

**Notice of Public Hearing**

LSA Document #14-341

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Under [IC 4-22-2-24](#), notice is hereby given that on December 11, 2014, at 5:30 p.m., at the Plainfield Public Library, 1120 Stafford Road, Plainfield, Indiana, the Natural Resources Commission will hold a public hearing on proposed amendments to [312 IAC 9-2-3](#) to allow the sale of squirrel hides and any portion of a river otter; [312 IAC 9-3-18.2](#) to establish a trapping season for river otters; [312 IAC 9-3-18.4](#) to remove the references to river otters; and [312 IAC 9-10-12](#) governing fur buyers' licenses.

[IC 4-22-2-24](#)(d)(3) Justification Statement: The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is proposing amendments to the rules that govern the application of this article to wild animal parts ([312 IAC 9-2-3](#)), add a river otter trapping season in [312 IAC 9-3-18.2](#), remove river otters from the restrictions governing the possession and sale of bobcats and badgers in [312 IAC 9-3-18.4](#), and govern the fur buyer's license in [312 IAC 9-10-12](#).

The changes in [312 IAC 9-2-3](#) that allow the sale of squirrel hides and river otters do not impose any new requirements on regulated entities.

The change in [312 IAC 9-3-18.2](#) will allow individuals to legally trap river otters in Indiana and, as a result of them becoming a game species, be able to sell their hides and other parts. These season dates are when the fur of a river otter is most valuable and matches the season dates for beavers, which are caught in the same traps and oftentimes in the same locations. The requirement for trappers to bring in carcasses to check-in otters and submit skinned carcasses to the department is needed to monitor the river otter population and ensure their survival in the wild. Federal law requires the tag listed in [312 IAC 9-3-18.2\(j\)](#) under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna. This new otter trapping season with the requirements will affect approximately 5,000 trappers each year.

The changes in [312 IAC 9-3-18.4](#) do not impose requirements.

The changes in [312 IAC 9-10-12](#) governing fur buyers' licenses allow licensed fur buyers to buy and sell river otters, badgers, and bobcats that were lawfully acquired; extend the deadline for reporting furs and carcasses purchased; clarify reporting requirements; and require the proper disposal of carcasses and their parts. Fur buyer's license holders will have more time to submit to the department a report of furs and carcasses that are purchased during that license year. The requirement for proper disposal of carcasses should have a minimal effect on fur buyers since the majority of them already meet these requirements. The new requirements for fur buyers include the proper disposal of carcasses and other wild animal parts to an incinerator, landfill, or other disposal facility that may charge to take the carcasses and other parts. However, this will not be a new cost to currently licensed fur buyers already purchasing wild animals and using one of these removal services. These requirements are necessary to prevent the carcasses and other parts of wild animals from becoming a public nuisance. Licensed fur buyers will still have the option of burying or composting the carcasses, which will not cost anything. These options for disposal are consistent with requirements for disposal of domestic animals under the Board of Animal Health and will help prevent noxious odors or insect infestations due to carcasses and other wild animal parts. There are approximately 85 fur buyers licensed by the DNR each year.

The number of trappers and fur buyer's license holders was obtained from the DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife's databases of license holders. The benefits and costs of the proposed changes were obtained from staff of the DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Copies of these rules are now on file at the Indiana Government Center North, 100 North Senate Avenue, Room N501 and Legislative Services Agency, Indiana Government Center North, 100 North Senate Avenue, Room N201, Indianapolis, Indiana and are open for public inspection.

Bryan W. Poynter  
Chairman  
Natural Resources Commission

Posted: 11/12/2014 by Legislative Services Agency  
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