| **House Bill 3279**  Senate Amendments  Section-by-Section Analysis | | |
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| HOUSE VERSION | SENATE VERSION (CS) | CONFERENCE |
| SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 66, Parks and Wildlife Code, is amended by adding Section 66.024 to read as follows:  Sec. 66.024. SEAGRASS PLANTS. (a) In this section, "seagrass plant" means a flowering marine plant of the species:  (1) Cymodocea filiformis, known as manatee grass;  (2) Halodule beaudettei, known as shoal grass;  (3) Halophila engelmannii, known as star grass or Engelmann's seagrass;  (4) Ruppia maritima, known as widgeon grass; or  (5) Thalassia testudinum, known as turtle grass.  (b) A person may not uproot or dig out any rooted seagrass plant from a bay bottom or other saltwater bottom area in the jurisdiction of this state by means of a propeller, except as that uprooting or digging out may be authorized by:  (1) a coastal lease granted by the General Land Office; or  (2) a commercial license or permit issued by the department.  (c) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that a person:  (1) anchors a vessel within an area containing seagrass plants and uproots a seagrass plant;  (2) uses an electric trolling motor within an area containing seagrass plants and uproots a seagrass plant; or  (3) operates a vessel in a manner consistent with the acceleration required to reach and stay on plane.  (d) A person who violates this section or a proclamation of the commission under this section commits an offense that is a Class C Parks and Wildlife Code misdemeanor. | SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 66, Parks and Wildlife Code, is amended by adding Section 66.024 to read as follows:  Sec. 66.024. SEAGRASS PLANTS. (a) In this section, "seagrass plant" means a flowering marine plant of the species:  (1) Cymodocea filiformis, known as manatee grass;  (2) Halodule beaudettei or Halodule wrightii, known as shoal grass;  (3) Halophila engelmannii, known as star grass or Engelmann's seagrass;  (4) Ruppia maritima, known as widgeon grass; or  (5) Thalassia testudinum, known as turtle grass.  (b) A person may not uproot or dig out any rooted seagrass plant from a bay bottom or other saltwater bottom area in the jurisdiction of this state by means of a propeller, except as that uprooting or digging out may be authorized by a commercial license or permit issued by the department.  (c) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that a person:  (1) anchors a vessel within an area containing seagrass plants and uproots a seagrass plant;  (2) uses an electric trolling motor within an area containing seagrass plants and uproots a seagrass plant; or  (3) operates a vessel in a manner consistent with the acceleration required to reach and stay on plane.  (d) A person who violates this section or a proclamation of the commission under this section commits an offense that is a Class C Parks and Wildlife Code misdemeanor. |  |
| SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2013. | SECTION 2. Same as House version. |  |