

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

ITEM

24

DECISION

TOPIC Chapter 108, “Mink, Muskrat, Raccoon, Badger, Opossum, Weasel, Striped Skunk, Fox (Red and Gray), Beaver, Coyote, River Otter, Bobcat, Gray (Timber) Wolf and Spotted Skunk Seasons NOIA

The Commission is requested to approve this Notice to amend Chapter 108, “Mink, Muskrat, Raccoon, Badger, Opossum, Weasel, Striped Skunk, Fox (Red and Gray), Beaver, Coyote, River Otter, Bobcat, Gray (Timber) Wolf and Spotted Skunk Seasons. Chapter 108 sets the season dates, bag limits, possession limits and areas open to hunting or trapping furbearers.

These amendments change the ending date for the unrestricted taking of muskrats from April 15 to April 1 and require that traps be placed entirely within the muskrat lodge to reduce the incidental catch of other wildlife. The amendments remove the individual seasonal bag limit for otters and bobcats however the season quota remains the same. The amendment clarifies that persons displaying either bobcats or otters as taxidermy mounts must keep the CITES tag in their possession.

Dr. Dale Garner, Wildlife Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
March 12, 2009

Attachment: Chapter 108, “Mink, Muskrat, Raccoon, Badger, Opossum, Weasel, Striped Skunk, Fox (Red and Gray), Beaver, Coyote, River Otter, Bobcat, Gray (Timber) Wolf and Spotted Skunk Seasons NOIA

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION [571]

Notice of Intended Action

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code subsection 455A.5(6), the Natural Resource Commission hereby gives Notice of Intended Action to amend Chapter 108, “Mink, Muskrat, Raccoon, Badger, Opossum, Weasel, Striped Skunk, Fox (Red and Gray), Beaver, Coyote, River Otter, Bobcat, Gray (Timber) Wolf and Spotted Skunk Seasons,” Iowa Administrative Code.

Chapter 108 sets the season dates, bag limits, possession limits and areas open to hunting or trapping furbearers.

These amendments change the ending date for the unrestricted taking of muskrats from April 15 to April 1 and require that traps be placed entirely within the muskrat lodge to reduce the incidental catch of other wildlife. The amendments remove the individual seasonal bag limit for otters and bobcats. However, the season quota remains the same. The amendment clarifies

that persons displaying either bobcats or otters as taxidermy mounts must keep the CITES tag in their possession.

Any interested person may make written suggestions or comments on the proposed amendment on or before April 29, 2009. Written comments may be directed to the Wildlife Bureau's website at www.iowadnr.com or may be sent to the Wildlife Bureau Chief, Department of Natural Resources, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034; fax (515)281-6794. Persons who wish to convey their views orally should contact the Wildlife Bureau at (515)281-5034 or at the Wildlife Bureau offices on the fourth floor of the Wallace State Office Building.

Also, there will be public hearings held at 18 locations via the Iowa Communications Network on April 29, 2009. Interested persons should contact the Department at (515)281-5034 for a list of hearing locations or go to the Department's website at www.iowadnr.com. At the hearings, persons may present their views either orally or in writing. Persons attending the hearing will be asked to give their names and addresses for the record and to confine their remarks to the subject of the amendments.

Any persons who intend to attend the public hearing and have special requirements such as those related to hearing or mobility impairments should contact the Department of Natural Resources and advise of specific needs.

This amendment is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.6, 481A.38, 481A.39, 481A.87, and 481A.90.

The following amendments are proposed.

ITEM 1. Amend subrules 108.1(1) and 108.1(2) as follows:

108.1(1) Molesting or disturbing muskrat houses. Any department of natural resources officer, natural resource biologist, or county conservation board director may permit trappers to molest or disturb muskrat houses on specific state or county game management areas as provided in Iowa Code section 481A.90, after finding that muskrats are causing excessive damage by destroying the vegetation essential to the welfare of a marsh and after so posting the area.

108.1(2) Game management areas. Open season for taking muskrats on certain state game management areas, certain federal national wildlife refuges, and certain county conservation board areas, only where approved by the wildlife bureau and posted accordingly, shall be from 8 a.m. the day after the regular muskrat trapping season ends until April ~~15~~ 1. The use of leg-hold traps during this season is prohibited unless each trap is placed completely inside a muskrat house. No bag or possession limit.

ITEM 2. Amend subrule 108.7(3) as follows:

108.7(3) Quotas ~~and seasonal bag limit~~.

~~a. Seasonal bag limit. The seasonal bag limit is 2 river otters and 1 bobcat per person.~~

~~b. Quotas. The quota for the number of river otters that may be taken is 500 statewide.~~

The quota for the number of bobcats that may be taken is 200 in the open area. The season shall end for river otters when the number of river otters trapped, as determined by the harvest reporting system, reaches 500. The season shall end for bobcats when the number of bobcats taken, as determined by the harvest reporting system, reaches 200. Trappers shall be allowed a 48-hour grace period after the quota is reached to clear their traps of river otters or bobcats. River otters or bobcats found in traps during the grace period may be kept even though the quota is exceeded ~~provided that the trapper has not reached the trapper's personal bag limit~~. River otters or bobcats trapped after the grace period ~~or in excess of the seasonal bag limit~~ must be turned over to the department; the trapper shall not be penalized.

ITEM 3. Amend subrule 108.7(6) as follows:

108.7(6) Tagging requirements. Every river otter or bobcat that may legally be kept must have a CITES tag attached. Tags will be supplied by the conservation officer or designated DNR employee. The tag must remain with the pelt until the pelt is sold or used for other purposes that render it no longer available for sale. Persons displaying river otters or bobcats as taxidermy mounts or as other decorative items must keep the tags in their possession as proof of legal harvest.

Date

Richard A. Leopold, Director

(C:108n.doc/mg)