

**ADMINISTRATIVE RULES  
FISCAL ESTIMATE AND  
ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS**

Type of Estimate and Analysis

Original     Updated     Corrected

Administrative Rule Chapter, Title and Number

WM-33-13 related to muskrat and mink trapping seasons.

This rule modifies Ch. NR 10 related to mink and muskrat trapping seasons.

Subject

Economic impact analysis of rules modifying the mink and muskrat trapping seasons. These rules were a topic of voting at the 2013 Spring Fish & Wildlife Hearings.

Fund Sources Affected

Chapter 20 , Stats. Appropriations Affected

GPR     FED     PRO     PRS     SEG     SEG-S

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

Specific Businesses/Sectors

Local Government Units

Public Utility Rate Payers

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

Yes     No

Policy Problem Addressed by the Rule

The policies in this rule are consistent with past board policies of regulating fish and game harvest for conservation purposes. These rule changes were subjects of voting at the 2013 Spring Fish & Wildlife Hearings. This rule package will modify the muskrat and mink trapping season dates.

This analysis is required under s. 227.137 Stats. It has been prepared as part of the normal rule making process. The effort involved and sophistication of this analysis are limited but sufficient given the minimal economic impact of these rules. Due to the excessive time required, no effort was made to calculate a net benefit using formal cost-benefit analysis techniques.

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 this analysis was posted on the department's website from November 26 through December 10, 2013 and various interest groups were contacted by email. The department did not receive any comments regarding mink and muskrat trapping or the related economic impacts of trapping on businesses, local governments, or individuals. Following hearings and through the process of adopting these rules, the department did receive comments from trappers about preferred season dates and slight modifications have been made in response to those comments. The department has determined that the scope has not changed in any meaningful or significant way under Wis. Stat. 227.137 (4) and paragraph IV.9 of Executive Order 50 relating to the promulgation of administrative rules.

These rules would simplify the mink and muskrat trapping regulations by creating more consistent opening dates throughout the state. Currently there are four separate zones for mink and muskrat harvest, with slightly different opening or closing dates. This proposal would consolidate zones in order to simplify regulations that are no longer needed. Under current rules:

- ‘North zone’ — Beginning on the Saturday nearest October 17 and continuing through the last day of February.
- ‘South zone’ — Beginning on the Saturday nearest October 28 and continuing through the last day of February.
- ‘Winnebago zone’ — Beginning on the Saturday nearest October 28 and continuing through March 15.
- ‘Mississippi River zone’— Beginning on the second Monday in November or the day following the close of the open season for ducks as established under sub. (1) (b) 1., whichever occurs first, and continuing through the last day of February.

Under this proposal, the opening day would be the Saturday nearest October 25 except in the Mississippi River zone. In the Mississippi river zone the season would continue to open on the second Monday in November or the day after the duck season closes, whichever occurs first, which represents compromise between waterfowl hunters and trappers to accommodate those diverse resources interests.

The opening weekend of the muskrat season can be important to fur trappers. A significant amount of the muskrat harvest by trappers occurs on the opening weekend of the season and, thereafter, muskrat numbers and trapping success may be lower. Fur quality improves during the fall season as winter approaches, so the timing of the season opener can also be important.

Under current rules, trapping season dates are staggered to open progressively later in the southern part of the state and take advantage of pelt primeness and favorable conditions for trapping before winter arrives. However, muskrat trappers relay that the staggered opening dates allow some people to take advantage of multiple opening dates and contribute to significant competition for prime trapping locations and muskrats.

A proposal in board order WM-01-13, the 2013 wildlife management spring hearing rule, would have consolidated opening dates so that most of the state would have opened on the third Saturday in October. This proposal would have spread trapping pressure around the state on one opening day and relieved the competition that results from people moving around to different zones to take advantage of multiple opening days. While the proposal had strong support in voting held in each county, a number of concerns were relayed to the department that muskrat fur quality would not be prime in certain areas on the third Saturday in October.

These rule revision would open the muskrat and mink trapping seasons on the Saturday nearest October 25, which would be the fourth Saturday in October during most years. This opening date is designed to address both concerns about distributing trapping pressure and not beginning the trapping season until muskrat pelts are likely to be prime in most of the state.

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)

This proposal will contribute to providing good opportunities for trapping and maintenance of the economic activity generated by people who participate. However, these rules are not expected to significantly affect currently available outdoor opportunities and no significant impacts to the economic activities of trappers, or outdoor recreation enthusiasts are expected.

State Fiscal Impact

This proposal will not have a fiscal impact on the department. The department already administers seasons and enforces regulations related to trapping opportunities that are modified by this rules package. No new expenses or revenues are anticipated as a result of these proposals.

Small Business Impacts

These rules, and the legislation which grants the department rule making authority, do not have a significant fiscal effect on the private sector or small businesses. These rules are applicable to individual sportspersons and impose no compliance or reporting requirements for small business, nor are any design or operational standards contained in the rule.

Economic Impacts

These proposed rule changes are not expected to influence the spending or other activities or trapping activity of trappers or other outdoor enthusiasts. Correspondingly, no related economic impacts are anticipated.

Public Utility Rate Payers

These proposed rules will have no impact on public utility rate payers.

Local Governmental Units

These rules do not establish any requirements for local governments and are unlikely to have any economic impact on local economies.

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

An alternative to this rule would be to make no change and continue with staggered opening dates vary different areas of the state. However, muskrat trappers relay that the staggered opening dates allow some people to travel to areas and take advantage of multiple opening dates and this contributes to significant competition for prime trapping locations and muskrats.

The opening date in this proposal has been selected to address both concerns about distributing trapping pressure and not beginning the trapping season until muskrat pelts are likely to be of prime quality in most of the state.

Long Range Implications of Implementing the Rule

This proposal will contribute to providing good opportunities for trapping mink and muskrat and maintenance of the economic activity generated by people who participate.

Compare With Approaches Being Used by Federal Government

Federal regulations allow states to manage the wildlife resources located within their boundaries provided they do not conflict with regulations established in the Federal Register. None of these rule changes violate or conflict with the provisions established in the Federal Code of Regulations.

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

These rule change proposals do not represent significant policy changes and do not differ significantly from surrounding states. All surrounding states have regulations and rules in place for the management and recreational use of wild game and furbearer species that are established based on needs that are unique to that state's resources and public desires.

Name and Phone Number of Contact Person

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