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## DIGEST

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HB 637 Engrossed

2025 Regular Session

Coates

**Abstract:** Authorizes the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to promulgate rules for the imposition of fees for the conversion of important habitat and species for large-scale solar development.

Proposed law authorizes the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to impose fees as part of a letter of clearance process required by HB 615 of this Regular Session for solar developments with a footprint of 10 acres or more.

Proposed law requires the dept. to promulgate rules for a method of charging a per acre fee to offset the impacts of the loss of habitats, biodiversity, and ecosystem functions.

Proposed law provides that the method of calculating fees may be based on the following:

- (1) Geographic location.
- (2) Market value.
- (3) Rarity of the habitat.
- (4) Quality of the habitat.
- (5) Presence of at-risk species.
- (6) Comparisons of mitigation value for similarly situated property or habitat.
- (7) Costs associated with restoring or conserving similar habitat.
- (8) Any other factor deemed necessary to establish a method to be applied statewide.

Proposed law requires any fees collected pursuant to proposed law be deposited into the Conservation Fund.

Proposed law requires that fees collected pursuant to proposed law be used only for the costs incurred by the dept. during the letter of clearance process and for the costs to protect, replace, or mitigate the loss of habitat being converted for large-scale solar development.

Effective only if HB 615 of this 2025 Regular Session becomes law.

(Adds R.S. 30:1128)