

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill contains various provisions impacting the state's game and fish laws, including a number of provisions recommended by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It also contains provisions originally in the DNR's policy bill when it was introduced.

Section

- 1 Bait harvest from infested waters.** Amends § 84D.03, subd. 3. Allows a cast net to be used to harvest gizzard shad in certain areas of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers provided they are used in the same water body they are taken from and are not transported off the water body.
- 2 Construction area restrictions.** Adds § 86B.201, subd. 4. Allows the commissioner of natural resources to adopt temporary water surface use controls at public construction and maintenance sites and exempts the controls from rulemaking requirements.
- 3 General requirements.** Amends § 86B.313, subd. 1. Modifies personal floatation device requirements to conform to federal law.
- 4 Dealers and rental operations.** Amends § 86B.313, subd. 4. Modifies personal floatation device requirements to conform to federal law.
- 5 Towing person on water skis or other device.** Amends § 86B.315. Adds wake surfing or operating a watercraft for a wake surfer to the list of activities (like water skiing) that are prohibited at night. Prohibits all of the activities from one-half hour after sunset to sunrise the following day (current law restricts the activities beginning one hour after sunset).

Section

- 6 **Power to prevent or control wildlife disease.** Amends § 97A.045, subd. 11. Allows the DNR to post restrictions at public accesses to prevent or control wildlife diseases.
- 7 **Compliance with federal law.** States that appropriations for information or telecommunication technology projects from the game and fish fund must be made to the commissioner of natural resources (federal law requires certain funds deposited in the game and fish fund to be under the control of the commissioner of natural resources).
- 8 **Separate selection of eligible licensees.** Amends § 97A.435, subd. 4. Requires a family member seeking a turkey license under a special lottery designed for certain qualifying landowners and their family members to live on the qualifying land (under current law there is no requirement that a family member live on the land).
- 9 **Residents of veterans homes.** Adds § 97A.465, subd. 7. Permits residents of veterans homes to hunt and take antlerless deer using a firearm or muzzleloader without obtaining a permit to do so. The privilege does not extend to other members of the veteran's hunting party or in areas closed to antlerless deer hunting or where quotas are placed on the taking of antlerless deer.
- 10 **Feral swine.** Adds § 97A.56. Prohibits a person from possessing or releasing feral swine, allowing them to run at large, or hunting or trapping them. States that only a person authorized by the DNR may hunt or trap them and that the authorized person is not liable to the owner for the value of the animals. States that the penalty for violating the section is a misdemeanor.
- 11 **Hunter satisfaction survey.** Amends § 97B.063. Modifies a provision requiring the DNR to administer a hunter participation and satisfaction survey to require it to be conducted annually and be submitted to the legislature and made available on the department's website.
- 12 **Exceptions.** Amends § 97B.081, subd. 3. Provides an exception from the prohibition on shining artificial lights while hunting for licensed bear hunters tracking or retrieving wounded or dead bears provided they have their license in possession, are on foot, and are following the blood trail of the bear.
- 13 **Taking unprotected wild animals.** Amends § 97B.085, subd. 2. Allows a person to use radio equipment to take unprotected wild animals.
- 14 **Residents age 84 or over may take deer of either sex.** Adds § 97B.301. Allows a resident age 84 or over to take a deer of either sex and limits the privilege to the resident only and not another member of the resident's hunting party.
- 15 **Feeding bears.** Adds § 97B.427. Prohibits a person from feeding bears except under certain circumstances.
- 16 **Game birds causing damage.** Amends § 97B.668. Expands the types of birds (from Canadian geese to all game birds) and times (from March 11 to August 31 to any time or place that a hunting season is not open) that a person may chase/harass the birds when they are causing property damage.
- 17 **Possession of firearms; hunting turkey.** Adds § 97B.722. Allows a person with a permit to carry a handgun to carry it while hunting turkey.

Section

- 18** **Beaver season.** Adds § 97B.9251. Allows the commissioner to establish open seasons for taking beaver (beginning the Saturday nearest October 26 (in the North Zone) and October 30 (in the South Zone)). Requires the seasons to be open until May 15.
- 19** **Cast nets for gizzard shad.** Adds § 97C.345, subd. 3a. Allows the use of cast nets to take gizzard shad to use as bait from July 1 to November 30 and in certain areas of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers. Requires the cast nets to meet certain size and other requirements. States that the section expires December 1, 2017, and requires the commissioner to report to the legislature on various matters related to this provision.
- 20** **Minnow dealers.** Amends § 97C.501, subd. 2. Allows a minnow dealer to designate employees to help the minnow dealer provided they are listed on the minnow dealer's license. Requires the minnow dealer to notify the DNR of additions or deletions from the list of designated helpers.
- 21** **Rulemaking; lifting spearing bans and northern pike regulations.** Requires the commissioner of natural resources to amend certain department rules to remove language prohibiting spearing. Allows the commissioner to use the good cause exemption from rulemaking to do so.
- 22** **Rulemaking; water surface use restrictions.** Requires the commissioner of natural resources to amend department rules to conform to the change contained in this bill that allows temporary water surface controls to be effective for 30 days. Allows the commissioner to use the good cause exemption from rulemaking to do so.
- 23** **Rulemaking; personal floatation devices.** Requires the commissioner of natural resources to amend department rules to conform to the changes in federal law regarding personal floatation devices. Allows the commissioner to use the good cause exemption from rulemaking to do so.
- 24** **Rulemaking; motorized trail environmental review.** Requires the Environmental Quality Board to amend rules to allow the construction of certain trails without the preparation of a mandatory environmental assessment worksheet (EAW).
- 25** **Repealer.** Repeals § 97A.475, subd. 25 (obsolete licensing fee for muskrat farms); § 97B.905 (bond requirements for raw fur dealers); and Minnesota Rules, part 6264.0400, subparts 27 and 28 (spearing bans on certain waters).