

## ADMINISTRATIVE RULES FISCAL ESTIMATE AND ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

Type of Estimate and Analysis

Original     Updated     Corrected

Administrative Rule Chapter, Title and Number

Ch. NR 10, Game and Hunting, Natural Resources Board Order WM-09-11

Subject

Re-establishing seasons for bobcat hunting and trapping.

Fund Sources Affected

GPR     FED     PRO     PRS     SEG SEG-S

Chapter 20 , Stats. Appropriations Affected

None

Fiscal Effect of Implementing the Rule

No Fiscal Effect  
 Indeterminate

Increase Existing Revenues  
 Decrease Existing Revenues

Increase Costs  
 Could Absorb Within Agency's Budget  
 Decrease Costs

The Rule Will Impact the Following (Check All That Apply)

State's Economy

Local Government Units

Specific Businesses/Sectors

Public Utility Rate Payers

Would Implementation and Compliance Costs Be Greater Than \$20 million?

Yes     No

Policy Problem Addressed by the Rule

In 2010 and 2011, the bobcat season was split into two separate permit periods: the Saturday nearest Oct. 17 - Dec. 25 and Dec. 26 to Jan 31. There appears to have been public support for the new season framework and the opinion of department staff is that it provides the tools for sound use, management and protection of the bobcat resource. If emergency rules and a permanent rule that eliminates a sunset provision are not promulgated, the season automatically reverts back to a single permit period beginning on the Saturday nearest October 17 and continuing through December 31 in 2012.

Summary of Rule's Economic and Fiscal Impact on Specific Businesses, Business Sectors, Public Utility Rate Payers, Local Governmental Units and the State's Economy as a Whole (Include Implementation and Compliance Costs Expected to be Incurred)

The bobcat hunting and trapping season framework proposed in this rulemaking will be the same as the season that was in place in 2010 and 2011. Because this rule preserves hunting and trapping opportunities which are identical to ones already in place, no fiscal or economic impacts are anticipated.

Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 50, Section II, this is a level 3 economic impact analysis. A notice for Solicitation of comments on the analysis was posted on the department's website from March 26 through April 8 and various interest groups were contacted by email. One general comment of support was received from the Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association.

An alternative to be considered during the rules process is to allow the new, split season framework to sunset. No significant fiscal or economic impacts would be expected under this scenario either. Under both the single and the split season frameworks, bobcat harvest is controlled through the issuance of permits. Bobcat population goals and harvest quotas will be the same under either season framework. The level of participation by hunters and trappers is expected to be similar and their activities would generate similar levels of economic activity. Economic activity generated under the split season framework would be spread over an additional month. The very high level of interest in the bobcat season, 12,431 applicants for 455 available permits in

2010, indicates that people will pursue bobcats regardless of the season framework.

The primary interest expressed by advocates for a split season framework is that ideal conditions for hunting with hounds occur when there is snow cover. These conditions do not occur before the December 31 end of that traditional, straight-season framework every year. In order to provide the type of hunting opportunity that hunters have asked for, but still maintain opportunities that trappers and hunters who do not use hounds have enjoyed, this proposal would add an additional month and create two time periods.

Benefits of Implementing the Rule and Alternative(s) to Implementing the Rule

Implementing this rule will assure program continuity by preventing a return to the single, straight season framework. Some people will view a reversion to the single season framework as a reduction of opportunity that is not socially acceptable. Frequent change of season dates and regulations for hunting and trapping can be confusing and disruptive to the public, can result in citations being issued, and is not necessary for protection of the bobcat population in this situation.

Returning to the single, straight season framework for bobcat hunting and trapping is the primary alternative.

Another alternative would be to extend the trial period but that may not be needed because the department will have two years of harvest and survey data following the 2011 season. Extending the trial season framework is not particularly practical considering the length of time it will take to promulgate permanent rules to repeal the sunset.

Long Range Implications of Implementing the Rule

Following the two year trial, the department's opinion is that the new split season framework provides harvest management tools that allow for sound use, management and protection of the bobcat resource. We hope to provide this level of resource protection and provide bobcat hunting and trapping opportunities well into the future.

Compare With Approaches Being Used by Federal Government

Bobcat population goals, seasons, and regulations on the method of harvest are controlled by the state. There are no federal regulations and federal authorization is not required.

Compare With Approaches Being Used by Neighboring States (Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Minnesota)

Bobcats are not harvested in Illinois and Iowa but are present and increasing in number in both states. Michigan hunters and trappers can generally harvest two bobcats per season. Minnesota hunters and trappers have a season limit of five bobcats. The more liberal season frameworks in Michigan and Minnesota reflect greater abundance of the species in those states and significantly less hunter and trapper interest. Neither state has the long tradition of hunting with hounds that Wisconsin has.

Name and Phone Number of Contact Person

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