Regulatory Analysis

Notice of Intended Action to be published: Iowa Administrative Code 571—Chapter 44
"Special Events and Fireworks Displays"

Iowa Code section(s) or chapter(s) authorizing rulemaking: 321G.16, 321I.17, 461A.42, 462A.16, and 481A.38

State or federal law(s) implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code sections 321G.16, 321I.17, 461A.3, 461A.4, 461A.42, 462A.16, 481A.22, and 481A.38

Public Hearing

A public hearing at which persons may present their views orally will be held via conference call as follows. Persons who wish to attend the conference call should contact Susan Stocker via email. A conference call number will be provided prior to the hearing. Persons who wish to make oral comments at the conference call public hearing must submit a request to Susan Stocker prior to the hearing to facilitate an orderly hearing.

September 24, 2024 9 a.m.	Via video/conference call

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit written or oral comments concerning this Regulatory Analysis. Written or oral comments in response to this Regulatory Analysis 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:

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Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Phone: 515.313.6439
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Purpose and Summary

Proposed Chapter 44 provides rules on the issuance of permits for special events and fireworks displays held on public land, waters, and ice of the state. The chapter allows for a balance with all user groups when scheduling special events and fireworks displays. Additionally, this chapter prevents the overuse, and potentially damaging use, of Iowa's natural resources, including depleted fisheries. Excessive events on the water would create a safety hazard and harm to the public with increased boating accidents. Unmanaged fireworks displays would create excess debris in the water and on public land and are potentially fire and public safety hazards. This chapter has been reviewed and edited consistent with Executive Order 10.

Analysis of Impact

1. Persons affected by the proposed rulemaking:

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

User groups who wish to schedule events and fireworks held on public land, waters, and ice of the state will bear the costs.

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

User groups who want to schedule events and user groups who wish to attend the events held on public land, waters, and ice of the state 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:

Each special event and/or fireworks display is required to pay a $25 administrative fee and ensure there is liability insurance for the specific event.

- Qualitative description of impact:

There are no additional costs from this rulemaking.

3. Costs to the State:

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

There are no implementation or enforcement costs outside of routine Department Conservation Officer patrol or administrative staff time.

- Anticipated effect on state revenues:

There is no anticipated effect on state revenues.

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

The costs of inaction are high. Special events and fireworks not managed will allow for overuse of resources and depleted fisheries. Excessive events on the water will create a safety hazard and harm to the public with increased boating accidents. Unmanaged fireworks displays will create excess debris in the water and on public land.

5. Determination whether less costly methods or less intrusive methods exist for achieving the purpose of the proposed rulemaking:

None were identified.

6. Alternative methods considered by the agency:

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

No practical alternatives were found. The regulated activities could be allowed without the requirements in these rules; however, this would not accomplish the purposes of the rules or the Iowa Code provisions that they implement.

- Reasons why alternative methods were rejected in favor of the proposed rulemaking:

The alternative method of not proposing this rulemaking would cause hardship to the user groups applying for the special events and fireworks displays. Prior to the electronic system and application process provided for by the proposed rules, a paper application was used, which burdened the public with additional processing time. The types of events being regulated by these rules are often large and potentially have great impact on public land and waters and other users of these resources. It is impractical to not provide some form of permitting and related requirements.

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 anticipated impact on small business.

Text of Proposed Rulemaking

ITEM 1. Rescind 571—Chapter 44 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 44
SPECIAL EVENTS AND FIREWORKS DISPLAYS

571—44.1(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A) Scope. The purpose of this chapter is to provide rules on the issuance of permits for special events and fireworks displays held on public land, waters, and ice of the state.

571—44.2(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A) Definitions. For the purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

"Accredited postsecondary institution or program" means an institution or program listed in the U.S. Department of Education's database of accredited postsecondary institutions and programs.

"Administrative processing fee" means the fee collected for the processing of each special event application that is submitted.

"All-terrain vehicle" or *"ATV"* means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 321I.1(1)*"a."*

"Bass fishing tournament" means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 483A.39. For purposes of this chapter, "bass fishing tournament" is included in the definition of "special event" unless otherwise specified.

"Catfish fishing tournament" means an event with the purpose of fishing for catfish from boats that meets the definition of "fishing tournament." For purposes of this chapter, "catfish fishing tournament" is included in the definition of "special event" unless otherwise specified.

"Centralized special events application system" means the web-based system used by applicants to submit applications for special events as permitted under this chapter. Approved applications will be placed on a calendar of events web page, accessible from the department's homepage, to inform the general public of scheduled events on public, or when applicable, private, land, water, and ice.

"Department" means the Iowa department of natural resources.

"Field and retriever meet or trial" means the same as described in Iowa Code section 481A.22. For purposes of this chapter, "field and retriever meet or trial" is included in the definition of "special event" unless otherwise specified.

"Fishing tournament" means any organized fishing event, except for department-sponsored fishing events held for educational purposes, involving any of the following: (1) six or more boats or 12 or more participants, except for waters of the Mississippi River, where the number of boats shall be 20 or more and the number of participants shall be 40 or more; (2) an entry fee is charged; or (3) prizes or other inducements are awarded. Additionally, a "virtual fishing tournament," also known as a "catch-photo-release" tournament, is a fishing tournament where fish are not possessed (i.e., not placed in a live well) by the angler but instead are photographed and released upon catching. An "aggregated virtual fishing tournament" occurs when all participants are present on one body of water simultaneously. A "distributed virtual fishing tournament" occurs when participants are present on two or more bodies of water. Additionally, only five or fewer participants may be present on any one body of water simultaneously, and the tournament may occur over an extended time frame. For purposes of this chapter, "fishing tournament" is included in the definition of "special event" unless otherwise specified. "Friends group" means an organization incorporated under Iowa Code chapter 504 or prior

statutory authority as a not-for-profit group which has been formed solely for the purpose of promoting and enhancing a particular state park, recreation area, or the Iowa state park system, or any combination of the three.

"Off-road motorcycle" or *"ORM"* means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 321I.1(16).

"Off-road utility vehicle" or *"OHV"* means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 321I.1(17).

"Permit" means a document issued by the department that enumerates all stipulations, requirements, and contingencies that the applicant must accept and adhere to throughout the duration of the approved special event.

"Public land" means land under the jurisdiction of the natural resource commission.

"Public water" means the same as "navigable waters" as defined in Iowa Code section 462A.2(22) and "waters of this state under the jurisdiction of the commission" as defined in Iowa Code section 462A.2(45).

"Sailing school" means an organization that provides basic and advanced sailing instruction by U.S. Sailing-certified instructors and is affiliated with a yacht club, an accredited postsecondary institution or program, a private or public primary or secondary school, a scouting organization, or a religious institution.

"Snowmobile" means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 321G.1(26).

"Special event" means either of the following occurring on public land, water, or ice:

1. An organized race, tournament, exhibition, demonstration, or other planned event in which an admission fee is charged, prizes are awarded, or competition occurs between participants;
2. A planned event that, due to its nature, potential or actual size, or length, would likely adversely impact the use of the area by the public.

"Vessel" means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 462A.2(40).

DIVISION I
SPECIAL EVENTS

571—44.3(321G,321I,461,462A,481A) Permit required. A permit is required in order to conduct a special event on any public land, water, or ice. A permit is also required for a field and retriever meet or trial held on private land.

571—44.4(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A) Permit conditions. The department may impose permit conditions not specifically covered herein as deemed necessary to protect the resource or to ensure public safety. Such conditions shall be included in the permit issued by the department.

44.4(1) *Use of concessionaire.* If the state park or recreation area where a special event is being held has a concessionaire, the sale of food or drinks shall be governed pursuant to 571—subrule 14.5(3). If a concessionaire chooses not to provide services during the special event, the event sponsor may bring in other concession operations as approved by the department.

44.4(2) *Special permit conditions for fishing tournaments.* In addition to permit conditions deemed necessary by rule 571—44.4(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A), the department may include some or all of the following permit conditions for fishing tournaments:

a. Release of live fish.
b. Fish measured to length and released from boat.
c. Multiple weigh-ins when water temperatures exceed 70°F.
d. Aerated live wells.
e. Designated release areas.
f. Designated release persons.

44.4(3) *Catfish fishing tournaments.* The daily catch limit for a catch and release catfish fishing tournament permitted under this chapter is five catfish per boat regardless of the number of tournament participants on the boat.

44.4(4) *Bass fishing tournaments.* In addition to permit conditions deemed necessary under the introductory paragraph of 571—44.4(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A) or under 44.4(2), the permit conditions for bass fishing tournaments shall include those listed in Iowa Code section 483A.39(2).

571—44.5(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A) Application procedures. The following procedures shall be used to apply for a special event permit:

44.5(1) Applications are made and submitted through the department's centralized special events application system.

44.5(2) Applications—when submitted.

a. Events for the current year. Applications may be submitted anytime during the calendar year in which the special event is to begin but no later than 30 days prior to the special event.

b. Events for the next year. Applications for a special event that will start in the next calendar year shall not be submitted until 7 p.m. on September 1 of the current year.

44.5(3) The number of special events to be held at any area on the same day may be restricted if deemed necessary to avoid congestion within the area or to protect the resource.

44.5(4) One application form may be submitted for all events of the same type being held at the same location within a nine-day period and will be processed as a single application. A distributed virtual fishing tournament may extend beyond the nine-day period and need not be at a single location.

44.5(5) Submission of an application does not guarantee issuance of a permit.

44.5(6) Permits are nontransferable.

571—44.6(321G,321I,462A) Alternate dates for snowmobile, boating, all-terrain vehicle, off-highway vehicle, and off-road motorcycle special events. An applicant may submit and the department may approve both a primary date and an alternate date for snowmobile, boating, ATV, ORM, and OHV special events. However, if both a primary date and an alternate date are approved, the primary date shall be used unless circumstances beyond the control of the applicant prevent its use. If the alternate date must be used for the event, the applicant shall contact the department representative at least one week in advance of the event date to obtain final approval to use the alternate date. The department representative shall document this approval in writing. Upon approval of an alternate date, the applicant shall notify the local conservation officer, and the department representative will update the calendar of events.

571—44.7(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A) Insurance coverage. The applicant shall secure liability insurance for the special event that names the department as an additional insured. Insurance information shall be available at the time the application is submitted. The applicant shall have a copy of the insurance policy available at the event location to present to department personnel if requested. These requirements do not apply to events sponsored by a friends group. The department reserves the right to waive these requirements on a case-by-case basis.

571—44.8(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A) Fees and exceptions.

44.8(1) The administrative fee for each special event application is $25 plus a processing fee, except applications for field and retriever meets and trials, which are subject to the fee described in Iowa Code section 481A.22(1)*"c."* The fees are nonrefundable.

44.8(2) The department will waive the administrative fee for processing special event applications for sailing schools; accredited postsecondary institutions and programs; private and public primary and secondary schools; all department-approved watercraft education courses, ATV education courses, and snowmobile education courses; fishing clinics; friends groups; department-sponsored youth fishing days; and distributed virtual fishing tournaments.

571—44.9(321G,461A) Structures placed on ice during a special event. The following requirements apply to the placement, construction, or erection of structures on ice during a special event:

44.9(1) *Vendor information provided on application.* The applicant shall identify the names and addresses of any vendors who will be on site during the special event.

44.9(2) *Owner information.* The full name, street address, and city of the structure's owner shall be displayed legibly on all sides of the structure, in block letters at least four inches in height, and in a color contrasting to the background.

44.9(3) *Accessibility.* Structures cannot be locked when in use.

44.9(4) *Reflectors.* Reflectors shall be attached to all sides of the structure in such a manner to enable them to reflect light at all times from sunrise to sunset.

571—44.10(462A) Boating special events—registration exemptions.

44.10(1) A vessel entered in a boating special event shall not be required to be registered pursuant to Iowa Code sections 462A.4 and 462A.5 but shall be labeled with an identifying number or letter that is at least four inches high and is in a color contrasting to the vessel. The identifying number or letter shall be located in a prominent spot on the exterior of the vessel, other than on the bow.

44.10(2) The sponsor of the boating special event shall maintain a list containing:

a. The names and addresses of all persons participating in the event.

b. A description of and identifying number for each vessel in the event.

571—44.11(462A) Mississippi River or Missouri River. Upon notification and proof that a United States Coast Guard (U.S.C.G.) permit has been secured, the department shall not require a special event application for fireworks displays or boating special events on the Mississippi River or the Missouri River. The regional U.S.C.G. office issuing permits for Mississippi River and Missouri River events is located in St. Louis, Missouri. This rule does not apply to fishing tournaments.

571—44.12(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A) Other requirements and permits. The applicant for a permit is responsible for ensuring full compliance with the requirements of Iowa Code chapters 321G, 321I, 461A, 462A, and 481A and any other Iowa Code chapters and rules promulgated under those chapters that may be applicable to special events. The applicant shall also acquire and comply with all applicable state and local permits issued by other state and local agencies necessary to hold the special event.

571—44.13(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A) Authority to cancel or stop a special event. If a peace officer or any department employee determines that a permit is being violated or that safety concerns warrant canceling or stopping the special event, the peace officer or department employee has the authority to cancel or stop the special event.

571—44.14(321G,321I,461A,462A,481A) Nonexclusive use of area. Issuance of a permit does not grant the applicant exclusive use of the public land, water, or ice that is the subject of the permit unless the permit explicitly provides otherwise.

DIVISION II
FIREWORKS DISPLAYS

571—44.15(461A) Entities eligible for permits. Permits for fireworks displays shall be issued only to qualified entities, such as political subdivisions of the state of Iowa, and to community or civic organizations. Permits shall not be issued to individuals. Permits are not transferable to another entity and do not relieve the sponsoring entity from obtaining any other permits required by the state or its political subdivisions.

571—44.16(461A) Permit conditions. The department may impose permit conditions not specifically required in these rules for any fireworks display special event as deemed necessary to protect the

resource or ensure public safety. Conditions shall be included in the permit that the applicant or sponsoring organization receives if the event is approved.

571—44.17(461A) Application procedures. The following procedures shall be used to apply for a permit:

44.17(1) Applications shall be made and submitted through the department's centralized special events application system.

44.17(2) Applications—when submitted.

a. Events for current year. Applications may be submitted anytime during the calendar year in which the fireworks display is to begin but no later than 30 days prior to the display.

b. Events for the next year. Applications for a fireworks display that will start in the next calendar year may be submitted beginning at 7 p.m. on September 1 of the current year.

44.17(3) The number of fireworks displays or other special events at any one public land, water or ice location during a given day may be restricted if deemed necessary to avoid congestion with the public or competing events and to protect the resource.

44.17(4) The applicant shall certify in the application that the fireworks display shall be conducted by a competent operator. The location of the display shall be determined by the department representative in charge of the area.

44.17(5) Submission of an application does not guarantee issuance of a permit by the department.

571—44.18(461A) Fireworks display procedures.

44.18(1) The sponsoring entity shall take adequate safety precautions to ensure that persons not actively involved in conducting the display remain a safe distance from the firing area and any areas containing set pieces.

44.18(2) The department representative in charge of the area in which the display is conducted or any state peace officer may halt any display when the character, location, weather, or firing of the display makes it hazardous to property or dangerous to any person.

44.18(3) Any fireworks that remain unfired after the display is concluded shall be immediately disposed of by the operator or the sponsoring entity in a manner that is safe for the particular type of fireworks.

44.18(4)

The sponsoring entity shall make arrangements for firefighting equipment and emergency medical services to be on the scene at all times during the firing of the display.

44.18(5) The sponsoring entity is totally responsible for cleanup of the fireworks display site at the conclusion of the display.

571—44.19(461A) Fees. A nonrefundable administrative fee of $25 plus a processing fee shall be charged for each fireworks display application.

571—44.20(461A) Insurance. The sponsoring entity for a fireworks display shall provide proof of liability insurance naming the applicant and the department as an additional insured in the sum of not less than $1 million. The department may, at its discretion, require a greater amount. Insurance information shall be available at the time the application is submitted.

571—44.21(461A) Concessions. If the state park or recreation area has a concessionaire on site, sales of food and other items during the display shall be governed pursuant to 571—subrule 14.5(3). If a concessionaire chooses not to provide services during the event, the sponsoring entity may then bring in other concession operations as approved by the department.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 321G.16, 321I.17, 461A.3, 461A.4, 461A.42, 461A.47, 461A.57, 462A.16, 481A.22, and 481A.38.