

HB 553 -- LANDS ACQUIRED THROUGH SETTLEMENTS

SPONSOR: Ross

This bill creates the "Land Reclamation Legal Settlement Commission," which is composed of four members from three regional planning commissions. The commission's purpose is to develop and implement a plan for primary restoration projects for areas affected by lead mining in southeast Missouri. The plan must be submitted to the chair of the House of Representatives' Committee on Budget and the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee by February 2, 2018.

The Department of Natural Resources and all other state departments, agencies, or entities must sell at public auction any property interest to land in Oregon County purchased on or before August 28, 2017, through legal settlement funds administered by the Department of Natural Resources. If there is no purchaser, the property will revert to the ownership of Oregon county government. Any condition, restrictions, dedication, covenant, or other encumbrance conveyed with the property is null and void and a new covenant appurtenant is included in the land conveyance stating that the land cannot be sold to, leased, or otherwise controlled by a state or federal agency. The proceeds of the sale of the property will be used to implement the commission's plan for primary restoration projects.

After August 28, 2017, the bill also prohibits the department and all other state departments, agencies, or entities from purchasing property interest in Oregon County. Any taxpayer in the state has standing to enforce these requirements and will be entitled to reasonable attorney's fees.

This section expires on August 28, 2018.

This bill contains an emergency clause.

This bill is similar to SCS HB 2187 (2016).