

Clearinghouse Rule 12-031

Report to
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL RULES CLEARINGHOUSE
NR 10, Wis. Adm. Code
Natural Resources Board Order WM-09-11

Wisconsin Statutory Authority

Statutes that authorize the promulgation of this rule order include ss. 29.011, 29.014, 29.192, 227.11 and 227.24 Stats.

Federal Authority

N/A

Court Decisions Directly Relevant

None.

Analysis of the Rule – Rule Effect – Reason for the Rule

Through this rulemaking, the department will make permanent a trial bobcat season framework that was split into two separate time periods in 2010 and 2011. 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 the 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 an early and a late time period and require permit applicants to choose one-or-the-other.

The dates of the bobcat season under this proposal and during the 2010 and 2011 trial period were; 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 permanent or emergency rules 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.

All hunters and trappers must obtain a special harvest permit before pursuing bobcats, and the annual bag limit is one bobcat per permit. Bobcat harvest goals are set annually based upon population size in relation to management goals. The number of harvest permits issued is based on the highest success rate during the previous three years for the first time period and a conservative, high success rate for the later, new time period. Because these harvest controls are in place, the actual dates and length of the hunting and trapping seasons are more important for hunter/trapper satisfaction than for protecting the bobcat population from overharvest.

Agency Procedures for Promulgation

Public hearings, followed by Natural Resources Board adoption, followed by legislative review.

Description of any Forms (attach copies if available)

None

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