An overview of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Aquaculture and Fish Importation Program.

Presented by

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Sec. 20-90. Aquaculture permits. Any person who shall engage in the breeding, hatching, propagation, or raising of aquatic life, whether indigenous or non-indigenous to this State, shall first procure a permit from the Department to do so. Aquatic life specified, which is bred, hatched, propagated or raised by a person holding a permit as provided for in this Section, maybe transported and sold for food or stocking purposes. Permittees who sell aquatic life propagated or raised under this permit are exempt from possessing a fish or minnow dealers license.

Aquaculture permits holders shall maintain records of all aquatic life bought, sold or shipped. These records shall include the name of address of the buyer and seller, the appropriate license or permit number of the buyer and seller, the date of the of the transaction and shall be made immediately available to authorized employees of the Department upon request. Records of the annual operations, as may be required by the Department, shall be forward to the Department upon request.

Nothing in this Section shall be construed to give permittees authority to take aquatic life in their wild or natural state, contrary to other provisions of the Code, or to remove the permittee from responsibility for the observance of any federal, State, or local laws, rules, or regulations that may apply to the aquatic life.
Aquaculture permit holders may harvest aquatic life on licensed aquaculture facilities with commercial fishing devices without obtaining any license for these devices.

Before any person imports or receives live, non-indigenous aquatic life for aquaculture or stocking purposes in this State, permission must be obtained from the Department. Regulations governing non-indigenous aquatic life shall be covered by administrative rule.

The annual fee for a permit under this Section shall be $50 and the permit shall expire on the 31st day of January of each year.

Any person who violates any provisions of this Section, including administrative rules relating to this Section, shall be guilty of a business offence and fined not less than $1000 and no more than $5000.

Permitted aquaculture facilities are exempt from size, catch, and possession limits and seasons on aquatic life when harvested, sold, or transported, except when taken by sport fishing devices.

All permits issued under this Section are valid only in the locations described and designated in the application for such permit.
Aquaculture Requirements CH. I, SEC.870

Must complete Aquaculture Permit Application and return with $50 application fee to aquaculture program coordinator.

The following aquatic life categories will be considered approved for aquaculture.

1. Amphibians
2. Reptiles
3. Crustaceans
4. Mollusks
5. Gastropods
6. Fish
7. Plants

Aquatic life approved species List – No special requirements unless advised by program coordinator.

Non-approved species- Subject to special requirements
1. Preapproval based from application
2. Facility inspection- Must demonstrate proper water drainage, proper disposal of dissolved solids, protection from fish escapement and proper theft protection
3. Letter of authorization

Must complete an annual report to be considered for renewal for the following Year.
2011 Aquaculture Summary

101 aquaculture facility permits issued

84% aquaculture facilities raising fish

59% of aquaculture facility permits issued for non-indigenous species

Of the non-indigenous species facilities permitted 80% are raising tilapia

33% of facilities permitted are educational institutions (high schools, universities)

19 newly permitted facilities

54% of facilities have been permitted for 5 or more years

Cook county has the most permitted aquaculture facilities (11)
Fish Importation

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Emergency Rule 875 Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS)

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VHS-Susceptible and Salmonid Importation Permits Summary
Sec. 10-105. Fish importation permits. Live fish, viable fish eggs, or viable sperm of any species or hybrid of salmon or trout may be imported into the State only by the holder of a fish importation permit and other required State permits. Importation permits shall be issued at no charge to a person who has applied on a Department special permit form, no less than 15 days nor more than 30 days before shipment, provided that the shipment is not considered detrimental to the fishery resource of the State.

An importation permit shall be issued only if the source hatchery is inspected and found free of those diseases designated by administrative rule of the Department, or any other diseases, that may be detrimental to the fishery resource of the State. Inspections may be carried out only by persons recognized by the Department as competent in the diagnosis of fish diseases. An importation may be granted by the Department for extended periods up to 6 months for the date the source hatchery is certified as being disease free. A permit may be cancelled upon the diagnosis of a disease at the source hatchery that may be detrimental to the fishery resource of the State.

A copy of the fish importation permit shall accompany shipment. Fish, eggs, or viable sperm imported under this permit are subject to inspection by employees of the Department and may include taking samples for biological examination. Shipment of live fish, viable fish eggs, or viable sperm of salmon or trout into the State without a fish importation permit shall be considered detrimental to the fishery resource and shall be seized and disposed of by means found suitable to the Department.

This Section does not apply to salmon and trout transit through the State that will not be released from their original containers.

Failure to comply with this Section is grounds for revocation of the aquaculture permit or fish dealers license, or both.
Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS)

VHS is a deadly fish virus and an invasive species threatening Illinois fish.

VHS virus has been present in the Great Lakes since at least 2003. The North American strain of the virus was first isolated from muskellunge *Esox masquinongy* caught in the northwest part of Lake St. Clair, Michigan (Elsayad et al. 2006).

Nearly 50 species of fish are known to be susceptible to VHS.

The mortality rate for infected fish varies between 20% and 80%, depending on environmental conditions, and has reached 100% in trout fry (CFSPH 2003).

Currently, VHS has not been detected in any Illinois inland water body.
Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) Emergency Administrative Rule 875

Emergency rule authorized in December 2008.

All live fish species being imported into Illinois from “affected regions” are required to have OIE or AFS bluebook fish health certifications which included VHS testing.

"Affected Regions" – those areas designated by USDA-APHIS as Affected or At-Risk Regions. Currently, these are the U.S. states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin and the Canadian Provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

All VHS susceptible fish species being imported into Illinois from “non-affected regions” are required to have OIE or AFS bluebook fish health certifications which included VHS testing.

The current list of VHS susceptible species from the APHIS Federal Order is as follows;

Black crappie Pomoxis nigromaculatus
Bluegill Lepomis macrochirus
Bluntnose minnow Pimephales notatus
Brown bullhead Ictalurus nebulosus
Brown trout Salmo trutta
Burbot Lota lota
Channel catfish Ictalurus punctatus
Chinook salmon Oncorhynchus tshawytscha
Emerald shiner Notropis atherinoides
Freshwater drum Aplodinotus grunniens
Gizzard shad Dorosoma cepedianum
Lake whitefish Coregonus clupeaformis
Largemouth bass Micropterus salmoides
Muskellunge Esox masquinongy
Shorthead redhorse Moxostoma macrolepidotum
Northern pike Esox lucius
White bass Morone chrysops
Rainbow trout Onchorhynchus mykiss
Rock bass Ambloplites rupestris
Round goby Neogobius melanostomus
Silver Redhorse Moxostoma anisurum
Smallmouth bass Micropterus dolomieu
Spottail shiner Notropis hudsonius
Trout-Perch Percopsis omiscomaycus
Walleye Sander vitreus
Yellow perch perca flavescens
Fish importation applicants wishing to import live VHS-susceptible species, viable eggs or sperm must make application two week prior to the fish importation program coordinator either in writing, fax or email.

Prior or while applying the importation applicants must provide current fish health certification for vhs- susceptible species, all species originating from an affected region or salmonid species.

Applications must provide the minimum application information.

1. Applicants name and address
2. Source address of fish, eggs or sperm
3. Location and date of delivery
4. The common and scientific name of species, size and total number or pounds

Fish importer must possess the fish importation permit during all deliveries made with the valid permit.
2011 Fish Importation Summary

79 fish importation permits issued

67% vhs-susceptible and 33% salmonid importation permits

20 species and 4 hybrid crosses were imported into Illinois

The five most imported species are:
Yellow perch *Perca flavescens* (242,825)
Largemouth bass *Micropterus salmoides* (189,621)
Walleye *Stizostedion vitreum* (146,157)
Black crappie *Pomoxis nigromaculatus* (92,215)
Channel catfish *Ictalurus punctatus* (69,422)

371 tons of bait fish imported into Illinois
Fathead minnow *Pimephales notatus* (56%)
Golden shiner *Notemigonus crysoleucas* (38%)
White sucker *Catostomus commersoni* (5%)
Goldfish *Carassius auratus* and Creek chub *Semotilus atromaculatus* (1%)
2011 Fish Importation Summary cont.

Approximately 60 tons of Rainbow trout *Salmo gairdneri* were imported.

Missouri is the largest source of Rainbow trout imports 85%.

70,000 Rainbow trout and 5,000 Brown trout *Salmo trutta* eggs were imported.

Fish and eggs were imported from 12 states.

The top five states where fish were imported from:
- Minnesota (317,144) Yellow Perch (42%)
- Arkansas (189,621) Largemouth bass (88%)
- Missouri (170,166) Channel catfish (32%)
- Wisconsin (135,500) Yellow perch (81%)
- Iowa (17,780) Bluegill (41%)
The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has issued this Special Circumstances Authorization (Illinois Administrative Rule regarding Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia 875.50 b) to above licensed commercial fisher to allow the **overland transport of legal commercial fish** (including VHSv susceptible Channel Catfish *Ictalurid punctatus*) and the **water needed to haul fish from commercially fishable waters to wholly privately owned water bodies within the State of Illinois**.

**CONDITIONS:** Authorization is subject to review and prompt reporting on an annual basis. Further, these records need to be made available upon request, and all privileges subject to termination/revocation for abuse, incomplete forms, or information that suggests that the risk of VHS has changed, as determined by the IDNR. The water used to transport fish would need to be released into the water body where it was taken, or released onto ground, not allowing any water directly into another water body, including lake, ditch, creek, stream, or sewer.
2011 Special Circumstances Authorization Summary

1 Permit issued

3600 pounds of Channel catfish delivered to 2 locations
Restricted Species Transportation Permit

A restricted species transportation permit is required for live haul of grass carp, silver carp, bighead carp or hybrid grass carp.

Applications must be received by the Division of Fisheries at least two weeks prior to the proposed shipment date.

Triploid grass carp under 4 inches in length cannot be shipped, transported or stocked and may only be possessed by aquaculture permit holders.

Lake and pond owners are exempt from the “Restricted Species Transportation Permit” requirements while transporting grass carp purchased and obtained in Illinois for stocking in their waters, if they have a signed receipt from an aquaculture permit holder or licensed non-resident aquatic life dealer stating that the grass carp have a triploid number of chromosomes, and the lake or pond owners name is listed on the aquaculturist “Restricted Species Transportation Permit.”
2011 Restricted Species Transportation Permit Summary

124 restricted species permit were issued.

23,541 triploid grass carp were transported in or through Illinois.

10,110 silver carp and 3,010 bighead carp were live transported. These Asian carp were collected and transported for educational and research purposes by state, federal and university programs.
Injurious Species Permit

Educational, medical or research institutions, or zoological exhibitions wishing to transport/possess injurious species must make application to the Department in writing, on forms provided by the Department.

Explanation of the exhibition, or educational, medical or research project necessitating the need for injurious species permit

A statement of applicant’s qualifications and previous experience in caring for and handling captive wildlife or aquatic life.

(i) Live fish or viable eggs of walking catfish, family Claridae.
(ii) Live mitten crabs, genus Eriocheir, or their viable eggs.
(iii) Live mollusks, veligers, or viable eggs of zebra mussels, genus Dreissena.
(iv) Any live fish or viable eggs of snakehead fishes of the genera Channa and Parachanna (or their generic synonyms of Bostrychoides, Ophiocephalus, Ophiocephalus, and Parophiocephalus) of the Family Channidae.
(A) Hypophthalmichthys harmandi (largescale silver carp).
(B) Hypophthalmichthys molitrix (silver carp).
(C) Hypophthalmichthys nobilis (bighead carp).
(D) Mylopharyngodon piceus (black carp).
Aquaculture - In flux of aquaculture permit applications requesting raising of native turtles on a commercial scale. A new code will be proposed which removes all herps from fish and wildlife code and places them in to a “herp code”. This proposed code will define “commercial” and “hobbist” turtle aquaculture.

Fish Importation – Restricted species transportation permits will not be granted for live diploïd grass carp transportation into the state for the human consumption market.

Fish importation – Waiting for guidance from APHIS on possible change to VHS rules. APHIS is analyzing data from last round of testing.