Regulatory Analysis

Notice of Intended Action to be published: 571—108.1(481A) and 571—108.4(481A)
"Wild Furbearer Trapping and Hunting"

Iowa Code section(s) or chapter(s) authorizing rulemaking: 481A.6, 481A.38, 481A.39, 481A.87, 481A.90, and 481A.92

State or federal law(s) implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code sections 481A.6, 481A.38, and 481A.92

Public Hearing

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

August 12, 2025	6200 Park Avenue, Second Floor
1 to 2 p.m.	Des Moines, Iowa

Public Comment

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

Chris Ensminger
Iowa 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 assistance: 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.

Servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística: 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 108 sets season dates, bag limits, possession limits, and areas open to hunting or trapping furbearers. Chapter 108 was recently finalized as part of the Natural Resource Commission's (Commission's) and Department's 2024 review under Executive Order 10. However, an error was noticed in rule 571—108.1(481A) that was the result of a multispecies consolidation from several rules into one. Several species' open season dates were not listed with sufficient detail. That error is being corrected as part of this proposed rulemaking. One additional amendment is proposed that will ensure consistent style and formatting throughout the chapter.

Analysis of Impact

1. **Persons affected by the proposed rulemaking:**

- **Classes of persons that will bear the costs of the proposed rulemaking:**

Iowa furharvesters will bear the costs.

- **Classes of persons that will benefit from the proposed rulemaking:**

Iowa furharvesters will benefit.

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:**

This proposed rulemaking is not associated with an economic impact or cost. This proposed rulemaking is correcting an error resulting from a larger Executive Order 10 consolidation; several species' open season dates were accidentally omitted. No substantive changes are proposed from past hunting seasons.

- **Qualitative description of impact:**

This proposed rulemaking does not impose burdens to the public.

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/trapping seasons and effort from conservation officers to ensure safe and compliant hunting takes place.

- **Anticipated effect on State revenues:**

A detailed 2022 survey of nearly 1,100 Iowans conducted by Responsive Management Inc. estimated that 433,000 people participate in hunting activities in Iowa annually. As mentioned previously, at least 15,000 of them pursue furbearers. According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis with the U.S. Department of Commerce, hunting is linked to nearly 7,000 jobs in Iowa and generated $47.8 million in taxes based on $227.0 million in salaries and wages.

4. **Comparison of the costs and benefits of the proposed rulemaking to the costs and benefits of inaction:**

The loss of furbearer hunting and trapping in Iowa would eliminate the revenues described previously. Additionally, unregulated furbearer populations could cause an increasing amount of damage to Iowa landowners.

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 rulemaking. Other states have similar regulations and strive to manage their furbearer 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 furbearer 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?

The following types of jobs are positively impacted by furbearer hunting and trapping in Iowa generally and should see no noticeable change due to this rulemaking: hunting equipment retailers (firearms, ammunition, clothing, chairs, stands, binoculars, and other supporting equipment); field guides and outfitters; taxidermists; and restaurants, hotels, and gas stations for hunters/trappers traveling around the State.

Text of Proposed Rulemaking

ITEM 1. Amend rule 571—108.1(481A), introductory paragraph, as follows:

571—108.1(481A) Badger, opossum, striped skunk, red fox, gray fox, mink, muskrat and weasel. Open season ~~for the taking of mink, muskrat and weasel~~ shall be from 8 a.m. on the first Saturday in November through February 28 of the succeeding year. Entire state open. No daily bag or possession limit.

ITEM 2. Amend rule 571—108.4(481A) as follows:

571—108.4(481A) Beaver. Open season ~~for the taking of beaver~~ shall be from 8 a.m. on the first Saturday in November through April 15 of the succeeding year. No daily bag or possession limit.