

Regulatory Plan for FY27

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Introduction

This plan is intended to implement the Governor's Executive Order 9 (1999 - Vilsack). It provides the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) expected regulatory actions for State Fiscal Year 2027, which began July 1, 2026.

Regulatory Objectives

The Director of the DNR, the Environmental Protection Commission, and the Natural Resource Commission:

- Strive to promulgate in administrative rule general statements that implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy or serve an important public need;
- Strive to describe by rule the organization, procedure, and practice requirements of the DNR;
- Strive to use sound science, economic analysis, and policy analysis;
- Strive to use an open, inclusive process for rulemaking; and
- Strive to provide rules that are plain-spoken, direct, productive, and are necessary to carry out the laws of Iowa and the federally mandated programs.

In doing so, these rulemaking authorities will strive to accomplish the DNR's goals that:

- Iowa will have a healthy and safe environment for work and play.
- Iowans will connect with nature.
- The DNR continually strives to improve organizational performance.

Regulatory Actions

The following table lists the DNR's anticipated regulatory actions by rulemaking authority. A summary of each action follows.

How Can You Participate?

You can participate by contacting the person listed in the summary of a regulatory action. You may also participate by commenting on proposed rules that are published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin. In addition, proposed rules are now available for public comment at <https://rules.iowa.gov/>.

Once a rule has been proposed, the DNR will consider your comments and address them before issuing a final rule. To be most effective, comments should contain information and data that support your position, and explain why they should be incorporated in the final rule. You can be particularly helpful and persuasive if you provide examples to illustrate your concerns and offer specific alternatives.

FY27 Regulatory Plan

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Chapter	Title
561-Chapter 12	Special Nonresident Deer and Turkey Licenses
567--Chapters 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, and 33	Air Quality updates
567--Chapters 22 and 23	Air Quality -- Permitting Exemptions rule updates
567--Chapter 23	Air Quality -- Open burning updates
567--Chapters 40, 41, 43, 44, 50, and 73	Water Supply Rule updates
567--Chapter 60	Wastewater Construction and Operation Permits – Revisions to the Iowa Wastewater Facilities Design Standards (IWFDS)
567--Chapter 61	Use Attainability Analysis – Batch 6
567--Chapter 65	Animal Feeding Operations updates
567--Chapters 70-73	Floodplain and Dam Safety updates
567--Chapter 81	Operator Certification updates
571--Chapter 12	Paddling Education
571--Chapter 15	(1) License Fees (align with 2026 legislation); and (2) Correction to multiple offender rule for trespass while deer hunting
571--Chapter 37	(1) Commercial Use of Vessels on Iowa Lakes (waterway management) and (2) Home-Built Boats
571--Chapter 46	ATVs and OUVs
571--Chapter 51	Game Management Areas (trail cameras)
571--Chapter 57 (currently reserved)	Shooting Range Dynamic Pricing and Event Fees
571--Chapter 61	State Parks updates
571--Chapter 81	Fishing regulations: (1) hybrid striped bass; (2) Paddlefish; (3) Missouri and Big Sioux Catfish Bag & Length Limit Regulations; and (4) Spirit Lake spillway expansion regulations
571--Chapter 89	Aquaculture
571--Chapter 90	Aquatic Invasive Species
571--Chapter 96	(1) Ruffed Grouse Hunting and (2) Nonresident small game hunting
571--Chapter 106 and 108	Trap & Tree stand IDs, Beavers, and Depredation Permits
571--Chapter 108	Bobcat Harvest Zones

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DIRECTOR'S RULES

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Special Nonresident Deer and Turkey Licenses

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 561--Chapter 12

Rule Making Authority

☒ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☐ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

The purpose of the proposed amendments is to comply with 2026 Iowa Acts, House File 2800, Division VII. House File 2800 amends Iowa Code section 483A.24 to provide one nonresident deer hunting license to be allocated to the Iowa state fair foundation. The proposed amendments remove a definition and update references to the Iowa state fair foundation to comply with this legislation.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

The updates are necessary to comply with 2026 Iowa Acts, House File 2800, Division VII made to Iowa Code section 483A.24 regarding the Iowa State Fair Foundation and nonresident deer hunting licenses.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

This regulatory action is necessary to comply with 2026 Iowa Acts, House File 2800, Division VII.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

This rulemaking is in response to legislation and therefore a notice of intended action must be submitted to ARRC within 180 days of the date on which the provision became effective. Because the provision became effective July 1, 2026, the notice of intended action should be submitted to the Director, approved, and filed with ARRC by December 28, 2026.

Staff Contact/Phone # Denise Roberg; 515-350-8434

567

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action	Air Quality Updates
Rule Chapter(s) Involved	567--Chapters 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, and 33

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☒ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☐ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

Description of the Action

- Adoption by reference of federal air quality regulations.
- Implementation of asbestos electronic reporting requirements.
- Allowance of alternative federal test methods.
- Execution of various administrative updates and corrections.

Alternatives Considered

- The Department did not consider any alternative methods, as the only available alternative would have been to not propose these rule changes at all.

Preliminary Estimate of Costs

- State Impact: Iowa faces no fiscal impact or enforcement costs, as the changes simply align state law with existing federal mandates.
- Facility/Business Impact: Affected facilities may incur compliance costs, but these originate at the federal level rather than from new state-imposed burdens.
- Operational Impact: Building owners and contractors should expect only minimal initial impacts related to learning the mandatory electronic Asbestos Notification System.

Preliminary Estimate of Benefits

- State Oversight: The Iowa Department of Natural Resources remains the primary compliance agency, maintaining a localized approach that stakeholders prefer over federal oversight.
- Small Business Support: Integrating these rules into the Iowa Administrative Code grants allows small businesses access to free technical and compliance assistance through the Iowa Waste Reduction Center at the University of Northern Iowa.
- Potential Cost Savings: Some facilities may achieve cost savings by utilizing newly adopted, flexible federal standards and voluntary alternative testing methods.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

The legal basis authorizing this rulemaking is derived from Iowa Code sections 455B.133, 455B.134, and 455B.145. Furthermore, the specific laws being implemented by this action include the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. §7401, et seq.) alongside these same Iowa Code sections.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

- Federal Consistency: Updates Iowa's administrative rules to ensure they remain consistent with the latest federal air quality and emission standards.
- State-Level Authority: Maintains the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' delegated authority under the federal Clean Air Act, ensuring the state - rather than the EPA - acts as the primary compliance and implementation agency.
- Administrative Efficiency: Mandates electronic submittals for asbestos notifications, which improves data accuracy and overall processing efficiency.

Reduction of Risk to Public Health, Safety, or the Environment

- Pollution Prevention and Control: Enforces updated, uniform standards for air pollutant emissions to actively prevent and control air pollution.
- Public Welfare Protection: Contributes to the health, safety, and general welfare of all Iowans by reducing exposure to harmful air contaminants.

Approximate Schedule (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

- Notice of Intended Action was approved by the EPC at its July meeting and will be published in the Administrative Bulletin on August 19, 2026
- Adopted and Final rules to be published likely in December

Staff Contact/Phone # Christine Paulson; 515-725-9510

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Updates to Air Quality Rules for Permitting Exemptions

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 567--Chapters 22 and 23

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☒ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☐ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

Description of the Action

- Update and modernize the current rules for air construction permitting exemptions. The rule changes will be stakeholder-driven, and technical workgroups will frame any proposed changes.
- Possible adoption by reference of new and amended federal air quality regulations may also be included in this rulemaking.

Alternatives Considered

- The Department did not consider any alternative methods, as the only way to update the exemptions from air construction permitting is through a rulemaking.

Preliminary Estimate of Costs

- Facility/Business Impact: No fiscal impact or costs for affected facilities, as updates to the exemptions will be a benefit to facilities.
- State Impact: If adopting federal air quality regulations by reference, Iowa faces no fiscal impact or enforcement costs, as the changes simply align state law with existing federal mandates.

Preliminary Estimate of Benefits

- Potential Cost Savings: Facilities may achieve cost savings by utilizing updated construction permitting exemptions.
- Small Business Support: Integrating these rules into the Iowa Administrative Code grants small businesses access to free technical and compliance assistance through the Iowa Waste Reduction Center (IWRC) at the University of Northern Iowa. IWRC regularly assists small businesses with identifying eligibility for construction permitting exemptions.
- State Oversight: If adopting federal air quality regulations by reference, the Department remains the primary compliance agency, maintaining a localized approach that stakeholders prefer over federal oversight.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

The legal basis authorizing this rulemaking is derived from Iowa Code sections 455B.133 and 455B.134. If adopting federal air quality regulations by reference, the specific laws being implemented by this action also include the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. §7401, et seq.) alongside these same Iowa Code sections.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

- Responding to Stakeholder Requests: The Department will be partnering with stakeholders to review and update the exemptions. This collaboration ensures the rules benefit businesses while protecting air quality.
- State-Level Authority: If adopting federal air quality regulations by reference, the Department maintains delegated authority under the federal Clean Air Act, ensuring the state - rather than the EPA - acts as the primary compliance and implementation agency.

Reduction of Risk to Public Health, Safety, or the Environment

- Using Science and Tech to Keep Communities Safe: Having stakeholders and technical experts shape the updates to the exemptions in cooperation with the Department ensures that these decisions are backed by sound science.
- Pollution Prevention and Control: Enforces updated, uniform standards for air pollutant emissions and permitting to actively prevent and control air pollution while benefiting the regulated industry.
- Public Welfare Protection: If adopting federal air quality regulations by reference, the updates also contribute to the health, safety, and general welfare of Iowans by reducing exposure to harmful air contaminants.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

- Technical workgroups formed by March 2027
- Regulatory Analysis published by July 2027
- Notice of Intended Action published by October 2027
- Public Comment period through November 2027
- Adopted and Filed Rules published by January 2028

Staff Contact/Phone # Jessica Reese McIntyre; 515-725-9547

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Updates to Air Quality Rules for Open Burning

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 567--Chapter 23

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☒ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☐ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

This rulemaking will propose updates to obsolete and unclear terminology in the air quality rules for open burning.

Alternatives Considered

The Department did not consider any alternative methods, as the only available alternative would have been to not propose these rule changes at all. Many of the definitions and other provisions included in the open burning rules have remained unchanged for 30-40 years or longer and are now outdated. Rule updates will provide consistency and clarity for public understanding and impacts, as well as for the Department's implementation of the rules.

Preliminary Estimate of Costs

The Department does not expect any fiscal impacts to the public from the updates to these rules, nor will there be any fiscal impact to the State.

Preliminary Estimate of Benefits

The public will benefit from modernized definitions, as well as increased clarity in the rules, particularly for the list of exemptions to the general prohibition on open burning. Additionally, the Department will better be able to consistently and fairly apply the open burning rules.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

The legal basis authorizing this rulemaking is derived from Iowa Code sections 455B.133 and 455B.134.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

The open burning rules include decades-old definitions and other rule provisions that are unclear and outdated. Rule changes are needed to provide consistency and clarity for the public and the Department.

Reduction of Risk to Public Safety or the Environment

Updated rules may result in reduction in air pollution due to added consistency and transparency. Any reduction in air contaminants contributes to the health, safety, and general welfare of Iowans.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

- By October 2026: Initiate internal planning among DNR air quality, land quality, and field staff, and seek input from the local air quality programs in Linn County and Polk County
- By January 2027: Regulatory Analysis published and public comment period
- By April 2027: Notice of Intended Action published, with public comment period through May 2027
- By July 2027: Adopted and Filed Rules published

Staff Contact/Phone # Christine Paulson; 515-725-9510

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action	Water Supply Rule Revisions
Rule Chapter(s) Involved	567--Chapters 40, 41, 43, 44, 50, and 73

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☒ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☐ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

This rulemaking package contains the following items:

1. Adoption of EPA's Consumer Confidence Reports Rule revision
2. Post-EO10 cleanup
3. Incorporation of changes to Chapters 40, 41, & 43 after considering stakeholder comments received during EO10 that were outside of the scope of EO10, but merited review for future rulemaking
4. Revision of Drinking Water SRF (DWSRF) chapter to allow costs of service lines as eligible for SRF funds, aligning rules with federal eligibility guidelines and benefitting borrowers
5. Revision of DWSRF chapter to align with Clean Water SRF and IFA rules, as amended during EO10
6. Update to Water Use Permit public notice and public hearing rules to reflect modern practices and allow permit renewals to be subject to public hearing requests, per Iowa Code 455B.278
7. Revision to Water Use application fee table to include the existing Water Storage Permit Application Fee, erroneously struck during EO10

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

This rulemaking package includes the adoption of EPA's revised Consumer Confidence Reports rule. In order for Iowa to retain primary enforcement authority for the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Department must adopt regulations no less stringent than those promulgated by EPA within two years of rule finalization.

The other items in the rulemaking package are not required by a statute or court order. Rule changes are needed to allow the costs of services line to be eligible for SRF funds, aligning with federal criteria and reducing administrative burden on staff who are currently issuing waivers for such situations. Other changes were necessitated after the EO10 process to correct clerical errors or oversight that occurred during those revisions, correct cross references that changed, align CWSRF and IFA rules that were amended, and standardize common language throughout the chapters. Additionally, the Department received stakeholder comments during the EO10 process that had technical merit, but went beyond the scope of EO10. Staff have evaluated these comments and will propose rule changes as a result that largely include clarification of self-monitoring requirements in Appendix A to Chapter 40, among several other smaller changes. Water Use public notice and hearing rules are updated to reflect modern, electronic notification procedures. Water Use rules are amended to allow permit renewals to be subject to public hearing requests, per Iowa Code section 455B.278.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

The revised Consumer Confidence Report rule supports public education by making annual drinking water quality reports more understandable and accessible to the public. The final rule ensures that these reports are easier to read and supports access to translations in appropriate languages while enhancing information about lead in drinking water. The rule streamlines delivery of the reports by encouraging electronic methods.

The additional items in the rulemaking package clarify and streamline rules by standardizing wording and revising self-monitoring requirements. Allowing service lines to be eligible SRF costs benefits borrowers, and enhances public health by facilitating replacement of lead services lines, in compliance with the upcoming Lead & Copper Rule Improvements.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

- Regulatory Analysis to be filed July 2026
- Regulatory Analysis Hearing in August 2026
- Submit to Governor's office for preclearance in August 2026
- Notice of Intended Action to be filed by October 2026
- Public hearings to be held November 2026
- Final rule by end of 2026

Staff Contact/Phone # Heidi Cline; 515-823-9473

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action	Wastewater Construction and Operation Permits - Revisions to the Iowa Wastewater Facilities Design Standards (IWFDS)
Rule Chapter(s) Involved	567--Chapter 60

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☒ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☐ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

Revise 567 IAC Chapter 60 to update the Iowa Wastewater Facilities Design Standards (IWFDS) for construction permits. The changes will correct outdated code references, update design standards, provide clarification of permit requirements, allow flexibility in design, incorporate new methods and processes and provide consistency with the Recommended Standards for Wastewater Facilities 2014 Edition adopted by the Great Lakes-Upper Mississippi River Board (GLUMRB). The updates will eliminate the need for variances for certain construction methods and processes to allow processing and approval of construction permits without delays for all regulated entities such as municipalities, industries and semi-public facilities. Costs to the regulated entities are expected to decrease due to the expected reduction in application submittal expenditures as a result of the updated standards.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

This rulemaking will update applicable Chapters 1 through 11 of the Iowa Wastewater Facilities Design Standards (rule by reference - 567 IAC 60.2(1)"b") in accordance with the provisions of Iowa Code section 455B.173.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

The benefit of the action is a reduced number of variance requests for construction methods that are not covered by the current design standards. The action is expected to have positive effect on public health, safety and the environment since the new construction methods are expected to be better and have reliable and longer useful life. The action is anticipated to reduce applicant submittal expenditures.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

NOIA in August or September 2026, with Adopted and Final rule by January 2027 or earlier

Staff Contact/Phone #	Satya Chennupati; 515-725-8436
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REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Use Attainability Analysis - Batch 6

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 567--Chapter 61

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☒ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☐ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

- Adopt by reference a revised Surface Water Classification document, which reflects revised designated uses from use attainability analyses (UAAs) and general cleanup.
- Costs associated with this rule were described in detail in the 2006 Fiscal Impact Statement and accounted for in the original rebuttable presumption rulemaking in 2006. This action implements that rule.
- Benefits include improved water quality. Expired permits are written with outdated water quality standards. This action will allow updated standards to be used in the permits.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

- Required by state/federal law.
- Iowa Code sections authorizing rulemaking: Iowa Code sections 455B.173(2), 455B.176(4), and 455B.176A(7).
- State or federal laws implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code sections 455B.105(3), 455B.173(2), and 455B.176(4).

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment):

Regulatory action will reduce risk to public health and the environment by allowing NPDES permits to be reissued using updated water quality standards.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

- Submit NOIA to governor's office by winter 2026.
- Finish rulemaking (final rule) by Fall 2027.

Staff Contact/Phone # Marie Todey; 515-204-7569

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Animal Feeding Operations

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 567--Chapter 65

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☒ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☐ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

This rulemaking will correct oversights from the Executive Order 10 rulemaking, including updating citations and inserting inadvertent deletions from the EO 10 review process. This rulemaking will also make updates to the rules for new flood plain maps and changes to the AFO Atlas. The revisions will reduce redundancies, provide clarifications, remove outdated provisions, and include an update to definitions to implement [HF 2534 \(AFO - shellfish\)](#).

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Iowa Code section 459.103 and Iowa Code subsection 17A.7(2)

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

This rulemaking will reduce redundancies, provide clarifications and updates, remove outdated provisions and will the DNR's rules consistent with the Iowa Code.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

- Collect stakeholder input: July 2026
- Regulatory Analysis NOIA Process: August - October 2026
- Submit to Governor's office for preclearance: November 2026
- Notice of Intended Action to be filed: December 2026
- Public hearings: January - February 2027
- Final rule: April 2027

Staff Contact/Phone # Kelli Book; 515-210-3408

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Floodplain and Dam Safety Rule Cleanup

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 567--Chapters 70-73

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☒ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☐ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

After fulfilling EO10, many rules regarding floodplain and dam safety regulation were reorganized, especially Chapter 71. This rulemaking will focus on rule cleanup to further clarify this revised language.

Changes may include:

- Chapter 70: clarification of definitions (channel change, flood control works, maximum damage potential)
- Chapter 71: Refine 71.4(7) Small project exemptions to clarify project types and allow for the exemption to be applied to urban areas in addition to rural areas.
- Chapter 72: Clarification of bridge criteria impacting high damage potential areas based on recent agreements with Iowa DOT. Redefine "Channel Changes" and "Stream protective devices" to allow for more efficient stream restoration project permitting. Consider updates to campground permitting requirements based on new national guidance (including Emergency Action Plan requirements).
- Chapter 73: Re-add definition of dam that was inadvertently removed during last rules update.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Iowa Code sections 455B.275(9), 455B.276(1), and 455B.278

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

These proposed updates will provide permitting clarifications and ease of compliance.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Drafted changes for initial stakeholder feedback by September 2026. Notice of Intended Action likely in December 2026.

Staff Contact/Phone # Jonathan Garton; 515-201-1018

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Water Supply Rule Revisions

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 567--Chapter 81

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☒ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☐ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

- Refine the proposed affidavit/contract "Operator In Charge Minimum Operational Requirements" based on stakeholder insights.
- Develop and establish clearer, more precise "operational control" definitions.
- Update existing operational agreements and enforcement criteria.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Requirements for Water and Wastewater Operators-in-Charge are legislated under Iowa Code Section 455B.223, which mandates that operating these facilities requires certification from the Department. The broader process improvement event and ongoing stakeholder consultations are being utilized to ensure the refined matrix aligns with these legal frameworks.

In order for Iowa to retain primary enforcement authority for the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Department must adopt regulations no less stringent than those promulgated by EPA.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

- Stakeholder Support: Overall, stakeholders actively support efforts to improve the current affidavit/contract operator process, validating the need for an updated more consistent process.
- Process Gaps: A broader process improvement event identified a critical need to standardize definitions, modernize operational agreements, and solidify enforcement criteria to ensure consistency across facilities.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

- Regulatory Analysis to be filed April 2027
- Regulatory Analysis Hearing in May 2027
- Submit to Governor's office for preclearance in May 2027
- Notice of Intended Action to be filed by June 2027
- Public hearings to be held August 2027
- Final rule by end of 2027

Staff Contact/Phone # Laurie Sharp; 515-664-8553

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NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Paddling Education

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 571--Chapter 12

Rule Making Authority ☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

The regulation would formalize a volunteer train-the-trainer paddling education program to meet growing public interest with standardized, Iowa-specific flat and moving water courses.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Formalizing a volunteer train-the-trainer paddling education program in regulation would be intended to implement Iowa Code section 472A.3. It is not required by statute or court order.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

As recreational paddling continues to grow in popularity across the state, so does the need for education and outreach opportunities. These regulations would reduce risk to public safety by providing education to paddlers in Iowa.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Estimated effective date in May 2027.

Staff Contact/Phone # Megan Wisecup (EOM); 515-238-4968

Nate Hoogeveen (Rivers); 515-205-2486

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action	1. License Fees (align with legislation)
Rule Chapter(s) Involved	2. Correction to multiple offender rules for trespass while deer hunting
	571--Chapter 15

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

1. This rulemaking will align Chapter 15 with legislation passed during the 2026 legislative session (SF654 and SF2471). Specifically, all furbuyer license fees will be set at \$50.00 and disabled veteran lifetime furharvester licenses will be set at \$5.00.
2. Chapter 15 implements the wildlife violator compact and penalties for multiple offenses. This rulemaking package proposes to correct an error under a prior rulemaking. Iowa Code limits assessing point values to trespass convictions while deer hunting. However, the existing rule references assessing point values to trespass convictions while hunting, fishing, or trapping.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

1. Required by SF654 and SF2471
2. Iowa Code section 481A.134 gives the Department authority to establish rules pursuant to Iowa Code Chapter 17A to provide for the suspension or revocation of licenses. Further, the Department has authority to adopt a point system under Chapter 17A to weigh the seriousness of violations. The point system limits the violations that can be considered, including to the crime "of committing trespass as defined in section 716.7 while hunting deer." The administrative rule is currently broader than permitted by Iowa Code.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

1. Required by SF654 and SF2471
2. The Department has already updated its processes to comply with Iowa Code. However, an update to Iowa Administrative Code is needed to more accurately reflect Iowa Code.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Rule package will be initiated in August of 2026 and will take approximately 6 months to become final.

Staff Contact/Phone #

Chris Ensminger; 515-250-6886 or Todd Bishop; 515-238-6461

Matt Bruner; 515-336-5456

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action	1. Commercial Use of Vessels on Iowa Lakes (Waterway Management)
	2. Home Built Boats
Rule Chapter(s) Involved	571--Chapter 37

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

1. Regulations would address high traffic by commercial vessels on public Iowa lakes and public boat ramps. The goal of the regulation would be to ensure safety of the recreating public and commercial users as well as protecting public recreation and natural resources.
2. Regulations would adopt US Coast Guard and National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) best practices to establish a consistent process for building and registering home-built boats in Iowa.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

1. Regulation of commercial use of vessels would be intended to implement Iowa Code section 462A.3 and 462A.24(5). It is not required by statute or court order.
2. Regulating home-built boats would be intended to implement Iowa Code section 462A.3, 462A.24(5), and 462A.80. It is not required by statute or court order.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

1. The volume of inquiries regarding the desire to operate a vessel for commercial use continues to increase and the Department currently lacks rules or guidance to ensure that these situations are handled in the best interest of the public and waterways. These regulations would reduce the public safety risk to the recreating public and commercial users, as well as protect the environment.
2. The Department is receiving an increase in calls requesting guidance on how to register home-built boats, when an individual has either built the boat themselves or is interested in purchasing a home-built boat from another individual. The regulation would reduce risk to public safety and the environment by ensuring that home-built boats are safe for operation on Iowa waterways.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Estimated effective date in May 2027.

Staff Contact/Phone #

Megan Wisecup (EOM); 515-238-4968
Rachel Alliss (EOM); 515-729-6037
Matt Bruner (LE); 515-336-5456
Denise Roberg (Licensing); 515-350-8434
Parks and Fisheries representatives TBD

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action All-Terrain vehicles, Off-Road Motorcycles, and Off-Road Utility Vehicles

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 571--Chapter 46

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

This administrative rule change is required due to the passage of 2026 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2088. There is no expected fiscal impact.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Division II, Section 12 of Senate File 2088 amends Iowa Code 321I.11 Accident Reports to change the reporting threshold for all-terrain vehicle accidents from \$1,500 to \$5,000. Chapter 46 must be amended to align with the updated requirements of Iowa Code Chapter 321I.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

Required by legislation.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Senate File 2088 includes an applicability date of March 1, 2027 or the date that DOT submits that the new records system is implemented (whichever is earlier).

Staff Contact/Phone # Kim Bohlen; 515-360-3682

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Game Management Areas - Trail Cameras

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 571--Chapter 51

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

The proposed rulemaking defines "trail camera" and prohibits the use of trail cameras on Game Management Areas, except when specifically authorized by permit or when used directly by the Department or its designated agents. The proliferation of trail cameras has generated numerous concerns and complaints from the public. This measure will protect the recreational experience of sportsmen and sportswomen and other visitors to these wild areas. Additionally, this prohibition is consistent with the ethical hunting principle of fair chase, ensuring that a hunter does not gain an improper or unfair technological advantage over game.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Iowa Code sections authorizing rulemaking: 481A.6 and 455A.5(6)"a"

Iowa Code sections implemented by rulemaking: 456A.24(2)"a," 481A.6, and 481A.39

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

The proliferation of trail cameras has generated numerous concerns and complaints from the public. This proposed rulemaking will protect the recreational experience of sportsmen and sportswomen and other visitors to these wild areas.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Rule package will be initiated in June of 2026 and take approximately 6 months to become final.

Staff Contact/Phone # Chris Ensminger; 515-250-6886 or Todd Bishop; 515-238-6461

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action	Shooting Range Dynamic Pricing and Event Fees
Rule Chapter(s) Involved	571--Chapter 57 (currently reserved)

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

Regulations would adopt a schedule to cover facility rental fees and damage deposits and fees at the Banner Shooting Complex, Cody Shooting Complex, and the Olofson Shooting Complex.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Establishing a shooting range event and damage fee schedule in regulation is intended to implement Iowa Code section 481A.17. It is not required by statute or court order.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

The popularity of DNR shooting ranges has led to requests to use the facilities for events. Department currently lacks a rental fee and damage deposit structure, which is limiting the Department's ability to meet customers' needs.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Estimate effective date in May 2027.

Staff Contact/Phone #	Megan Wisecup (EOM); 515-238-4968
	Jonathan Jones (EOM); 515-313-8048

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action State Parks, Recreation Areas, and State Forest Camping

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 571--Chapter 61

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

This regulatory action proposes two categories of administrative rule changes: (1) modernizing procedures for camping reservations and (2) clarifying after-hours public access at certain state park boat ramps.

1. Modernizing Procedures for Camping Reservations

The changes contemplated in this proposal include modernizing procedures and clarifying definitions. Specifically, updates will be made to modernize procedures for camping reservations to align with the new operational strategy of 100% Same-Day Reservable capacity through the centralized reservation system. The weekend minimum stay requirement will also be modified. Additionally, there has been a shift in policy from a physical “walk-in,” manual self-registration system to a mandatory centralized reservation system (website or call center), fully integrating walk-in campers into the digital reservation system.

Alternatives considered included making no changes to the camping reservation system. However, the benefits of modernizing procedures to staff and customers outweighed this alternative.

Estimated benefits of this Action include increased operational efficiencies for DNR staff and improved customer experience by having real-time availability of campsites. Estimated costs of this Action from removing physical “walk-in” availability are expected to be minimal or outweighed by the benefits of the continued availability of the camping space through the centralized reservation system.

Centralized Reservation System and Reservation Procedures (571—61.3)

Walk-in Campers and Reservations: Changes were made to fully integrate walk-in camping into the reservation system:

- Elimination of self-registration. The paper-based first-come first-served system has been eliminated and replaced with a requirement that all registration be completed through the centralized reservation system.
 - Campsite registration is considered complete only after a reservation is confirmed and fees are paid through the centralized reservation system.
 - Walk-in campers seeking an available site must now register by making a reservation prior to occupying the site, rather than self-registering within one-half hour of entry.
 - Added flexibility for backpack campsites where the registration requirements will be identified at the area or through the centralized reservation system. Also identified that reservation fees may apply.
- The process for occupying unrented, reservable sites was updated to state that campers may reserve a site through the centralized reservation system for up to 14 consecutive nights, subject to availability.

Operational Efficiency, Improved Convenience, and Modernization

Digital Registration: Requiring all walk-in campers to register through the centralized reservation system before occupying a site ensures real-time accuracy of site availability and streamlined fee collection. If a cancellation occurs, the site is available within minutes which eliminates the need for park staff to post arrival rosters and reservation cards, which previously gave the perception that a campsite was reserved, but a customer could have cancelled and the campsite could have been used or rebooked.

100% Same Day Reservable improves planning opportunities and eliminates uncertainty for campers arriving at a campground and not knowing if a site will be available. Allowing for increased site availability in every campground since many walk-in sites go unused.

Clarification of Procedures: Standardizing check-in and check-out times, reduces public confusion and administrative burden for park staff.

Modification of Weekend Minimum Stay:

The general two-night minimum stay requirement for weekends (Friday and Saturday nights) between May 1 and October 31 has been removed. This rule was deemed less necessary after the transition to a 100% reservable system. This will accommodate public users who have non-standard work schedules. The change to the rule language to use the word “may” instead of “is required” is to maintain the flexibility to reinstate the stay requirement in the future. (No changes were recommended for holiday weekend stay requirements)

2. Clarifying After-Hours Public Access to Certain State Park Boat Ramps

The proposed rulemaking would clarify when the public has access to certain state park boat ramps for boating and fishing when the state parks are otherwise closed. Alternatives considered include taking no action. However, there is currently visitor confusion on what activities are permissible after park closure at certain state park boat ramps.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Statutory Authority

- **Iowa Code Section Authorizing Rule:** The action is authorized under Iowa Code chapter 461A. Specifically, these rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 455A.4(i), 461A.3, and 461A.46 to 461A.51.
- **State or Federal Law(s) Implemented by the Rule:** Iowa Code sections 455A.4(i), 461A.3, and 461A.46 to 461A.51.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)
See above.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Mandatory Review/Rescission: This action is required by Iowa Code section 17A.7, which mandates a chapter rescission date of June 5, 2029. Rulemaking is necessary to update and re-evaluate these regulations prior to that deadline to ensure continuous operational authority for state parks and recreation areas.

Staff Contact/Phone # Kim Bohlen; 515-360-3682

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Fishing Regulations

1. Establishment of a Hybrid Striped Bass Regulation
2. Paddlefish regulation in Rathbun and West Okoboji Lakes
3. Missouri and Big Sioux River catfish bag & length limits
4. Prohibited Areas for snagging, spearing, and bowfishing (Spirit Lake spillway expansion)

Title of Regulatory Action

Rule Chapter(s) Involved

571--Chapter 81

Rule Making Authority

- ☐ Director
- ☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)
- ☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

1. To maximize the ecological and recreational value of Iowa's aquatic resources, the Fisheries Bureau is developing a strategic regulatory framework for statewide White Bass and Hybrid Striped Bass fisheries. While native White Bass are self-sustaining, Hybrid Striped Bass are sterile and rely entirely on costly hatchery production, making active management essential to safeguard the state's financial investment. Growing interest in Hybrid Striped Bass as a trophy fish supports guiding businesses and attracts non-resident anglers to lakes, such as Rathbun Lake, because of the lack of regulations on this species. Production challenges and increased angling pressure necessitate regulations on these previously unregulated fisheries. A statewide limit of two fish over 18" will protect trophy hybrid populations without impacting harvest-oriented White Bass fishermen, as fall gillnet data shows <1% of White Bass exceed 18". Protecting these fast-growing predators leverages high biological productivity to maximize growth, ultimately establishing high-quality sport fisheries that offer Iowa anglers exceptional, trophy-class catching opportunities.
2. To establish Lake Rathbun and West Okoboji Lake as premier trophy fisheries, the Fisheries Bureau proposes implementing a Paddlefish length limit (34-in). Since Paddlefish are unable to reproduce naturally within these lake environments, their populations rely entirely on state hatchery stocking. This length limit will protect our investment by preventing overharvesting prior to the fish reaching maturity. Safeguarding these exceptional fish during the years required to attain trophy caliber will enable them to fully capitalize on the high biological productivity of the lakes, ultimately achieving "Master Angler" weights exceeding 50 pounds. Through active management of these populations, we will build high-quality destination fisheries that offer Iowans exceptional, in-state Paddlefish angling opportunities, eliminating the need to travel to states like Missouri or Oklahoma.
3. This rulemaking will structurally bifurcate the proposed changes into the core regulatory table and the subsequent text-based exceptions as follows: (i) amendments to Rule 571—81.1(481A) (Core Regulations Table): Modify the "Boundary Rivers" regulatory matrix specifically for the Missouri River and Big Sioux River lines. Update the "Catfish" row to strike the current combined baseline limits and establish a distinct, species-specific daily catch limit of 10 Channel catfish, 5 Flathead catfish, and 1 Blue catfish. This modification brings Iowa into absolute conformity with the neighboring jurisdictions of Nebraska and South Dakota; and (ii) amendments to Rule 571—81.2(481A) (Exceptions to Seasons and Limits): Length Restrictions: Update the catfish exceptions subrule to codify a protective size ceiling on shared border waters, restricting the daily Flathead catfish catch limit so that only one (1) fish may exceed 30 inches in length.
4. Spirit Lake: The rulemaking would amend 571 IAC 81.2(11)"a" to strike and rescind subparagraph (6) ("Spillway area from directly below the Spirit Lake outlet to the confluence at East Okoboji Lake"), which currently only prohibits snagging. Additionally, 571 IAC 81.2(11)"b" would be amended to add the Spirit Lake Spillway, expanding the restriction to completely forbid snagging, bowfishing (bow and arrow), and spearing.

Alternatives considered

1. Leaving unlimited harvest of Hybrid Striped Bass risks degrading the trophy fishery the Department has established for this fishery, creates the potential for commercial harvest of this fish across state lines, and is a

waste of the dollars it takes to raise this fish to a trophy size. Staff have received numerous comments from anglers concerning overharvest of Hybrid Striped Bass.

2. Permitting unregulated Paddlefish harvest risks undermining the potential to build a trophy fishery and opens the door for interstate commercial exploitation. Moreover, it leads to an inefficient use of hatchery space and the financial resources spent rearing these fish within our state hatchery system.
3. Status Quo: Maintaining the current regulations as written was the only alternative considered. This option was rejected because it leaves severe border-river regulatory inconsistencies unaddressed, perpetuates confusion for multi-licensed sport anglers, and fails to resolve ongoing jurisdictional friction for boundary water law enforcement.
4. Leaving the rule entries unchanged was rejected. Doing so maintains a confusing loophole that permits spearing and bowfishing in a tight public channel where fish pile up, causing severe crowding and resource safety issues. Amending paragraph "b" without striking the entry from paragraph "a" was also rejected, as it would cause an explicit statutory conflict and administrative redundancy

Preliminary estimate of costs/benefits

No financial cost to the state or general public. Benefits include preserving Hybrid Striped Bass and Paddlefish populations, providing clear guidance for enforcement officers, and preserving Trust Fund dollars. Additionally, the changes to the catfish regulations removes geographic "compliance traps" for anglers navigating shifting river channels, provides law enforcement officers with a uniform code to enforce, and ensures unified, multi-state biological management of shared catfish populations.

Costs: There are nominal administrative and fiscal costs associated with the processing, publication, and enforcement adjustments of this rule change. Finally, removing weapons that launch sharp projectiles (spears and arrows) from an area tightly congested with shore anglers eliminates a severe physical safety risk to standard sports anglers and families.

Costs: There are nominal administrative and fiscal costs associated with the processing, publication, and enforcement adjustments of this rule change.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

These actions are authorized under Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, 481A.67 and 461A.76, which grant the Commission the power to regulate territorial limitations, quotas, and specific methods of take for fish to maintain proper biological balance.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

This comprehensive action resolves potential overharvest of Hybrid Striped Bass fisheries and Trust Fund savings, with no impact to harvest-oriented White Bass fishermen. Likewise, this initiative addresses the potential overharvesting of Paddlefish populations in both West Okoboji Lake and Lake Rathbun, while also ensuring the proper safeguarding of Trust Fund resources.

Catfish → While a similar iteration of this rule change was previously deferred, the Department continues to experience persistent, compounding public pressure to resolve the ongoing regulatory conflicts inherent to our border rivers.

- Inconsistency on Border Waters: The DNR currently enforces a daily combined catch limit of 15 catfish with no length restrictions on our sections of the Missouri and Big Sioux border rivers. This directly conflicts with Nebraska's and South Dakota's more stringent frameworks.
- Jurisdictional Enforcement Challenges: Certain stretches of the Missouri River shift entirely between Iowa and Nebraska jurisdictions due to oxbows and channel shifts. This creates an ongoing compliance trap for well-meaning anglers and an environment that is exceptionally difficult for conservation officers to effectively police. South Dakota recently updated their rules to match Nebraska specifically to resolve these identical boundary issues.

- **Unanimous Stakeholder Support:** This proposal represents a unified front from all affected parties. It is heavily supported and requested by border-river anglers, frontline Conservation Officers, and DNR Fisheries Bureau biological staff.

Spirit Lake: This comprehensive action resolves two critical issues:

- **Public Safety & Conflict Mitigation:** The Spirit Lake Spillway is a popular shore destination where standard recreational anglers tightly congregate shoulder-to-shoulder. Discharging projectile-based methods of take (like heavy-poundage archery gear or hand-thrown/mechanized spears) within close proximity of crowded shorelines creates an acute public safety hazard and a severe risk of accidental physical trauma or cross-line line entanglement.
- **Resource Management:** Confined spillways cause massive, unnatural pooling of fish species. Restricting non-selective projectile harvest protects these game and rough fish corridors from disruptive exploitation.
- **Regulatory Clarity:** Removing the location from paragraph “a” while adding it to paragraph “b” stops the rule from being duplicated across different lists, keeping the Iowa Administrative Code accurate, organized, and legally airtight.

Approximate Schedule (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)
Implement in 2027

Staff Contact/Phone # Joe Larscheid - Fisheries Bureau Chief; 515-201-3376

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Aquaculture

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 571--Chapter 89

Rule Making Authority ☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action

We propose to revise the approved aquaculture species list (571-89.1(481A)) in the following manner:

1. Delete the scientific nomenclature currently paired with every common name. This modification aims to clarify which fish may be legally produced or marketed by Iowa's hatchery facilities. Because scientific classifications are fluid and frequently updated, discrepancies between common and technical names create unnecessary confusion for our stakeholders. Eliminating these entries will also streamline administrative oversight by removing the requirement for frequent list amendments to reflect updated taxonomy. Specifically, the technical designation for Largemouth Bass was recently applied to the Florida Bass, a distinct southern species, while the Largemouth Bass was assigned a new scientific name. Consequently, our existing records are inaccurate, linking Largemouth Bass to the wrong taxon. Given that Largemouth Bass are a primary game fish often managed by private aquaculture operations, such inaccuracies could disrupt industry production and distribution.
2. Remove any species that are not actively produced within Iowa's public or private hatchery systems. This update will simplify the regulations by focusing exclusively on taxa currently utilized in state aquaculture operations. To identify these species, we will evaluate Aquaculture Unit License annual reports from the previous decade to catalog all fish actively cultured in the private sector. A concurrent review of public hatchery data for the same period will be conducted. The final approved list will be restricted to those species with a documented history of culture or sale in Iowa over the last 10 years.

Opting for no regulatory action would perpetuate the current ambiguity surrounding common and technical nomenclature. Conversely, implementing these changes will enhance administrative efficiency by removing the necessity for constant list revisions driven by taxonomic shifts, thereby preventing inaccuracies that might otherwise impede industry cultivation and commercial activities.

Eliminating scientific names and removing species not currently produced in Iowa's public or private hatchery systems would incur no costs for the DNR. Instead, this action yields clear benefits: it relieves the DNR from the administrative burden of reconciling discrepancies between common and scientific nomenclature, while also reducing confusion among constituents by excluding species not actively cultured in the state.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Iowa Code sections 481A.142 and 481A.143.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

The oversight of commercial propagation and commercial exchange for fish, reptiles, and amphibians in the aquaculture sector is governed by Chapter 89. These regulations establish a catalog of taxa authorized for aquaculture activities and identify specific pathogens subject to mandatory surveillance and notification. Further stipulations provide a mechanism for licensing species excluded from the approved list while strictly forbidding the import or possession of designated restricted organisms. The intent of these provisions is to mitigate the hazards of non-native species establishment and prevent the transmission of disease from hatchery stocks to wild populations.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

- Submit to Governor's office for preclearance by August 2026
- Notice of Intended Action to be filed by October 2026
- Public hearings in November 2026

- Final rule by January 2027

Staff Contact/Phone # Joe Larscheid - Fisheries Bureau Chief; 515-201-3376

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Aquatic Invasive Species

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 571--Chapter 90

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

This rulemaking would add plant, fish and invertebrate species to the lists of designated aquatic invasive species (AIS) in subrules 571-90.2 (1), 571-90.2 (2) and 571-90.2 (3).

The following species are being considered to be added to the lists:

Aquatic Plants

Brazilian waterweed (*Egeria densa*)
didymo or rock snot (*Didymosphenia geminata*)
Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)
parrot feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)
starry stonewort (*Nitellopsis obtusa*)
water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*)
water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*)
yellow iris or yellow flag (*Iris pseudacoris*)
yellow floating heart (*Nymphoides peltata*)

Invertebrates

banded mystery snail (*Viviparus georgianus*)
Chinese mystery snail, Japanese mystery snail (*Cipangopaludina spp.*)
faucet snail (*Bithynia tentaculata*)
marbled crayfish (*Procambarus virginalis*)
red swamp crayfish (*Procambarus clarkii*)

An alternative to this regulatory action would be continued public education to inform Iowans about the threat of AIS. This alternative would not give the DNR authority to prevent the introduction and spread of additional AIS in Iowa.

There would be no costs to the DNR for adding these species to the lists of designated AIS. Benefits would be realized by the DNR not having to attempt to manage these species if they become introduced into waters of the state and/or spread within Iowa.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Iowa Code section 456A.37

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

571 IAC Chapter 90 helps protect waterbodies across Iowa by preventing the introduction and spread of AIS. Aquatic invasive species are non-native species that dominate aquatic ecosystems and have harmful impacts on natural resources, the economy, and human use of natural resources. Some of the impacts of AIS are reduced populations of native aquatic plants and fish, increased operating costs of drinking water facilities and lakes that become unusable by boaters, anglers and swimmers. The most cost-effective management of AIS is preventing their introduction and spread. Expensive management options exist for some of the aquatic invasive plants, but there are few or no control options for invasive fish or invertebrates that would not affect native fish and invertebrate populations.

New species of AIS continue to be found in Iowa waterbodies, requiring the need for this regulatory action. This rule pairs with federal regulations related to Noxious Weeds and Injurious Wildlife and better aligns with regulations of Iowa’s neighboring states.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

- Submit to Governor’s office for preclearance by August 2026
- Notice of Intended Action to be filed by October 2026
- Public hearings in November 2026
- Final rule by January 2027

Staff Contact/Phone # George Scholten; 515-371-6915

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action	1. Ruffed Grouse Hunting
Rule Chapter(s) Involved	2. Nonresident small game hunting
	571--Chapter 96

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

1. This rulemaking will define ruffed grouse zones and establish harvest quotas for each zone. The Iowa ruffed grouse population has been steadily declining for several years and no longer supports a viable hunting opportunity in the state. By establishing zones and quotas the NRC will be able to provide limited opportunities in controlled areas if and when the population recovers. This rulemaking is biologically responsible and supported by Iowa grouse hunters.
2. This rulemaking will define the nonresident hunting season for small game (pheasant, partridge, grouse, rabbit, squirrel and doves) to be two 7-day periods selected at the time of license purchase. It will also define brief resident-only periods for hunting small game on public lands.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Iowa Code sections 481A.2, 481A.38, 481A.39, and 481A.48

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

1. The Iowa ruffed grouse population has declined to the point where it can no longer support recreational harvest. If and when the population recovers, opportunity to pursue ruffed grouse in a biologically responsible manner will be restored.
2. The issues addressed by this rulemaking have been requested by Iowa hunters for several years. Multiple hunter surveys conducted over the past several years consistently show in excess of 70% support for the changes. It is also important to note that, on average, nonresident small game hunters spend 5 days or less hunting in Iowa annually. These changes will allow nonresidents the opportunity to hunt nearly three times longer than that if they choose to.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Rule package will be introduced in the fall of winter of 2026 and take approximately 6 months to become final.

Staff Contact/Phone # Chris Ensminger; 515-250-6886 or Todd Bishop; 515-238-6461

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Trap & Tree Stand ID, Beavers and Depredation Permits

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 571--Chapter 106 and 108

Rule Making Authority

☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

Legislation from this year requires chapters to these two chapters.

First, 2026 Iowa Acts, SF 654 requires several changes to existing rules. It requires hunters or trappers to clearly label traps and tree stands with their name and address or Department-issued ID. It also provides for the taking of beavers outside of the regular trapping season when damage is occurring on private property and authorizes Conservation Officers to distribute deer depredation permits.

Second, 2026 Iowa Acts, SF 2318 authorizes the Commission to determine which nonresident deer hunting zones are exempt from the standard antlerless deer tag purchase requirement.

There are no significant costs expected with any of these changes.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

Required by SF 654 and SF 2318

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

Regulatory action is needed to comply with legislation.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Rule package will be initiated in August or September of 2026 and will take approximately 6 months to become final.

Staff Contact/Phone # Chris Ensminger; 515-250-6886 or Todd Bishop; 515-238-6461

REGULATORY ACTION DESCRIPTION FOR FY27

Title of Regulatory Action Bobcat Harvest Zones

Rule Chapter(s) Involved 571--Chapter 108

Rule Making Authority ☐ Director

☐ Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)

☒ Natural Resource Commission (NRC)

Description of Contemplated Regulatory Action (Including, to the extent reasonable and practicable, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimate of costs and benefits of the Action)

Iowa's bobcat population has been expanding into suitable habitats for well over a decade. This rulemaking would expand areas eligible for bobcat harvest in order to maximize recreational harvest opportunities in a biologically conservative and responsible manner.

Legal Basis (Include whether action is required by statute or court order)

This rule making is proposed under the authority provided in Iowa Code sections 455A.5(6)"a", 481A.38, 481A.39, and 481A.87.

Need for Regulatory Action (Include, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment)

Currently Iowa trappers and furharvesters are constrained to harvesting bobcats in 57 counties. The current population has expanded well beyond those counties and can sustain a modest level of recreational harvest without risk to population health.

Approximate Schedule: (include any specific performance dates required by statute or court order)

Rule package will be initiated in August of 2026 and take approximately 6 months to become final.

Staff Contact/Phone # Chris Ensminger; 515-250-6886 or Todd Bishop; 515-238-6461