

**NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION[571]**

**Adopted and Filed**

**Rulemaking related to salvage of fish and game**

The Natural Resource Commission (Commission) hereby rescinds Chapter 80, “Salvage of Fish and Game,” Iowa Administrative Code, and adopts a new Chapter 80 with the same title.

*Legal Authority for Rulemaking*

This rulemaking is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code sections 481A.11, 481A.38 and 481A.39.

*State or Federal Law Implemented*

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code sections 481A.11, 481A.38 and 481A.39.

*Purpose and Summary*

Chapter 80 establishes rules for the lawful salvage, distribution, and possession of fish and game that are accidentally killed by motor vehicles, confiscated by authorities, or found dead. The chapter ensures that salvaged resources are used appropriately (primarily for human consumption or animal feed) and not exploited for commercial gain or illegal purposes. The chapter also outlines procedures for collecting shed antlers and found-dead deer (“deadheads”) during different times of the year. This chapter was reviewed and edited consistent with Executive Order 10.

*Public Comment and Changes to Rulemaking*

Notice of Intended Action for this rulemaking was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on January 7, 2026, as **ARC 9919C**. A public hearing was held on the following date(s):

- January 28, 2026
- February 11, 2026

No one attended the public hearings. One public comment was received. The comment sought to require affixing the authorization number or physical tag to the deadhead for identification.

Changes from the Notice have been made to clarify that the authorization number or physical tag needs to be affixed to the deadhead.

*Adoption of Rulemaking*

This rulemaking was adopted by the Commission on April 9, 2026.

*Fiscal Impact*

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

*Jobs Impact*

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, no impact on jobs has been found.

*Waivers*

This rulemaking is subject to the waiver provisions of 571—Chapter 11. Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Commission for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any.

*Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee*

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

*Effective Date*

This rulemaking will become effective on June 17, 2026.

The following rulemaking action is adopted:

ITEM 1. Rescind 571—Chapter 80 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 80  
SALVAGE OF FISH AND GAME

**571—80.1(481A) Salvage.** Salvage authorizes the possession of confiscated fish or game or game accidentally killed by a motor vehicle on a public highway for the purpose of human consumption or the feeding of domestic animals. Any other benefits derived from the possession of legally salvaged game (such as legal sale of hides, plumage, or antlers) is a secondary benefit only. Peace officers are not to salvage game solely for the purpose of financial gain or commercial taxidermy.

**80.1(1)** The following game when accidentally killed by a motor vehicle shall not be considered salvageable: spotted fawn deer and hen pheasants.

**80.1(2)** All salvaged game or fish shall be accompanied with a salvage tag signed by the holder and a peace officer or designee of the director of the department of natural resources and shall be valid for the time period assigned on the tag. The salvage tag shall remain with the game or fish until the game or fish is consumed. All salvage tags referred to in this chapter are not transferable.

**571—80.2(481A) Game killed by motor vehicle.**

**80.2(1)** Any person wanting to possess game accidentally killed by a motor vehicle on a highway shall immediately contact the nearest conservation officer, Iowa state trooper, sheriff's department, or police department to request and receive a salvage tag prior to taking possession of said game. The whole carcass of the game animal must be removed from the scene.

**80.2(2)** When a request is made for game accidentally killed by a motor vehicle, the game shall, when salvageable, be disposed of in accordance with the following priorities:

- a. Individuals involved in the accident;
- b. Public institutions;
- c. Nonprofit organizations;
- d. Others.

**571—80.3(481A) Confiscated fish or game.**

**80.3(1)** The following conditions shall apply to a person being allowed to take possession of fish or game confiscated by the department of natural resources or a court.

**80.3(2)** Confiscated fish or game, when salvageable, shall be disposed of in accordance with the following priorities:

- a. Public institutions.
- b. Nonprofit organizations.
- c. Others.

**571—80.4(481A) Deadheads and shed-antlers.**

**80.4(1)** Naturally shed deer antlers may be collected and possessed at any time of year.

**80.4(2)** Found-dead deer heads with attached antlers, also known as deadheads, may be collected and possessed by individuals who possess a valid hunting license and have paid the habitat fee pursuant to Iowa Code section 483A.1 unless exempt under Iowa Code section 483A.24(1) or 483A.24(8). Collection is permitted during the following time periods under the following conditions:

*a.* February 1 through July 31: an individual must electronically complete and submit a deadhead report and possession authorization through the department's website prior to collecting and possessing each deadhead. The unique authorization number shall be affixed to and remain with the deadhead.

*b.* August 1 through January 31: an individual must contact the local conservation officer and request a physical deadhead tag prior to taking possession. Verbal or electronic authorization from a conservation officer is sufficient for temporary possession until a physical tag can be issued and affixed by a conservation officer. The physical tag shall remain affixed to the deadhead.

**80.4(3)** This rule does not apply to deer that have been shot or killed by unlawful methods or means.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.11, 481A.38, and 481A.39.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: For replacement pages for IAC, see IAC Supplement 5/13/26.