

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill contains changes recommended by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as part of the "Shallow Lakes Management Report" required by a 2011 law. It would provide the DNR greater flexibility when designating and managing sanctuaries and feeding and resting areas for waterfowl and when temporarily drawing down public waters.

- 1** **Migratory waterfowl sanctuary.** Amends § 97A.095, subd. 1. Allows the commissioner to designate part of a state game refuge or a portion of public waters as a migratory waterfowl sanctuary without requiring a petition signed by ten licensed hunters as currently required. Requires the commissioner to consider designating an area when presented with a petition signed by at least ten residents. Prohibits a person from entering a migratory waterfowl sanctuary, unless accompanied by a DNR employee or under permit, during times designated by the commissioner (currently the restriction only applies during the open migratory waterfowl season).
- 2** **Waterfowl feeding and resting areas.** Amends § 97A.095, subd. 1. Allows the commissioner to designate a part of a lake as a migratory feeding and resting area if there is adequate free public access (currently the commissioner must receive a petition signed by ten local resident hunters). Requires the commissioner to consider an area for designation when presented with a petition signed by at least ten residents. Requires a public notice and comment period of 30 days.
- 3** **Shallow lake.** Adds § 103G.005, subd. 11a. Defines "shallow lake" as a body of water, excluding a stream, that is greater than or equal to 50 acres in size and 15 or less feet in maximum depth.
- 4** **Temporary drawdown of public waters.** Amends § 103G.408. Allows the commissioner to temporarily drawdown a shallow lake to be managed for fish, wildlife, or ecological purposes after the commissioner has conducted a public hearing and states that these drawdowns are not to be considered takings from riparian landowners.