

Subject DNR Policy Bill

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Overview

This bill contains a number of provisions impacting programs and policies administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) being recommended by the department, as well as policies contained in: H.F. 3363 (Sandstede) modifying snowmobile registration requirements; H.F. 3535 (Becker-Finn) modifying the types of muzzleloaders that may be used to hunt; H.F. 721 (Lee) restricting the use of certain insecticides in wildlife management areas (WMAs); H.F. 3239 (Ecklund) expanding Cervidae carcass importation restrictions; and H.F. 3342 (Lee) requiring the use of nontoxic shot in certain WMAs.

Summary

| Section | Description |
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| 1 to 13 | VHS/Fish health provisions related to aquaculture. |
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Make a number of technical changes to the state's aquaculture statutes regulating fish health, including regulations related to viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS), including updating the reference for the VHS susceptible species list, incorporating scientific names for certifiable diseases, and clarifying that the presence of a pathogen that causes a disease is included in the definition of disease.

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| 14 | Permanent school fund authority; reporting. |
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Requires the DNR to report to the Legislative Permanent School Fund Commission (LPSFC) on the management of school trust lands biennially (every two years) rather than biannually (twice a year).

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| 15 | General requirements. |
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Eliminates the requirement that snowmobiles be registered in order to transport them.

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| 16 | Collector limited snowmobile use. |
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Technical related to the previous section.

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| 17 | Permit for invasive carp. Makes permanent a provision allowing the DNR to issue permits to DNR divisions to tag bighead, black, grass, and silver carp and release them back into the water body they were captured from for research or control purposes. |
| 18 | Authority to establish. Removes the authority of the DNR to establish provisions for improving and maintaining golf courses already established in state parks (provisions regarding the Fort Ridgely Golf Course are repealed in section 44). |
| 19 | State park special events. Allows the DNR to stage and charge entrance/use fees for state park special events, rather than state park “pageants” as allowed under current law. |
| 20 | State park reservation system. Expands the DNR’s ability to develop reservation policies for the use of state park facilities, tours, programs, and rentals. Under current law, the DNR may do so only for campsites and other lodging. |
| 21 | Special use permits. Allows the DNR to develop reasonable policies for special-use permits to use state parks, state recreation areas, and state waysides. Provides an exemption from the rulemaking provisions for the policies developed. |
| 22 | Requirement. States that a motor vehicle’s owner/lessee is responsible for making sure a vehicle has the required state park permits and allows the commissioner to issue warnings and citations to the owner/lessee for noncompliance. |
| 23 | State Park Open House Days. Technical (related to the change in section 20). |
| 24 | Special-use permits. Allows the DNR to develop reasonable policies for special-use permits to use state trails and state water access sites. Provides an exemption from the rulemaking provisions for the policies developed. |
| 25 | Unloaded. Amends the definition of “unloaded” to accommodate muzzle loading firearms with electronic encapsulated powder charge ignition systems added to the list of allowable firearms in section 32. |

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| 26 | Insecticides in wildlife management areas. Prohibits a person from using a product that contains an insecticide from the neonicotinoid class of insecticides in a WMA. |
| 27 | Commissioner's authority. Technical (related to the next section). |
| 28 | Snakes, lizards, and salamanders. Requires the DNR to prescribe conditions and issue permits to breed, propagate, and sell snakes, lizards, and salamanders. Allows a person who obtained a snake, lizard, or salamander from a permitted breeder prior to August 1, 2020, to keep it as a pet. |
| 29 | General. Modifies license revocation provisions for minnow dealers. Under current law, a minnow dealer's license is revoked if there is a third violation of the minnow license within one year, the change would revoke a license if there is a second conviction within three years. |
| 30 | Issuance after conviction; night vision or thermal imaging equipment. Prohibits a person in the possession of night vision or thermal imaging equipment convicted of certain violations (trespassing, hunting in a closed season/hours, taking a wild animal in violation of night vision/thermal imaging equipment laws, or violating firearms restrictions in deer zones) from obtaining a hunting license or hunting wild animals for five years. |
| 31 | Importing Cervidae carcasses. Expands a provision prohibiting the importation of Cervidae carcasses (e.g. deer, elk, and moose). Under current law, a person cannot import a hunter-harvested Cervidae carcass unless it has been processed to meet certain requirements to ensure it has been cleaned of all brain tissue and the spinal column (e.g. cut and wrapped meat, finished taxidermy mounts, or quartered without the spinal column or head attached). This section would expand the provision to all Cervidae carcasses, not just hunter-harvested ones. |
| 32 | Permissible firearms and ammunition; big game and wolves. Amends the list of permissible firearms to take big game and wolves to accommodate muzzle loading firearms with electronic ignitions and encapsulated powder charge ignition systems. |

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| 33 | <p>Crossbow hunting during firearms season.</p> <p>Allows the use of crossbows during the deer hunting season during all firearm seasons except the muzzleloader season.</p> |
| 34 | <p>Possessing night vision or thermal imaging equipment.</p> <p>Clarifies that provisions allowing the use of night vision equipment also allow the use of night vision equipment enhanced with an infrared illuminator. Prohibits the use of night vision or thermal imaging equipment to hunt coyote/fox during the regular firearms deer season.</p> |
| 35 | <p>Nontoxic shot required for taking small game in certain areas.</p> <p>Requires the use of nontoxic shot when hunting small game on a WMA in the farmland zone beginning July 1, 2021. The farmland zone is a portion of the state that falls south and west of a line that follows Highway 70 westward from the Wisconsin border to Highway 65 to Highway 23 to U.S. Highway 169 at Milaca to Highway 18 at Garrison to Highway 210 at Brainerd to U.S. Highway 10 at Motley to U.S. Highway 59 at Detroit Lakes northward to the Canadian border.</p> |
| 36 | <p>Seasons, limits, and other rules.</p> <p>Allows the DNR to make midseason adjustments to fish possession and size limits to manage the fishery in Upper Red Lake similar to existing authority for Mille Lacs.</p> |
| 37 | <p>Bait restrictions.</p> <p>Technical related to the update of the reference to the VHS susceptible species list in previous sections.</p> |
| 38 | <p>Permit for transportation.</p> <p>Technical related to the update of the reference to the VHS susceptible species list in previous sections.</p> |
| 39 | <p>Restrictions.</p> <p>Reduces the number of nets that a person may use to net lake whitefish and ciscoes from two nets to one.</p> |
| 40 | <p>Lake Superior lake trout; expanded assessment harvest.</p> <p>Removes the reference date for the Fisheries Management Plan for the Minnesota Waters of Lake Superior so that an updated version applies when reassessing quotas for commercial operators in certain management zones.</p> |
| 41 | <p>Exemption; Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area.</p> <p>Exempts local units of government within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) from requirements applicable in critical areas generally that require them</p> |

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| | to send regulations and plans to the Environmental Quality Board in lieu of new requirements applicable in the MRCCA established in the next section. |
| 42 | Reviewing and approving local plans and regulations. Makes the DNR responsible for local government plan and regulation reviews and approvals affecting land in the MRCCA and the Metropolitan Council responsible for duties required of regional development commissions for other critical areas. Establishes a 60-day timeframe when reviews must be completed. Requires the DNR to either conditionally approve the plan/regulations or return them for modification. Requires the local unit of government to revise and resubmit the plan/regulation within 60 days. Allows the local unit of government or Metropolitan Council to request a meeting which can extend the deadline. States that only plans and regulations receiving approval have the effect of law. Establishes conditions for approving the plans/regulations and requires a local unit of government to enforce the approved plan/regulation when they take effect. |
| 43 | Exchange of state land; Aitkin, Beltrami, and Koochiching Counties. Requires lessees of DNR land for wild rice in Aitkin, Beltrami, and Koochiching Counties that are eligible to be exchanged by the DNR to pay all the costs of the exchange (e.g. survey work, legal fees, title work, and closing costs). |
| 44 | Repealer. Repeals provisions associated with the golf course at Fort Ridgely State Park. |



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