

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION[571]

Regulatory Analysis

Notice of Intended Action to be published: rule 571—96.10(481A)
“Small Game Hunting by Nonresidents”

Iowa Code section(s) or chapter(s) authorizing rulemaking: 481A.38, 481A.39, and 481A.48
State or federal law(s) implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, and 481A.48

Public Hearing

A public hearing at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

July 28, 2026
1 to 2 p.m.

6200 Park Avenue, Suite 200
Des Moines, Iowa

Free Language Assistance: If you need assistance in a language other than English, contact the Department of Natural Resources (Department) at chris.ensminger@dnr.iowa.gov or civilrights@dnr.iowa.gov or by telephone at 515.250.6886 at least seven days before the event.

Asistencia lingüística gratuita: Si necesita ayuda en un idioma que no sea inglés, comuníquese con el Departamento al chris.ensminger@dnr.iowa.gov o civilrights@dnr.iowa.gov o por teléfono a 515.250.6886 al menos siete días antes del evento.

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit written or oral comments concerning this Regulatory Analysis, which must be received by the Department no later than 4:30 p.m. on the date of the public hearing. Comments should be directed to:

Chris Enslinger
Department of Natural Resources
6200 Park Avenue, Suite 200
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Phone: 515.250.6886
Email: chris.ensminger@dnr.iowa.gov

Free Language Access: If you speak a non-English language, the Department offers language assistance services free of charge. Contact the Department at chris.ensminger@dnr.iowa.gov.

Asistencia lingüística gratuita: Si habla un idioma que no sea el inglés, los servicios de asistencia lingüística están disponibles de forma gratuita, comuníquese con el Departamento al chris.ensminger@dnr.iowa.gov.

Purpose and Summary

Chapter 96 governs small game hunting by residents and nonresidents in the State of Iowa. This chapter also sets forth season dates, bag limits, possession limits, shooting hours, areas open to hunting, and transportation requirements. The proposed rule defines annual nonresident small game hunting license parameters and designates resident only hunting periods on public lands.

Analysis of Impact

1. **Persons affected by the proposed rulemaking:**
 - **Classes of persons that will bear the costs of the proposed rulemaking:**
Iowa small game hunters will bear the costs of the proposed rulemaking.
 - **Classes of persons that will benefit from the proposed rulemaking:**
Iowa small game hunters will benefit from the proposed rulemaking.
2. **Impact of the proposed rulemaking, economic or otherwise, including the nature and amount of all the different kinds of costs that would be incurred:**
 - **Quantitative description of impact:**
The proposed rule does not change the fees for small game hunting licenses.
 - **Qualitative description of impact:**
The proposed rule will more evenly distribute small game hunting pressure on public land, providing for a safer and more enjoyable experience for resident and nonresident hunters. Additionally, a typical nonresident hunter spends five days or less hunting small game in Iowa annually. The proposed rule provides for up to 14 days of hunting on an annual license with the option to purchase multiple annual licenses.
3. **Costs to the State:**
 - **Implementation and enforcement costs borne by the agency or any other agency:**
The agency's primary cost is from staff time to implement and enforce the rules. This includes Wildlife Bureau staff to administer, coordinate, and monitor the hunting seasons and also effort from conservation officers to ensure safe and compliant hunting takes place. However, no staff work exclusively on small game hunting-related matters.
 - **Anticipated effect on State revenues:**
The proposed rule is not expected to result in any changes to State revenue.
4. **Comparison of the costs and benefits of the proposed rulemaking to the costs and benefits of inaction:**

The public does not have any costs to comply with the process and requirements set forth in these rules.
5. **Determination whether less costly methods or less intrusive methods exist for achieving the purpose of the proposed rulemaking:**

The Department could not identify less costly or less intrusive methods for achieving the purpose of this rule. Other states have similar regulations and strive to manage their small game populations at a balance between recreational opportunities and negative interactions.
6. **Alternative methods considered by the agency:**
 - **Description of any alternative methods that were seriously considered by the agency:**
No alternative methods were identified to effectively manage Iowa's small game populations.
 - **Reasons why alternative methods were rejected in favor of the proposed rulemaking:**
Not applicable.

Small Business Impact

If the rulemaking will have a substantial impact on small business, include a discussion of whether it would be feasible and practicable to do any of the following to reduce the impact of the rulemaking on small business:

- Establish less stringent compliance or reporting requirements in the rulemaking for small business.
- Establish less stringent schedules or deadlines in the rulemaking for compliance or reporting requirements for small business.
- Consolidate or simplify the rulemaking's compliance or reporting requirements for small business.

- Establish performance standards to replace design or operational standards in the rulemaking for small business.
- Exempt small business from any or all requirements of the rulemaking.

If legal and feasible, how does the rulemaking use a method discussed above to reduce the substantial impact on small business?

This proposed rule is not expected to have any impact on small business.

Text of Proposed Rulemaking

ITEM 1. Adopt the following new rule 571—96.10(481A):

571—96.10(481A) Small game hunting by nonresidents.

96.10(1) Small game species for nonresident hunting include pheasant, quail, partridge, grouse, dove, rabbit, and squirrel.

96.10(2) Nonresident small game hunters purchasing a nonresident annual hunting license shall be limited to two 7-day periods totaling not more than 14 days per annual license purchased. Multiple nonresident annual hunting licenses may be purchased.

96.10(3) The two seven-day periods must be designated at the time the annual license is purchased and may be consecutive. The seven-day periods must fall within the season dates defined in rules 571—96.1(481A) through 571—96.4(481A) and this rule, except:

a. Small game hunting by nonresidents is not allowed on public land during the first seven days of the pheasant season as defined in 571—subrule 96.1(1).

b. Rabbit, squirrel, and grouse hunting by nonresidents is not allowed on public land from the third Saturday in October through the third Saturday in November.

96.10(4) A designated period may be changed prior to the beginning date of the period by contacting the department.

96.10(5) The nonresident five-day hunting license may be purchased independently or in conjunction with a nonresident annual hunting license.