

**SENATE  
STATE OF MINNESOTA  
NINETIETH SESSION**

**S.F. No. 972**

(SENATE AUTHORS: EKEN)

DATE  
02/15/2017

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OFFICIAL STATUS  
Introduction and first reading  
Referred to Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Legacy Finance

1.1 A bill for an act  
1.2 relating to game and fish; providing for earlier openings for deer hunting and  
1.3 angling seasons; amending Minnesota Statutes 2016, sections 97B.311; 97C.395,  
1.4 subdivision 1.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 97B.311, is amended to read:

1.7 **97B.311 DEER SEASONS AND RESTRICTIONS.**

1.8 (a) The commissioner may, by rule, prescribe restrictions and designate areas where  
1.9 deer may be taken, including hunter selection criteria for special hunts established under  
1.10 section 97A.401, subdivision 4. The commissioner may, by rule, prescribe the open seasons  
1.11 for deer to begin no later than noon on a Friday within the following periods:

1.12 (1) taking with firearms, other than muzzle-loading firearms, between November 1 and  
1.13 December 15;

1.14 (2) taking with muzzle-loading firearms between September 1 and December 31; and

1.15 (3) taking by archery between September 1 and December 31.

1.16 (b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), the commissioner may establish special seasons  
1.17 within designated areas at any time of year.

1.18 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 97C.395, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

1.19 Subdivision 1. **Dates for certain species.** (a) The open seasons to take fish by angling  
1.20 are as follows:

2.1 (1) for walleye, sauger, northern pike, muskellunge, largemouth bass, and smallmouth  
2.2 bass, no later than noon the Saturday Friday two weeks prior to the ~~Saturday of Friday~~  
2.3 before Memorial Day weekend to the last Sunday in February;

2.4 (2) for lake trout, from January 1 to October 31;

2.5 (3) for the winter season for lake trout, brown trout, brook trout, rainbow trout, and  
2.6 splake on all lakes located outside or partially within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area,  
2.7 from January 15 to March 31;

2.8 (4) for the winter season for lake trout, brown trout, brook trout, rainbow trout, and  
2.9 splake on all lakes located entirely within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, from January  
2.10 1 to March 31;

2.11 (5) for brown trout, brook trout, rainbow trout, and splake, between January 1 to October  
2.12 31 as prescribed by the commissioner by rule except as provided in section 97C.415,  
2.13 subdivision 2; and

2.14 (6) for salmon, as prescribed by the commissioner by rule.

2.15 (b) The commissioner shall close the season in areas of the state where fish are spawning  
2.16 and closing the season will protect the resource.

2.17 Sec. 3. **EFFECTIVE DATE.**

2.18 Sections 1 and 2 are effective for seasons opening after January 1, 2018.