



Department of Natural Resources Fact Sheet



2010 POLICY FACT SHEET DNR Forestry Bill

CONTENT

The Department of Natural Resources Forestry Bill amends Minnesota Statutes dealing with issuing burning permits, publishing fees for forestry services, and offering timber for sale. It also repeals certain pilot projects and reports.

OVERVIEW

Section 1

General Burning Permits

This language amends Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 88.17, subdivision 1, to allow for establishing an alternative to the requirement for written burning permits in predominantly agricultural counties where risk of fire escape and impact from fires are low. This will help focus regulatory and fire suppression efforts on higher fire danger areas.

Section 2

Permanent Tree and Brush Open Burning Sites

This language amends Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 88.17, subdivision 3 to add provisions for site dimensions, burn-pile size, operating conditions, and smoke management on permanent tree and brush open burning sites. This will help clarify the information required on applications for community and commercial open burning sites, reduce carbon emissions, and support bioenergy initiatives.

Section 3

Service Fees Charged to Landowners

This language amends Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 88.79, subdivision 2 to add that the fees charged to owners receiving forest management services and cost-sharing conservation practices be published by written order in the State Register.

Section 4

Reoffering Unsold Timber

This language amends Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 90.041 by adding a new subdivision that allows the commissioner of Natural Resources to reoffer unsold tracts of timber at public auction at below appraised value. This will help encourage the purchase of state timber while maintaining a healthy sustainable forest ecosystem through forest regeneration and timber stand improvement operations.

Section 5

Auction Sale Procedures

This language amends Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 90.14, subdivision (d) by clarifying that down payments made on state timber sold at public auction conducted by a sealed bid process must be received or postmarked within 14 days of the date of the sealed bid opening.

This language further amends Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 90.14, subdivision (e) requiring that a bid guarantee, in addition to a down payment, is needed for any bid increase made on a timber sale permit in excess of \$5,000 of the appraised value of the timber.

The language changes to Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 90.14, subdivisions (d) and (e) will help clarify and expedite the timber sale permitting process.

Section 6

Repealers

Repeals Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 90.172 that deals with annual reports due to the Legislature and Executive Council. Technology through FORIST (the DNR's Forest Information System) can now supply information on timber sales, timber permit holders, and applied forest management (silvicultural) practices in a more efficient and timely manner than what can be provided in annual, written reports.

Repeals Minnesota Statutes 2009 Supplement, section 88.795 that deals with a forest management lease pilot project. A report on the pilot project (also a requirement of the statute) recommended its repeal. The report found that lease agreements under the terms of the statute would be too restrictive to potential lessees and the costs associated with monitoring a forest management lease would exceed the revenue gained from the lease.

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