural areas, waters, and ecosystems of this state at an  
37 accelerating rate.

38 (b) The goal of the pilot program is to examine the  
39 benefits of using strategically deployed hunting and fishing  
40 teams to slow the advance of tegu lizards, lionfish, and species  
41 listed in s. 379.372(2)(a) and begin to contain and eradicate  
42 such species from this state.

43 (c) The commission shall form hunting and fishing teams by  
44 entering into contracts with entities or individuals to capture  
45 or destroy tegu lizards, lionfish, and species listed in s.  
46 379.372(2)(a) found on public lands and in public waters. The  
47 commission shall award such contracts through a competitive  
48 bidding process. All parties awarded contracts by the commission  
49 shall ensure that each individual who participates in a hunting  
50 or fishing operation holds a valid Florida hunting or fishing

51 license. The commission shall ensure that all captures and kills  
52 of tegu lizards, lionfish, and species listed in s.  
53 379.372(2)(a) are documented and photographed and that the  
54 geographic location of the take is recorded for research  
55 purposes. The commission shall direct the disposal of all  
56 animals captured and not destroyed in a hunting or fishing  
57 operation.

58 (d) The commission shall compose teams of contracted  
59 entities and individuals and direct their operations in  
60 geographic areas in a manner designed to maximize the take of  
61 tegu lizards, lionfish, and species listed in s. 379.372(2)(a)  
62 or to achieve the greatest gain in territory from which such  
63 species have been eradicated.

64 (e) Teams are authorized to hunt or fish at the direction  
65 of the commission in the Everglades and Francis S. Taylor  
66 Wildlife Management Areas and all other state lands and waters  
67 managed by the commission. The commission may enter into  
68 memoranda of agreement with other state and local entities for  
69 permission to deploy teams of hunters and fishers in other state  
70 and local natural areas. The commission shall seek permission  
71 from the National Park Service to deploy hunting and fishing  
72 teams in the Everglades National Park.

73 (f) The commission shall submit a report of findings and  
74 recommendations regarding its implementation of the pilot  
75 program to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the

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76 Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 1, 2020.

77 (g) For fiscal years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, the sum of  
78 \$300,000 is appropriated from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to  
79 the commission for the purpose of implementing this subsection.

80 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2017.