

Policy-Related and Technical Changes



Summary

Each year, the DNR proposes policy-related and technical changes to Minnesota statutes that deal with multiple programs administered by the DNR. This year's proposed changes will help the DNR manage the state's natural resources adaptively and respond to public input.

The 2024 policy and technical bill focuses on changes related to sustainable forest management, ecosystem management and improving DNR business and policy practices.

Proposal

Sustainable Forest Management

This portion of the proposal contains three initiatives that allow the DNR to manage Minnesota's forests sustainably today and into the future more effectively and efficiently.

Increasing Minnesota-Grown Tree Seedling Availability

This change removes the seedling production cap and allows the DNR's State Forest Nursery to grow and sell both bareroot and plug seedlings that can be planted to mitigate and adapt to climate change, enhance habitat and recreation, and perpetuate the state's diverse forests.

School Trust Land Forest Management Revenue-Cost Certification Report Clarification

This change provides a process for DNR to deposit net income into the Permanent School Fund and certified costs to be transferred to the Forest Management Investment Account by June 30th each year.



MN ReLeaf – Urban and Community Wood Utilization

This change allows the ReLeaf Program to provide grant and technical assistance to support new and emerging urban and community wood utilization efforts, reducing wood waste.

Ecosystem Management

This portion of the proposal would make changes that improve the agency's ability to proactively manage the state's flora and fauna.

Protection of endangered species

This proposed change would prohibit the release of endangered or threatened species and clarify permitting requirements for imported endangered and threatened species. It would also explicitly include "threatened" species (along with "endangered" species) in its statutory protections, aligning with existing regulatory requirements.

Improve DNR Business and Policy Practices

This portion of the proposal would make changes that improve processes and correct legislative inaccuracies or omissions.

Restitution Upon Malicious Intent

This proposal will provide clarity for how to define "malicious intent" when enforcing a provision that doubles fines for animals killed with malicious intent. Currently there is not an interpretation on what is considered malicious intent as the term is not defined in law.

Minerals Coordinating Committee (MCC) Sunset Extension

This change would extend the MCC, charged with research and planning for diversified mineral development in the state, from 2026 to 2036.

State Board of Investment Management of DNR Financial Assurance

This change would allow the State Board of Investment to manage financial assurance funds for mining projects on behalf of the DNR, reducing costs and expediting access to funds if needed.

Water Use General Permit Fee Correction

This change would correct an unintended fee change passed during the 2023 legislative session by creating a separate application fee for water use general permits that should not have been subject to the 2023 fee increases.

Bison Herd Transfer Authorization

This change would allow the agency to request the Department of Administration to allow the sale, donation or conveyance of bison to a governmental or nonprofit organization, within or outside of Minnesota, when it would benefit the state's natural resources or bison management.

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