HOUSE BILL 1571

AN ACT relative to the qualifications for the members of the fish and game commission.


COMMITTEE: Fish and Game and Marine Resources

ANALYSIS

This bill amends the qualifications for members of the fish and game commission.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in bold italics. Matter removed from current law appears [in brackets and struckthrough]. Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.
AN ACT relative to the qualifications for the members of the fish and game commission.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1  Fish and Game Commission; Appointment of Commission. Amend RSA 206:2 to read as follows:

206:2 Appointment of Commission.

I. The commission shall consist of 11 members, each qualified pursuant to RSA 206:2-a, appointed by the governor and council. Whenever an appointment is to be made to the commission, the governor shall cause to be published the name of the nominee in a newspaper of statewide daily circulation. The nominee shall also be named at the monthly commission meeting immediately following the nomination and the nominee's name shall be included in the minutes of that meeting. The council may not consent to an appointment under this section sooner than 30 days after the name of the nominee is submitted to the council.

II. Sporting clubs, conservation organizations, and nonconsumptive recreational clubs with membership in each county may form a county [sporting club] board. Whenever an appointment is to be made to the commission, each board may nominate one to 3 persons and submit such recommendations to the governor for the governor's consideration. Whenever an appointment is to be made to the commission from the tidewater towns, the advisory committee on marine fisheries may nominate one to 3 persons and submit such recommendations to the governor for the governor's consideration.

III. For the purposes of this section ["sporting clubs" means]:

(a) "Sporting club" means an organization which has specific interests in hunting, fishing, trapping, wildlife, and habitat conservation [and] which has been registered with the department of state for at least 2 consecutive years[.]

(b) An organization which [ ] and acknowledges in its permanent mission and bylaws, the promotion and protection of hunting, fishing, or trapping and which accepts scientific [wildlife management] methods and tools.

(b) “Conservation organization” means a bona fide nonprofit organization qualified under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4), with a presence in the state of New Hampshire for at least 2 consecutive years that has specific interests in, and which acknowledges in its permanent mission and bylaws, the promotion and protection of one or more of the fields listed in RSA 206:2-a, II(f), and accepts scientific methods and tools.
(c) "Nonconsumptive recreational club" means an organization which has specific interests in, and acknowledges in its permanent mission and bylaws, the promotion and protection of one or more of the fields listed in RSA 206:2-a, II(g), accepts scientific methods and tools, and which has been registered with the department of state for at least 2 consecutive years.

2 Fish and Game Commission; Qualifications of Commissioners. RSA 206:2-a is repealed and reenacted to read as follows:

206:2-a Qualifications of Commissioners.

I. Each member of the commission shall be a resident of a different county in the state except that one commission member shall be a resident of one of the tidewater towns of Portsmouth, Seabrook, Rye, Hampton, Hampton Falls, North Hampton, Newington, Greenland, Stratham, Exeter, Newfields, Newmarket, Durham, Madbury, Dover, Rollinsford, or New Castle, and not more than 6 commissioners shall be members of the same political party.

II. Each member shall also be qualified in the following manner:

(a) Well informed on the subject of fish and wildlife conservation and restoration.

(b) Dedicated to the conservation and protection of the state's fish and wildlife resources and of an environment conducive to the welfare of the same.

(c) Committed to a fish and game program providing reasonable balance between research, habitat management and law enforcement.

(d) A personal record free of convictions of violation of fish and game laws and regulations of this state or any other jurisdiction within 5 years, preceding his or her appointment.

(e) Five but not more than 6 commissioners shall have demonstrated at least 5 years' experience in one or a combination of the following:

(1) Be an active outdoorsman holding a resident fishing, hunting, or trapping license in at least 5 of the 10 years preceding the appointment.

(2) Forestry.

(3) Agriculture.

(4) Management of wild lands.

(5) Fish and game management.

(6) Active membership in a sporting club in this state.

(f) Five but not more than 6 commissioners shall have demonstrated at least 5 years' experience in one or a combination of the following fields:

(1) Soils conservation.

(2) Conservation of water resources.

(3) Fish and game propagation.

(4) Conservation engineering.

(5) Conservation law.
(6) Wildlife education.
(7) Wildlife biology.
(8) Ecology.
(9) Active membership in a conservation organization in this state.

(g) Three but not more than 4 commissioners shall have demonstrated at least 5 years' experience in one or a combination of the following fields:
(1) OHRV recreation.
(2) Motorized and nonmotorized marine recreation.
(3) Hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, or climbing.
(4) Equestrian or bicycle trail riding.
(5) Wildlife watching or wildlife photography.
(6) Camping.
(7) Active membership in a nonconsumptive recreational club in this state.

(h) In the case of the coastal commission member, a general knowledge of all crustaceans and bivalves in coastal waters and salt water fishing in general.

III. Upon nomination by the governor, each nominee shall forthwith file with the secretary of state an affidavit, duly signed and sworn to, setting forth in detail how he or she complies with the qualifications cited in paragraph II and affirming his or her belief in the aims of subparagraphs (b) and (c) of paragraph II. An appointment shall not be confirmed by the council until such affidavit has been examined by them and such appointee has been found qualified pursuant to this section.

3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.