

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST FOR A NAME CHANGE AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF SCIENCE AND Ph.D PROGRAMS IN WILDLIFE BIOLOGY AND ANIMAL
ECOLOGY TO MASTER OF SCIENCE AND Ph.D. PROGRAMS IN WILDLIFE ECOLOGY**

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by Iowa State University to merge the Master of Science and Ph.D. Programs in Wildlife Biology and Animal Ecology and to name the merged programs as the Master of Science and Ph.D. Programs in Wildlife Ecology.

Executive Summary: The name change will provide a unified set of degree requirements that provide a common foundation in principles and practices of wildlife ecology and management. There have been no objections to the proposed name change. This request has been reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This report addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan objective (1.1) to “offer high-quality programs through ongoing program improvement for undergraduate, graduate, professional, and non-degree students and special school students.”

Background:

- ◇ Department change. In 2002, the Natural Resource Ecology and Management (NREM) Department was created through the merger of the Animal Ecology and Forestry Departments. The Department is dedicated to the understanding, effective management, and sustainable use of renewable natural resources through the land-grant missions of teaching, research, and extension. It offers Master of Science and Ph.D. degrees in animal ecology, fisheries biology, forestry, and wildlife biology.
- ◇ Description of current programs. The current programs in Animal Ecology and Wildlife Biology are designed to result in broad understanding of principles of wildlife conservation, biology, ecology and management, as well as critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary to conduct applied research in support of informed management.
- ◇ Reasons for proposed name change. The difference in curriculum requirements between the current programs is minimal. The lack of a sufficiently articulated rationale for choice between them has been a source of confusion for prospective and incoming graduate students.
- ◇ Objective of proposed program changes. The proposed program will have an updated and focused curriculum which will provide a more attractive and understandable choice for students interested in professional careers as wildlife ecologists in the field of natural resource conservation. This emphasis more closely aligns the graduate degree programs with the goals and philosophy of the new NREM Department.
- ◇ Similar names at peer institutions. Several universities offer graduate programs titled Wildlife Ecology or something similar, including the University of Florida, University of Maine, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and Texas State University.

- ◇ Resource requirements. The resources currently provided to the existing programs will be sufficient for the merged programs. No other resources will be required to implement the proposed name change.
- ◇ Enrollment. The proposed programs are expected to have an enrollment of 15 students per year.
- ◇ Relationship to other programs. There are no graduate programs in wildlife ecology at other Iowa institutions.
- ◇ Date of implementation. If approved by the Board, the proposed name change will become effective immediately, but it will not affect currently enrolled students.