STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
DOA 2049 (R 07/2011)

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES
FISCAL ESTIMATE AND ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

Type of Estimate and Analysis

☒ Original ☐ Updated ☐ Corrected

Administrative Rule Chapter, Title and Number

Ch. NR 10, Game and Hunting, Natural Resources Board Order WM-05-13

Subject

Relating to bobcat hunting and trapping and elk management and hunting.

Fund Sources Affected	Chapter 20 , Stats. Appropriations Affected
☐ GPR ☐ FED ☐ PRO ☐ PRS ☒ SEG SEG-S	None

Fiscal Effect of Implementing the Rule

☐ No Fiscal Effect ☐ Indeterminate	☐ Increase Existing Revenues ☐ Decrease Existing Revenues	☒ Increase Costs ☒ Could Absorb Within Agency's Budget ☐ Decrease Costs

The Rule Will Impact the Following (Check All That Apply)

☒ State's Economy ☐ Local Government Units	☐ Specific Businesses/Sectors ☐ Public Utility Rate Payers

Would Implementation and Compliance Costs Be Greater Than $20 million?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Policy Problem Addressed by the Rule

Bobcat
This proposal would result in new hunting and trapping opportunities for bobcat in portions of the state where harvest is not allowed under current rules.

Elk
The goal is to restore elk at two locations so they become self-sustaining populations that can adapt to the Wisconsin landscape. The benefits of this effort include greater diversity in our state's wildlife community, increased genetic diversity of Wisconsin elk, additional hunting opportunities in the future and increased tourism from elk viewing opportunities.

Summary of Rule's Economic and Fiscal Impact on Specific Businesses, Business Sectors, Public Utility Rate Payers, Local Governmental Units and the State's Economy as a Whole (Include Implementation and Compliance Costs Expected to be Incurred)

Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 50, Section II, this is a level 3 economic impact analysis. A notice for Solicitation of comments on the analysis was posted on the department's website from August 20 through September 3 and various groups were contacted. No comments on the proposal's economic impacts were received.

Fiscal Impact of the Proposed Rules

Bobcat
No fiscal impacts are anticipated. The hunting and trapping season frameworks proposed in this rule will be similar in scope to those already implemented by the department and which have been in place during previous seasons. In the past, approximately 200 to 500 bobcat harvest permits have been issued annually. The department does not anticipate a significant change in the number of applicants for permits or permits issued.

Elk

These rules do not require reintroduction of elk in the Black River area and will not result in a significant change in management of the existing Clam Lake elk herd. However, a decision has been made to reintroduce elk in the Black River area and supplement the Clam Lake herd and a management plan has been adopted. A summary of anticipated fiscal impacts of reintroduction follows below and in the table attached in Appendix A. Note that the table provides a range of costs for acquiring various numbers of elk. Planning documents recommend translocation of 275 elk over a period of several years. In summer 2013, discussions with managers of a source herd indicate that 150 animals may be more achievable. Translocation of 150 animals might occur over two years for an estimated total cost of $277,000.

Fiscal Impact of the Elk Restoration Effort in Black River Falls and Supplementing the Clam Lake Herd:
Based on 2011-12 figures obtained from Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife along with estimates from Wisconsin's current program, the importation of 275 elk (potentially from Kentucky) over a 3-4 year period (anticipating 75-100 elk per year) would cost approximately $480,000 to $560,000. All necessary funding has been pledged from partner groups including the Ho-Chunk Nation ($100,000 existing grant), Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation ($300,000 written pledge), and Jackson County Wildlife Fund ($50,000), with other pledges pending. See the table attached in Appendix A. Note that the acquisition of the full 275 elk may not be possible and potential costs could be lower.

Fiscal Impact of Future Elk Management in Wisconsin:
Wisconsin's elk management program is currently supported by Fish and Wildlife Segregated Funds and General Program Revenue at a cost of approximately $200,000 per year. When elk hunting begins, management costs will be offset with revenues from applications for elk hunting permits and the sale of hunting licenses. The cost of a permit application has been established at $10 per applicant including a $2.75 processing fee and $0.25 issuing fee, with the remaining $7.00 returning to the elk management program. Revenue from the sales of the elk hunting permits ($50 resident, $250 non-resident) is earmarked for elk management. Although harvest permits will be limited, with over 620,000 deer hunters in Wisconsin, anticipating approximately 40,000 applications seems reasonable, if not conservative. At that level, the $7 from application fees will provide an estimated $280,000 annually for elk management and will be used to cover personnel costs, vehicle and equipment purchases and maintenance, elk research and monitoring, and implementation of the elk hunting season. Revenues from all fees would be segregated to an elk management account. Additional revenues from the implementation of an elk hunt are also anticipated. By State Statute, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation will be provided with one elk harvest permit each year for the first five years that hunting is allowed. The permit must be raffled (sale at auction is not allowed), and is expected to generate additional dollars that are earmarked for elk management in Wisconsin. We are hopeful that this single permit could generate an additional $100,000 or more per year. In total, these revenue-generating items are expected to provide approximately $400,000/year for elk management, research, and monitoring need.

Once elk arrive in Wisconsin and the new BREH is established, additional personnel may be needed to monitor the herd and cover management responsibilities. The job responsibilities of the Jackson/Clark County wildlife biologist will include 40% of their time being dedicated to elk management if an elk herd is present. Ho-Chunk Nation Division of Natural Resources has agreed to help with herd monitoring, and graduate student projects from UW-Stevens Point are anticipated to monitor the BREH after release. Eventually, a full-time project position and LTE help may be required and would cost approximately $80,000 per year.

Economic Impact of the Proposed Rule

Bobcat

No economic impacts are anticipated. The hunting season frameworks proposed in this rule will be similar in scope to those in place during the previous seasons. While this proposal would result in increased hunting and trapping opportunities, the number of harvest permits issued will continue to be low relative to other hunting seasons like deer, bear, or turkey. The positive impacts of increased hunting related expenditures will likely not be noticeable. These rules are applicable to individual hunters and impose no compliance or reporting requirements for small business, nor are any design or operational standards contained in the rule.

Elk

The positive impacts of elk-related tourism will be noticeable in local communities. The Cable Chamber of Commerce estimates that 1,200 people visiting the Clam Lake area annually to view elk and contribute approximately $175/day totaling approximately $210,000 annually to the area. While difficult to predict in the Black River Falls area of Jackson County, elk-related tourism is expected to be higher due to the ease of accessing this area via the Interstate corridor between southern Wisconsin and the Twin Cities. The Black River Falls Bureau of Tourism has been a supporter of establishing a herd there and is optimistic that they will see high levels of elk viewing interest. Local and state interest in elk is high, as evidenced by continually large numbers of requests for information about the elk reintroduction, and statewide support from a variety of partners including the Ojibwe tribes and Ho-Chunk Nation, government partners such as the U.S. Forest Service and county administration boards, and non-profit groups like the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Jackson County Wildlife Fund, and Safari Club International. Hunting will become part of elk management in Wisconsin when a harvestable surplus develops. The Clam Lake herd is nearing that level with a hunt anticipated in 2014. Harvest permit levels will be limited, but local economies would receive some economic gains from elk hunting. Hunters would be expected to spend money on food, lodging, fuel, and hunting equipment. However, the greatest impact will be from general tourism activities as people travel simply to view elk, primarily during the fall rutting season. Michigan sees as many as 53,000 visitors per year who spend over $3,000,000.

The potential for crop damage by a Black River elk herd exists, but the scope is unknown. Agricultural crop damage has not been a concern with the Clam Lake Herd, which is not in close proximity to agricultural areas. The Black River area is more agricultural, but not intensely-so compared to other areas of southern and central Wisconsin. Elk causing crop damage inside the designated range before public hunting is initiated will first be hazed and/or relocated. If hazing and relocation are unsuccessful the animal will be killed. Once public hunting is initiated, additional permits will be issued for areas surrounding those where crop damage problems have occurred. The department, in its 2001 plan where elk reintroduction was first authorized, the project was made contingent on establishing that elk be added to the Wildlife Damage, Abatement and Claims program, which was accomplished by 2001 ACT 109. In the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program (WDACP), farmers are eligible to receive both abatement assistance and claims reimbursement for elk damage to agricultural crops. The primary focus of the WDACP is to help farmers reduce agricultural damage occurring on their property. An important abatement tool, and a requirement of participating in the WDACP, is to provide hunting access to the public during the open season(s) for the species causing damage. In the case of elk, farmers that enroll in the WDACP for elk damage in a given year would only be required to allow elk hunters access to their property during the open season(s) for elk. Claims reimbursement for crops damaged by elk are also available to farmers enrolled in the WDACP. The claim amounts are determined by crop appraisals conducted by WDACP field technicians, and are based on 26 tested appraisal methods documented in the WDACP Technical Manual. Farmers are eligible for 100% of losses up to $5000, and 80% of losses up to a maximum of $15,000, with a $250 deductible. Appraisal methods in the WDACP Technical Manual will be updated, where needed, to reflect damage specific to elk which may be of a multi-year nature (e.g. severe elk damage to cranberry beds necessitating replanting).

These rules direct the department's management activities and may be applicable to individual hunters, but they impose no compliance or reporting requirements for small business, nor are any design or operational standards contained in the rule.

Benefits of Implementing the Rule and Alternative(s) to Implementing the Rule

Bobcat

The primary benefit of implementing the rule will be increased opportunities for bobcat hunting and trapping in additional areas of the state. The amount of new opportunity provided will be limited. For comparison, in areas north of HWY 64 where bobcat hunting and trapping are currently allowed, a range of approximately 200 to 500 permits have been issued annually in recent years. The number of permits issued in new areas where hunting and trapping may be allowed will be lower. However, the opportunity to pursue bobcat in Wisconsin is

valued very highly and any amount of increased opportunity will be viewed as very important to hunters and trappers. The significant demand for this opportunity is illustrated by the fact that 11,424 people applied for 165 available harvest permits in 2011.

Elk

The consequences of not implementing these strategies are expected to be a herd that will experience suppressed population growth and little range expansion. Without these changes, there may also be reduced public support for Wisconsin's current elk restoration efforts, resulting in a loss of tourism opportunities and revenues, both locally and statewide. The Black River Elk Herd would may not be established.

Implementation of these strategies will best enhance individual fitness and adaptive potential of the Clam Lake Elk Herd, place it in the best habitat available that will support sustainable population growth, and help spread elk across more of the available suitable habitat. This will all be accomplished together with public and private partners, the Ojibwe Tribes and Ho-Chunk Nation.

Long Range Implications of Implementing the Rule

Bobcat

Wisconsin's bobcat season framework will continue to provide harvest management tools that allow for sound use, management and protection of the bobcat resource. We hope to provide this level of resource protection and provide bobcat hunting and trapping opportunities well into the future.

Elk

Implementation of these strategies will best enhance individual fitness and adaptive potential of the Clam Lake Elk Herd, place it in the best habitat available that will support sustainable population growth, and help spread elk across more of the available suitable habitat. Establishment of a second herd will provide opportunities for elk viewing and the associated tourism related benefits in an additional area of the state. Hunting opportunities that may be available in the future will also provide recreational and some economic benefits. Healthy, sustainable elk herds in both locations will contribute to Wisconsin's overall image as a desirable destination for outdoor recreational opportunities.

Compare With Approaches Being Used by Federal Government

Bobcat and elk population goals, seasons, and regulations on the method of harvest are controlled by the state. There are no federal regulations and federal authorization is not required.

Compare With Approaches Being Used by Neighboring States (Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Minnesota)

Bobcats are not harvested in Illinois but are present and increasing in number. Michigan hunters and trappers can generally harvest two bobcats per season. Iowa trappers/hunters have a bag and possession limit of one bobcat while Minnesota hunters and trappers have a season limit of five bobcats. The more liberal season frameworks in Michigan, Iowa and Minnesota reflect greater abundance of the species in those states and/or significantly less hunter and trapper interest. Neither state has the long tradition of hunting with hounds that Wisconsin has.

Restored elk populations exist in Michigan and Minnesota and both states hold an annual hunting season. Hunting regulations and management activities in both states are comparable to Wisconsin's activities.

Name and Phone Number of Contact Person

Scott Loomans, Wildlife Regulation Policy Specialist, 608-266-3534.

Appendix A. Wisconsin Elk Restoration Annual Budget

Item		*1-time Cost*	*50 Elk*	*75 Elk*	*100 Elk*
Trapping Costs					
Bait for corral trap			$1,500.00	$2,000.00	$3,000.00
Lodging/meals/expenses	Trapping crews		$10,000.00	$15,000.00	$20,000.00
Misc Supplies			$2,500.00	$2,500.00	$2,500.00
subtotal			***$14,000.00***	***$19,500.00***	***$25,500.00***
Holding and Processing in KY for 90 days					
Hay	est $3.75 ea		$2,765.00	$3,500.00	$4,250.00
Water					
24 hour Caretakers	2 caretakers		$11,000.00	$12,000.00	$13,000.00
subtotal			***$13,765.00***	***$15,500.00***	***$17,250.00***
Holding and Processing in WI					
Release Site Prep		$3,000.00			
Holding Pens	3 pens	$15,000.00			
Water Tanks	2 tanks	$1,100.00			
Feed			$3,520.00	$5,250.00	$6,000.00
subtotal		***$19,100.00***	***$3,520.00***	***$5,250.00***	***$6,000.00***
Post Release Herd Monitoring					
VHS Transmitters			$16,250.00	$25,000.00	$32,500.00
Misc Equipment/Supplies			$5,000.00	$5,000.00	$5,000.00
subtotal		***$0.00***	***$21,250.00***	***$30,000.00***	***$37,500.00***
Disease Testing/Supplies					
Osterpro (Vet supplies needed for disease tests and parasite control)			$3,500.00	$5,000.00	$6,500.00
CWD Test Lab wCSU ($25/elk)			$1,250.00	$1,875.00	$2,500.00
Disease testing MSU ($60.50/elk)			$3,025.00	$4,540.00	$6,050.00
Immobilization drugs for KY			$1,000.00	$1,500.00	$2,000.00
Misc Supplies			$500.00	$750.00	$1,000.00
subtotal			***$9,275.00***	***$13,665.00***	***$18,050.00***
KYDFWR Reimbursements					
KY Staff time/lodging/meals for trapping			$50,000.00	$50,000.00	$50,000.00
subtotal			***$50,000.00***	***$50,000.00***	***$50,000.00***
Transportation					
Contract semi-hauling $3.50/mile X 1000 miles			$3,500.00	$5,000.00	$7,000.00
subtotal			***$3,500.00***	***$5,000.00***	***$7,000.00***
Total Cost		***$19,100.00***	***$115,310.00***	***$138,915.00***	***$161,300.00***

Note: Planning documents recommend translocating a total of 275 elk over a period of several years. In summer 2013, discussions with managers of a source herd indicate that 150 animals may be more achievable. Translocation of 150 animals might occur over two years for an estimated total cost of $277,000.