



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENT MEMO

2011 Senate Bill 411

Senate Amendments 1, 3, and 4

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2011 SENATE BILL 411

2011 Senate Bill 411 requires the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to establish an annual wolf hunting season from October 15 through February if the wolf is removed from the United States and Wisconsin lists of endangered and threatened species. Both state residents and nonresidents are eligible for licenses and a license authorizes both the hunting and trapping of wolves. The DNR must issue licenses based on a cumulative preference system if the number of people applying for a wolf harvesting license exceeds the number of licenses that will be issued.

The bill requires the DNR to divide the state into up to four wolf harvesting zones, and specifies that a wolf harvesting license authorizes hunting and trapping only in a specified zone. The DNR may limit the number of licenses issued and the number of wolves that may be harvested, and is authorized to close a wolf harvesting zone to both hunting and trapping of wolves if it determines that the closure is necessary to effectively manage the state's wolf population. The DNR may also close a zone to hunting of coyotes during a gun deer season if it determines that the closure is necessary to effectively manage the state's wolf population.

The bill allows the transfer of licenses and preference points under certain circumstances, specifies the types of firearms that may be used for wolf hunting, allows the use of dogs to hunt wolves for part of the season, allows the baiting of wolves with bait other than animal byproducts except for liquid scents, allows hunting wolves at night for part of the season, and requires the DNR to authorize the use of cable restraints for trapping wolves. A person who kills a wolf must register the carcass with the DNR on a telephone registration system or through an electronic notification system. Landowners may hunt or trap wolves on their land without a license during February if the land is in a zone that is still open to hunting wolves.

The bill specifies that the current law prohibition on shooting a firearm, bow, or crossbow across a highway or within 50 feet of the center of a roadway does not apply to a person who is legally hunting wolves.

The bill requires the DNR to administer a damage program under which payments may be made for death or injury caused by wolves to livestock, to hunting dogs other than those being used in the hunting of wolves, and to pets, and to fund the program with money collected as fees for wolf harvesting licenses. If, after making these payments, there is money remaining, the DNR may use it for wolf management and control activities.

The bill requires the DNR to submit rules to implement or interpret the bill to the Legislative Council staff no later than the fourth month beginning after the effective date of the bill.

SENATE AMENDMENT 1

Senate Amendment 1 makes all of the following changes to the bill:

- Requires the DNR to divide the state into zones and requires that the zones be identified in the DNR's wolf management plan, instead of specifying that the total number of wolf harvesting zones may not exceed four.
- Specifies that if the DNR closes a wolf harvesting zone to hunting of coyotes during a season that authorizes hunting deer with firearms, the DNR may reopen the zone to the hunting of coyotes if the DNR determines that the closure is no longer necessary to effectively manage the state's wolf population, and specifies that the opening and closing of zones is not required to be promulgated as an administrative rule.
- Removes the sections of the bill that authorize landowners to hunt or trap wolves on their land without a license during the month of February.
- Creates duplicate approvals for both resident and nonresident wolf harvesting approvals.
- Adds a provision to the wolf depredation program which specifies that the DNR is only authorized to make payments from wolf hunting and trapping license funds if the wolf is not listed on the federal endangered species list and is not listed on the state endangered species list. In addition, the bill prohibits the DNR from spending money from wolf hunting and trapping license funds for its wolf management and control activities unless the wolf is not listed on the federal endangered species list or the state endangered species list.
- Clarifies that the new funding source created in the bill for the wolf depredation program is the source from which the DNR may make wolf depredation payments, not the endangered resources fund.
- Removes the section of the bill that authorizes shooting a firearm, bow, or crossbow across a highway or within 50 feet of the center of a roadway if the person is legally hunting wolves.

- Requires the DNR to submit rules to implement the bill to the Legislative Council staff no later than the eighth month beginning after the effective date of the bill, instead of the fourth month beginning after the effective date of the bill.

SENATE AMENDMENT 3

Senate Amendment 3 provides that instead of registering carcasses by telephone or through an electronic notification system, the DNR may require the person who kills a wolf to physically present the entire carcass to the DNR for registration.

SENATE AMENDMENT 4

Senate Amendment 4 provides that if there are more qualified applications for wolf harvesting licenses than the number of licenses that are available in a given year, the DNR must issue 50% of the licenses at random and the remaining 50% of the licenses based on a cumulative preference system. The amendment authorizes the DNR to establish a method for dividing the applications into those that will be included in the at-random system and those that will be included in the cumulative preference system.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

On March 1, 2012, the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Environment recommended adoption of Senate Amendment 1 on a vote of Ayes, 7; Noes, 0; and passage of Senate Bill 411, as amended, by a vote of Ayes, 7; Noes, 0. On March 6, 2012, the Senate adopted Senate Amendments 1, 3, and 4 and passed Senate Bill 411, as amended, on a vote of Ayes, 24; Noes, 9.

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