

Proposed Changes to the Importation Rule (19.35.7 NMAC)

The Department proposes amendments to the Importation of Live Non-Domestic Animals Rule. The proposed amendments include:

- Provide consistency in the level of review of importation applications for all taxa, including carnivores.
- Remove the requirement for fish hatchery renovation and depopulation if a facility tests positive for *Renibacterium salmoninarum*, the causative agent of bacterial kidney disease.
- Clarify testing requirements for the whirling disease pathogen in hatcheries.
- Minor formatting and clerical changes.

What Would Change:

- The Director of the Department of Game and Fish would have authority to review and approve importation applications for all taxa.

- The requirement for complete renovation of a fish hatchery raising salmonids (trout or salmon) which has tested positive for bacterial kidney disease would be removed. A fish hatchery which tests positive for bacterial kidney disease could still be barred from importing fish or fish eggs into New Mexico but would have greater flexibility in steps taken to attain disease free certification.

- Age specific testing requirements for the whirling disease pathogen will be clarified. Current rule requires all lots of fish greater than six months of age to be sampled for the whirling disease pathogen. The current rule also requires testing for at least one lot (group) of susceptible salmonids which has been exposed to the hatchery's water source for at least 10 months. If a hatchery does not rear salmonids for at least 10 months, they would still be required to test one lot greater than six months of age for whirling disease.