

## Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

### Fish and Wildlife Division

#### NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT EXPEDITED RULES WITHOUT A PUBLIC HEARING

**Proposed Adoption of Rules Relating to Fur Farms, *Minnesota Rules*, parts 6242.1500, 6242.1550, 6242.1600, 6242.1800, 6242.1900, 6242.1950, 6242.2000, 6242.2100, 6242.2200, 6242.2300; Revisor's File Number R-4974**

**Introduction.** The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Department) intends to adopt rules under the expedited rulemaking process following the rules of the Court of Administrative Hearings, Minnesota Rules, part 1400.2410, and the Administrative Procedure Act, Minnesota Statutes, section 14.389. You may submit written comments on the proposed expedited rules until 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 19, 2026.

**Subject of the Expedited Rules.** The proposed expedited rules are about regulations for fur farms. Consistent with recent legislative direction, this rulemaking addresses longstanding challenges that arose from regulating game farms and fur farms under the same statute and rules. Game farms are primarily licensed to breed and propagate game birds while fur farms are licensed for breeding and propagation of furbearing mammals. These two types of operations differ in purpose, animal species, and associated risks. After the Minnesota Legislature amended the game farm rules to exclude fur farms in 2024, fur farms have had no governing rules in place pending adoption of new rules. Minnesota currently has 24 licensed fur farm operations; and additional operations that meet the statutory definition may be active without a license.

In 2024, the Minnesota Legislature responded to the need for clearer, more effective oversight of fur farms by creating separate statutory sections for game farms and fur farms and directing the Department to adopt new rules specific to fur farms. Game farms remain under existing rules, while Minnesota Session Law 2024, Chapter 116, Article 6, Sections 2 and 3 require the Department to adopt fur farm rules addressing licensing, inspection, acquisition, monitoring, carcass disposal, and recordkeeping. Together, the rules the Department has been directed to adopt will strengthen the framework for identifying problems early, ensuring consistent practices, and reducing the chance that undetected issues could contribute to the spread of wildlife diseases.

6242.1500 Definitions; Scope.

This rule part establishes key definitions and the scope of the fur farm rules. It clarifies that the statutory definition of “fur-bearing animal” in Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.015, applies to

these rules and that a “farmed animal” is the subset of those fur-bearing species that are listed on an individual licensee’s fur farm license. The rule also incorporates the existing definition of “reportable disease” from Minnesota Rules, part 1721.0020, to support statewide animal-health reporting requirements. Finally, this section states that parts 6242.1500 to 6242.2300 apply to all fur farm licenses issued by the commissioner.

#### 6242.1550 Fur Farm License; Application.

This rule part requires that a fur farm license identify the species of fur-bearing animals authorized for breeding or propagation and requires applicants to provide specific information when applying for a license. This includes the applicant’s name and mailing address; the business name and address if different; an approved identification number; the species to be listed on the license; and, for new fur farms, a description of how the facility will meet the requirements for animal care in part 6242.1600, subpart 1. These provisions support the prevention and control of wildlife disease by ensuring that facilities meet established standards for animal health and containment.

#### 6242.1600 Fur Farm Requirements.

This rule part requires fur farm licensees to meet specific standards for the care and housing of farmed fur-bearing animals, including providing clean, secure enclosures that support normal movement and species-typical behaviors; maintaining health and sanitation; and supplying appropriate food and water. It also requires licensees to allow the commissioner to inspect the premises, facilities, animals, and records upon request, and to notify the commissioner of any escaped animal within 24 hours. Additionally, it establishes the commissioner’s authority to recapture or destroy escaped animals that are not recovered by the licensee within 72 hours of notice to the commissioner or that pose a risk to wildlife, domestic animals, or public safety. Consultation with the fur farm operator is required, except in situations needing immediate action. These provisions help prevent and control the spread of disease by ensuring animals are securely housed, healthy, and promptly managed if they escape.

#### 6242.1800 Acquiring of Fur Farm Animals.

This rule part restricts acquisitions to ensure that fur farm licensees obtain captive-reared furbearers only from licensed operators or other authorized sources, promoting accountability and reducing the risk of unregulated or illegal animal transfers. This requirement also helps prevent the introduction and spread of disease between facilities and wild populations.

#### 6242.1900 Sale or Disposal of Fur Farm Animals.

This rule part establishes detailed requirements for the sale, transfer, shipment, import, and disposal of fur farm animals. Licensees must document all sales and disposals using a receipt or invoice that includes key details about the actions. Operators must submit original documents

to the Department's Division of Enforcement, provide copies to purchasers, and retain records for inspection. Shipments by common carrier must include documentation attached to containers. Importing animals into Minnesota requires a certificate of veterinary inspection issued by a licensed veterinarian. Carcasses must be disposed of by rendering, incineration, composting, or burial in compliance with state and federal regulations, with methods designed to prevent wildlife access and protect water and surrounding properties.

#### 6242.1950 Disease Testing and Reporting.

This rule part requires fur farm licensees to prepare and follow a disease monitoring and response plan, conduct routine inspections, and establish protocols for veterinary care and reporting of suspected or confirmed diseases. Licensees must notify the Department of elevated mortality within 24 hours and immediately report any known or suspected reportable diseases. The rule authorizes the Department, in coordination with the Board of Animal Health and Department of Health, to require diagnostic testing, quarantine, and other response measures when disease risks are identified. Testing must be performed by licensed veterinarians and approved laboratories, with results reported promptly. These provisions strengthen early detection, accountability, and coordinated response to disease threats that could affect both farmed and wild furbearers

#### 6242.2000 Required Fur Farm Records.

This rule part requires fur farm licensees to maintain complete and up-to-date records of all animal acquisitions, births, sales, disposals, and deaths in a form that is legible and readily available for inspection by the commissioner. Records and related receipts must be entered within 48 hours, retained for three years, and made available for inspection upon request. Maintaining these records helps prevent and control wildlife diseases by enabling traceability of animals and rapid identification of potential disease risks.

#### 6242.2100 License Renewal and Annual Reports.

This rule part establishes annual licensing and reporting requirements for fur farms. Licensees must renew their license and pay fees by January 1 to maintain continuous licensure, and failure to do so results in a lapse until approval is granted. In addition, license holders must submit an annual report to the Department's Division of Enforcement by January 15 demonstrating compliance with statutory and rule requirements. These provisions ensure timely renewals, continuous oversight, and accountability through annual reporting.

#### 6242.2200 Threatened or Endangered Species.

This rule part clarifies that a fur farm license does not authorize possession, breeding, or sale of species listed as threatened or endangered by either the state or federal government unless the

fur farm operator has identified the species on the fur farm license, and it was lawfully obtained.

#### 6242.2300 Violations, Enforcement and Suspension.

This rule part establishes the enforcement framework for fur farm licenses and clarifies the consequences of violations. It authorizes the Department to take enforcement actions—including suspension or revocation of a license, issuance of citations, or other actions consistent with statutory authority—against operators who violate parts 6242.1500 to 6242.2300. The rule also prohibits fur farm operators from obtaining or selling fur-bearing animals, animal parts, or animal products while their license is under suspension, except when specifically authorized by the commissioner. Suspended licenses cannot be reinstated without a new application and facility reinspection, and licenses that remain under suspension through the following year are revoked. This ensures compliance with regulatory standards, maintains oversight of fur farm operations, and provides a clear process for addressing violations and managing suspended licenses.

**Statutory Authority.** The statutory authority to adopt these rules is Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.106, subdivisions 6, 8, and 12. The statutory authority to adopt the rules under the expedited rulemaking process is Minnesota Statutes, section 84.027, subdivision 13a(a)(1), which does not require offering a hearing.

**Publication of proposed rules.** A copy of the proposed rules is published in the State Register and attached to this notice as mailed. A free copy of the rules is available upon request from the agency contact person listed below. The proposed expedited rules may be viewed on the [DNR rulemaking webpage](https://mndnr.gov/input/rules) at [mndnr.gov/input/rules](https://mndnr.gov/input/rules).

**Agency Contact Person.** Submit comments or questions on the rules to Jason Abraham, Season Management Specialist, at Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155, telephone 651-259-5197, or email [jason.abraham@state.mn.us](mailto:jason.abraham@state.mn.us).

**Public Comment.** You have until **4:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 19, 2026**, to submit written comment in support of or in opposition to the proposed expedited rules and any part or subpart of the rules.

Your comment must be in writing and received by the agency contact person by the due date. Your comment should identify the portion of the proposed expedited rules addressed and the reason for the comment. In addition, you are encouraged to propose any change desired. You must also make any comments that you have on the legality of the proposed rules during this comment period. If the proposed expedited rules affect you in any way, the Department encourages you to participate in the rulemaking process.

Submit written comments to the agency contact person listed above.

All comments or responses received are public data and will be available for review at the Department.

**Modifications.** The Department may modify the proposed expedited rules using either of two avenues: The Department may modify the rules directly so long as the modifications do not make them substantially different as defined in *Minnesota Statutes*, section 14.05, subdivision 2, paragraphs (b) and (c). Or the Department may adopt substantially different rules if it follows the procedure under *Minnesota Rules*, part 1400.2110. If the final rules are identical to the rules originally published in the *State Register*, the Department will publish a notice of adoption in the *State Register*. If the final rules are different from the rules originally published in the *State Register*, the Department must publish a copy of the changes in the *State Register*.

**Adoption and Review of Expedited Rules.** The Department may adopt the rules at the end of the comment period. The Department will then submit rules and supporting documents to the Court of Administrative Hearings for review for legality. You may ask to be notified of the date that the Department submits the rules. If you want to be so notified or want to receive a copy of the adopted rules or want to register with the Department to receive notice of future rule proceedings, submit your request to the agency contact person listed above.

**Lobbyist Registration.** *Minnesota Statutes*, chapter 10A, requires each lobbyist to register with the State Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board. You may direct questions about this requirement to the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board at: Suite #190, Centennial Building, 658 Cedar Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155, telephone (651) 539-1180 or 1-800-657-3889.

**Alternative Format.** Upon request, this information can be made available in an alternative format, such as large print, braille, or audio. To make such a request, please contact the agency contact person at the address or telephone number listed above.

12/18/2025

Date

/s/ SARAH STROMMEN

Sarah Strommen, Commissioner