ENROLLED

Regular Session, 2011

HOUSE BILL NO. 184

BY REPRESENTATIVE HILL

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 3:4278.1(A), (B), (C), and (D), relative to timber theft; to provide for the recovery of treble damages by co-owners or co-heirs of timber; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 3:4278.1 (A), (B), (C), and (D) are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

§4278.1. Trees, cutting without consent; co-owners and co-heirs; penalty

A.(1) It shall be unlawful for any person to cut, fell, destroy, remove, or to divert for sale or use, any trees, or to authorize or direct his agent or employee to cut, fell, destroy, remove, or to divert for sale or use, any trees, growing or lying on the land of another, without the consent of, or in accordance with the direction of, the owner or legal possessor, or in accordance with specific terms of a legal contract or agreement.

(2) It shall be unlawful for any co-owner or co-heir to cut, fell, destroy, remove, or to divert for sale or use, any trees, or to authorize or direct his agent or employee to cut, fell, destroy, remove, or to divert for sale or use, any trees, growing or lying on co-owned land, without the consent of, or in accordance with the direction of, the other co-owners or co-heirs, or in accordance with specific terms of a legal contract or agreement. The provisions of this Paragraph shall not apply to the sale of an undivided timber interest pursuant to R.S. 3:4278.2.

B. Whoever willfully and intentionally violates the provisions of Subsection A of this Section shall be liable to the owner, co-owner, co-heir, or legal possessor of the trees for civil damages in the amount of three times the fair market value of

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the trees cut, felled, destroyed, removed, or diverted, plus reasonable ~~attorney's~~ attorney fees and costs.

C. Whoever violates the provisions of Subsection A of this Section in good faith shall be liable to the owner, co-owner, co-heir, or legal possessor of the trees for three times the fair market value of the trees cut, felled, destroyed, removed, or diverted, if circumstances prove that the violator should have been aware that his actions were without the consent or direction of the owner, co-owner, co-heir, or legal possessor of the trees.

D. If a good faith violator of Subsection A of this Section fails to make payment under the requirements of this Section within thirty days after notification and demand by the owner, co-owner, co-heir, or legal possessor, the violator shall also be responsible for the reasonable attorney fees and costs of the owner, co-owner, co-heir, or legal possessor.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____

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