

## HB 1072 -- Shipwreck Site Protection

Sponsor: Jetton

Under current law, a person who wishes to salvage a submerged shipwreck must obtain a permit from the Department of Natural Resources and pay a permit fee. The applicant must also provide the department with a plan for excavation and have a professional archaeologist on staff. This bill prohibits the department from issuing the permit without a detailed excavation, conservation, and preservation plan and proof that the applicant has adequate funding for the salvage. The bill also requires the applicant to be or hire a professional maritime archaeologist. If the applicant does not fulfill all tasks in the scope of work related to the shipwreck, all items and data regarding the shipwreck are forfeited to the state. The state may not limit visitation to a shipwreck unless there are certain apparent threats. The current permit fee is increased from \$100 to \$500.

The bill also requires persons who wish to salvage a submerged embedded abandoned shipwreck to positively identify the shipwreck. The person must apply for an exploratory permit from the department. The department must comment on any application within 60 days. The applicant must pay a \$1,500 application fee to the Director of Revenue for the exploratory permit. The permit allows the applicant to search for and identify the precise location of the individual shipwreck. The applicant will have one year to demonstrate that the specific shipwreck has been located.

The bill also outlines a process for professional maritime archaeologist to obtain a permit for research and training. This permit fee is \$100. The bill sets the conditions of the permit. If a shipwreck has been previously, positively identified and located, an exploratory permit is not necessary; and the applicant may apply for a salvage permit. The bill also outlines conditions for ongoing professional archaeological research and restrictions on shipwrecks located in state parks and historic sites.

The bill defines "embedded," "historic shipwreck materials," "land beneath navigable waters," "national register," "professional maritime archaeologist," "shipwreck," and "visitation."

Persons who knowingly take historic shipwreck materials from state navigable waters or vandalize a shipwreck are guilty of a class A misdemeanor for the first offense and a class D felony for the second or subsequent offenses.