

Fiscal Estimate — 2009 Session

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original <input type="checkbox"/> Updated <input type="checkbox"/> Corrected <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental	LRB Number Bill Number	Amendment Number if Applicable Administrative Rule Number WM-09-12(E)
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Subject

Relating to the wolf hunting and trapping season, regulations, and a depredation program.

Fiscal Effect

State: No State Fiscal Effect
 Indeterminate

Check columns below only if bill makes a direct appropriation or affects a sum sufficient appropriation.

<input type="checkbox"/> Increase Existing Appropriation	<input type="checkbox"/> Increase Existing Revenues
<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Existing Appropriation	<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Existing Revenues
<input type="checkbox"/> Create New Appropriation	

Increase Costs — May be possible to absorb within agency's budget.
 Yes No

 Decrease Costs

Local: No Local Government Costs
 Indeterminate

1. Increase Costs
 Permissive Mandatory
 2. Decrease Costs
 Permissive Mandatory

3. Increase Revenues
 Permissive Mandatory
 4. Decrease Revenues
 Permissive Mandatory

5. Types of Local Governmental Units Affected:
 Towns Villages Cities
 Counties Others
 School Districts WTCS Districts

Fund Sources Affected

GPR FED PRO PRS SEG SEG-S

Affected Chapter 20 Appropriations

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

These rules are necessary to implement a wolf hunting and trapping season and a depredation management program as required by 2011 ACT 169. In most cases, these expenses are required by the authorizing legislation and are not discretionary for the department. Therefore, the department does not expect new costs, beyond those already required under the ACT, as a result of this rulemaking.

This will be the first modern era hunting and trapping season in the Midwest and significant new costs are anticipated as a result of the ACT. For informational purposes, this analysis summarizes those costs and is similar to the analysis of 2011 Senate Bill 411 which became ACT 169.

A. Bureau of Law Enforcement

a. Use of dogs for hunting--under the bill, the use of dogs will be allowed for hunting wolves after the close of the regular gun deer season until the season closes the end of February. However, no restriction is created under this bill on the use of dogs to pursue wolves for dog training or dog trials year round, including the October and November portions of the wolf hunting season. The Department anticipates there will be some complaints of hunters using dogs to hunt or train dogs to pursue wolves before the end of the regular gun deer season, which will require investigation to determine if the dog handlers were in fact hunting wolves or were simply hunting other species or only training dogs to pursue wolves. It is not possible to determine accurately the costs associated with the number of complaints that will be received and require investigation by wardens. The cost in staff time and travel could be significant, likely averaging 2-8 hours per complaint, with travel distance/time and other circumstances.

b. Use of bait - bait will be allowed for hunting provided it does not include any animal parts or animal byproducts. Rules will likely need to be established to restrict who may place bait, the amount, and how it is placed to minimize access by other species.

The cost of monitoring the use of bait is indeterminate at this time but would likely take 2-4 hours to investigate each complaint.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

Interest in wolf harvesting opportunities may decline as the wolf population is reduced closer to a population goal, resulting in less funding for depredation. However, depredation program needs may also decline and may result in some funds available for other wolf management activities.

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LRB Number	Amendment Number if Applicable
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Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate – Continued

c. Use of traps with cable restraints--under the bill, the types of traps that may be used for trapping wolves must include cable restraints. A cable restraint is a type of trap using a relaxing loop made with a cable. Current Department rules only authorize the use of cable restraints for bobcat, fox and coyote from Dec. 1 through the end of that species open season or Feb. 15th, whichever is first. Cable restraints used for bobcat, fox and coyote may not exceed certain specifications to help ensure that they do not catch and hold species such as deer or bear. However, cable restraints authorized for wolf trapping under this bill would have to exceed the standards for bobcat, fox and coyote to be capable of holding a wolf. There may be incidental catches of non-target species. When trappers are unable to release deer, bear or other non-target species unharmed, it will require staff time and travel to respond to and assist with the release or disposal of such animals. The costs associated with increased workload caused by increased use and larger cable restraints is indeterminate at this time, but would likely require 2-6 hours of staff time per incidental catch requiring staff assistance. By prohibiting the use of cable restraints until winter, when bears are no longer active, the department anticipates a low number of incidental catches.

d. Wild animal protection surcharge--the bill increases the wild animal protection surcharge added to any penalty imposed by the courts when a person is convicted of illegally harvesting a wolf from the current \$17.50, to \$87.50. When the wolf was listed as an endangered species, the surcharge amount was \$875 for each illegally killed animal (which is in addition to the violation penalty amount). This surcharge amount is deposited into the state's conservation fund. It is not possible to accurately estimate what number of wolves that might be killed illegally and the persons responsible who will be apprehended and convicted.

B. Bureau of Wildlife Management

a. Population monitoring and harvest planning--The Department will need to monitor populations and conduct harvest planning to meet federal requirements and to “effectively manage the state’s wolf population”, as required by the bill. Many of these tasks are currently conducted by existing wolf advisory and science committees. Population monitoring is a significant expense for the department and will continue to be a necessary activity. When wolf hunting and trapping are allowed, annually establishing harvest quotas will be a new task. Because the Department has an existing process in place for collecting information and making wolf management decisions, no new significant costs are anticipated.

b. Cumulative preference system--Because the number of applicants for wolf harvest licenses is expected to exceed the number of licenses issued, a random drawing and cumulative preference system for wolf harvest licenses is created for issuing 50% of the permits. Hardware and software are already in place to support similar drawings for other species, so no new purchases are required. The costs for collecting customer data are addressed under section D of this fiscal estimate for the Bureau of Customer & Outreach Services.

c. Pelt tagging--In addition to harvest reporting, which is addressed below, in-person pelt tagging, registration of harvested animals, and collection of carcasses for research purposes will be needed in order to meet population monitoring and law enforcement needs and, in the future, to meet requirements resulting from U.S. participation in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES). CITES participation is a federal requirement for states that allow the harvest and international transportation and trade of certain species. Some new costs will be incurred by law enforcement and wildlife management staff to meet with successful hunters and trappers to register animals and issue CITES tags.

Mileage: 5,000 miles (carcass collection and sample deliveries) @ \$0.60/mile = \$3,000.00
 Time: 320 hours (manager, technician, warden and researcher time) @ \$30/hr. = \$9,600.00
 Meals & Miscl. \$1,000.00
 Lab Analysis \$4,000.00

Total \$17,600.00.

d. Public outreach--The Department invests significant effort into communicating with the public about hunting and trapping opportunities and the management of harvested species. These investments are made primarily by customer & outreach, wildlife, law enforcement and the science services bureaus. Since the Department is already organized to handle these duties, additional efforts related to wolves can be supported with currently available resources.

e. License sales--Wisconsin has not held a wolf hunting season in modern times. A wolf harvest quota and resulting number of harvest licenses to be issued is not known at this time. The primary way of generating revenue will be through the sales of \$10 applications (\$9.75 plus a 25 cent vendor fee) for wolf harvest licenses. Although the number of applications that would be sold cannot be accurately estimated, it is likely that there will be interest in this new opportunity. In 2009, the first year of Idaho's wolf season, 26,428 licenses were issued. Also in 2009, Montana's first year of wolf hunting, 15,603 licenses were issued. Both states allowed anyone to purchase a license but closed their seasons early when harvest quotas were met. Because anyone could purchase a license, those numbers might be indicative of potential interest in harvest license applications in Wisconsin. The department also has data from Wisconsin for bear permit applications, which also allows for preference points and a drawing to issue permits. In 2011, 27,793 people applied for a harvest tag and 76,060 people applied for a preference point. If interest is comparable to that which was generated in Idaho, a possible outcome in Wisconsin is that 25,000 applicants buying applications that cost \$9.75 would generate \$250,000 for the depredation program. To the extent that wolf depredation claims would be at or below this \$250,000 level, prorating claims would not be required and any remaining funds could be used to cover the costs of staff for claims investigation, verification, and program administration. If it is closer to the interest level that exists for bear hunting, it could be as high as 100,000 applicants, or about \$1 million.

If the wolf harvest quota is 200 animals, half of which could be claimed after tribal declarations are made, then 100 would be left for state-licensed hunters and trappers in the first season. For the 2012 season, the department is assuming a success rate of 10%. That means that 1,000 hunters would be purchasing licenses valued at \$100 each, equaling a revenue increase of \$10,000 from license sales. This is a short term estimate only and the department will learn more about interest in licenses and success rates after the first season.

g. Wolf trapping certification course--Wolf trapping techniques are unique and have not been a subject of Wisconsin's mandatory trapper education course. Since instruction in wolf trapping methods will be essential for public acceptance of the activity, the Department will place a priority on providing information through its website and other sources. At this time, the department does not plan to establish new trapper education requirements so the costs to department staff should be minimal and can be absorbed in the department's budget.

C. Endangered Resources

The Bureau of Endangered Resources (BER) was responsible in the past for administering the wolf management program. The wolf management program has three main components: a) wolf recovery and surveys; b) wolf investigations; and c) wolf depredation payments.

a. Wolf recovery and surveys are funded from a variety of sources, including state funding, private gifts, Pittman-Robertson federal funding, and memorandums of agreement for aerial surveys with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Wisconsin Indian Tribes. In FY11, recovery and surveys expenditures totaled \$497,600, which includes 1.75 FTE that are federally-funded, non-game mammalian ecologists which the Bureau currently dedicates to wolf recovery activities.

b. Wolf investigations have previously been funded primarily from federal dollars provided by the USDA's Animal and Plant Health and Inspection Service (APHIS). In FY11, the APHIS amounts for these services were approximately \$260,000. As of the end of FY11, direct federal funding for APHIS ended, leaving the Bureau to pay for these continued inspection services. It is important to note that Pittman-Robertson funding cannot be used specifically for lethal control mechanisms, but only for investigations related to wolf depredations.

c. Wolf depredation payments were statutorily attached to the bureau of endangered resources. The main funding source was the ER Segregated account, defined in WI Stat. s.20.370 (1) (fs) but that has changed under the ACT and management responsibility is shifting to the wildlife management bureau. In FY11, the total damage payments from wolves were \$213,000, which included \$78,100 in a federal wolf livestock demonstration grant. In FY12, the total wolf damage payments are estimated to exceed \$320,000.

The bill creates a hunting and trapping season for wolves and establishes a new appropriation for the wolf depredation program to be funded from the licenses and processing fees collected. The bill also states that if the Department determines that the amounts for payments available from s.20.370 (1) (fs) and the amount from the new licenses and fees is insufficient in a given fiscal year, the Department shall make the payments on a prorated basis. The bill further states that if moneys remain after payments for wolf depredation in a given fiscal year, in the following fiscal year remaining moneys can be used for management and control activities.

If future damage claims and resulting payments continue at about \$300,000 annually, fees generated from wolf hunting and trapping licenses will need to generate approximately that amount annually or the payments will be prorated.

There will continue to be a need for \$757,600 that the department currently spends annually on wolf survey and investigation costs (\$497,600 recovery and survey + \$260,000 investigations).

D. Bureau of Customer and Outreach Services

The Bureau would incur one-time costs related to the issuance of wolf trapping and hunting licenses. These one-time costs are as follows:

a. An estimated 235 hours of computer programming time for touchscreen and internet modifications, programming for the development of a license/carcass tag on via touchscreen/internet, and the development of a wolf harvest registration database and batch import process. Costs are estimated at \$22,300 (235 hrs. x \$95/hr.).

b. Changes to the harvest registration phone and online systems will take approximately 50 hours of Department staff time at an estimated cost of \$2,500.00

Total estimated one-time costs for Customer and Outreach Services = \$24,800

Fiscal Estimate Worksheet — 2009 Session
 Detailed Estimate of Annual Fiscal Effect

Original Updated
 Corrected Supplemental

LRB Number	Amendment Number if Applicable
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Subject

Relating to the wolf hunting and trapping season, regulations, and a depredation program.

One-time Costs or Revenue Impacts for State and/or Local Government (do not include in annualized fiscal effect):

Annualized Costs:		Annualized Fiscal Impact on State Funds from:	
		Increased Costs	Decreased Costs
A. State Costs by Category			
State Operations — Salaries and Fringes		\$	\$ -
(FTE Position Changes)		(FTE)	(- FTE)
State Operations — Other Costs			-
Local Assistance			-
Aids to Individuals or Organizations			-
Total State Costs by Category		\$	\$ -
B. State Costs by Source of Funds		Increased Costs	Decreased Costs
GPR		\$	\$ -
FED			-
PRO/PRS			-
SEG/SEG-S			-
State Revenues	Complete this only when proposal will increase or decrease state revenues (e.g., tax increase, decrease in license fee, etc.)	Increased Revenue	Decreased Revenue
GPR Taxes		\$	\$ -
GPR Earned			-
FED			-
PRO/PRS			-
SEG/SEG-S			-
Total State Revenues		\$ 0	\$ -

Net Annualized Fiscal Impact

	<u>State</u>	<u>Local</u>
Net Change in Costs	\$ _____	\$ _____
Net Change in Revenues	\$ _____	\$ _____

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