

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION[571]

Regulatory Analysis

Notice of Intended Action to be published: 571—Chapter 106
“Deer Hunting”

Iowa Code section(s) or chapter(s) authorizing rulemaking: 455A.5(6)“a,” 481A.39 and 481A.48
State or federal law(s) implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39 and 481A.48 and 2026 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2318

Public Hearing

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

September 22, 2026
1 to 2 p.m.

6200 Park Avenue, Second Floor
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 515.326.0430 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 515.326.0430 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 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 106 governs deer hunting by residents and nonresidents in the State of Iowa. This chapter regulates deer hunting and sets forth season dates, bag limits, possession limits, shooting hours, areas open to hunting, licensing procedures, means and methods of take, and transportation and reporting requirements.

This rulemaking proposes two amendments to comply with 2026 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2318, passed during the 2026 Legislative Session. That legislation amends Iowa Code section 483A.8,

which previously required a nonresident who purchased an antlered or any-sex deer hunting license to also purchase an antlerless-deer-only deer hunting license at the same time. Senate File 2318 changes this requirement to add in the following caveat: the Natural Resource Commission (Commission) can designate certain zones as “not required” for the mandatory antlerless-deer-only license. This rulemaking aligns Chapter 106 with this statutory change and specifies the process for the Commission to make the “not required” designation.

Analysis of Impact

1. Persons affected by the proposed rulemaking:

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

Most hunters will not be affected by this proposed rulemaking. Nonresident hunters may not be required to purchase a mandatory antlerless-deer-only license if they select a zone that the Commission has designated “not required.”

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

Deer hunters 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:**

There is a potential small economic benefit for nonresident hunters who may no longer be required to purchase a mandatory antlerless deer license.

• **Qualitative description of impact:**

The Commission will likely only designate zones as “not required” in cases where the deer population has dropped to a level below the Department’s population goals. In these cases, resident antlerless-deer-only licenses are not available, so requiring nonresidents to purchase a privilege not available to residents is seen negatively. The proposed rulemaking will rectify that inequity and is strongly supported by resident hunters.

3. Costs to the State:

• **Implementation and enforcement costs borne by the agency or any other agency:**

Not applicable. The Department will absorb any necessary educational outreach and enforcement of the legislation in its existing budget.

• **Anticipated effect on State revenues:**

It is difficult to accurately predict what the actual revenue loss of this rulemaking will be for the Department. There will be lost revenues from the reduction in mandatory license sales. However, this will be in low deer population zones where nonresident hunter demand is also low. It is also not clear at this time whether the Commission will determine that any zones should be designated as “not required.”

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:

There are no costs associated with this proposed rulemaking.

6. Alternative methods considered by the agency:

• **Description of any alternative methods that were seriously considered by the agency:**

None were considered.

• **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 rulemaking does not have any impact on small business.

The following types of jobs are positively impacted by deer hunting 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 traveling around the State.

Text of Proposed Rulemaking

ITEM 1. Amend paragraph **106.1(4)“b”** as follows:

b. *Mandatory antlerless-deer-only licenses.* Each hunter who is successful in drawing an any-deer license must also purchase an antlerless-deer-only license for the same zone and season as the any-deer license unless the zone in which the nonresident is purchasing the any-deer hunting license is designated by the commission as not required. If the hunter is unsuccessful in drawing an any-deer license, neither the any-deer nor antlerless-deer-only license will be issued. Antlerless-deer-only licenses shall be valid for taking deer that have no forked antler.

ITEM 2. Amend subrule 106.10(5) as follows:

106.10(5) *Antlerless-deer-only licenses, mandatory antlerless-deer-only licenses and zone B any-deer licenses.* Paid antlerless-deer-only licenses and zone B any-deer licenses shall be available by county as designated annually by the commission. Mandatory antlerless-deer-only licenses shall be available by nonresident zone as designated annually by the commission. Prior to the commission designating the quotas and nonresident zones, the department shall publish on its website (www.iowadnr.gov/deerhunting) a proposed allocation and accept public comments for at least 30 days.