

Cannabis Use on State Lands



Related Facts

State parks and recreation areas receive about 12 million visitors each year, with over 1.1 million visitors staying overnight.

53 percent of people who visited state parks were in groups that included at least one child or teen.

DNR operates 66 state parks, nine state recreation areas, nine state waysides, 43 state forest campgrounds, and more than 5,000 campsites.

Summary

The recent Minnesota legislation legalizing cannabis use for people 21 and older allowed local governments to determine if and where cannabis may be used on public property within their jurisdiction. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was not given the same authority to manage cannabis use on DNR-managed state lands.

The new state law prohibits an individual from smoking cannabis flower or cannabis products in any location where the smoke or vapor would be inhaled by a child. However, the law does not clearly address situations where children come and go from a location, such as at a state park picnic area or campground. The DNR is interested in restricting the use of cannabis flower or cannabis derived products in certain areas of DNR-managed public lands where children are likely to be present. In addition, the DNR is also seeking to clarify storage requirements on DNR-managed public lands by specifying cannabis flower and cannabis derived products need to be stored in a vehicle or on a person and not left in the open where they could be accessible to a child.



Proposal

This proposal will allow the Commissioner of DNR to establish restrictions by written order published in the state register on the use and display of cannabis flower or cannabis derived products on DNR-managed public lands. This authority would allow the DNR to restrict cannabis use in a manner similar to the authority already provided to local governments for land under their jurisdiction.

Providing this authority would allow the DNR to communicate to visitors where cannabis use is and is not allowed on DNR-managed public lands, making compliance efforts more efficient and helping the public know what to expect when they visit these public lands. The intended results of this proposal are greater clarity for visitors to DNR-managed public lands, reduced potential for visitor conflicts, and enjoyment of the outdoors by both cannabis users and non-users.

This proposal is not intended to infringe upon the legal use of cannabis, but to provide the DNR with the same authority that local governments have to clarify where cannabis can be used on DNR-managed public lands.



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