

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-TWO

H.P. 1478 - L.D. 1992

An Act Related to the Electronic Registration and Tagging of Turkey

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §12301-B is enacted to read:

§12301-B. Electronic registration of turkey

Beginning in 2023, the department shall allow electronic registration of turkey. The commissioner shall adopt rules to implement this section. The rules may include exceptions to or electronic means of compliance with any of the requirements of this chapter for a person who registers a turkey in accordance with the rules. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §12302-A, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2021, c. 121, §2, is further amended to read:

1. Requirement. Except as provided in section 12307 or rules adopted under section 12301-B, a person who kills a bear, deer, moose or wild turkey shall:

- A. Remain with that animal until it is registered, except as provided in section 12303-A;
- B. Present that animal for registration in that person's name at the first open registration station for that animal on the route taken by that person; and
- C. Leave the registration seal attached to the animal in accordance with section 12301-A until that animal is processed and packaged for consumption.

Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §12303-A, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2021, c. 54, §11 and c. 121, §3, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

1. Time limits. Except as provided in subsection 1-A and in section 12307 or in rules adopted under section 12301-B, a person may not keep any of the following unregistered wild animals for more than 18 hours:

- A. Bear;
- B. Deer;

C. Moose; or

D. Wild turkey.

Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §12304-A, as repealed by PL 2021, c. 54, §12 and amended by c. 121, §4, is repealed.

Sec. 5. 12 MRSA §12304-B, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 54, §13, is amended to read:

1. Wild turkey. A Except as provided in rules adopted under section 12301-B, a person ~~must~~ shall present a wild turkey in its entirety for registration, except that the viscera may be removed in a manner that permits determination of the sex of the animal.

Sec. 6. 12 MRSA §12306, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2021, c. 121, §5, is further amended to read:

1. Prohibition. Except as provided in section 12307, a person may not possess any of the following animals if that animal has not been legally registered as provided in this chapter or rules adopted under section 12301-B, unless that animal is possessed in accordance with chapter 921:

A. Bear;

B. Deer;

C. Moose; or

D. Wild turkey.

Sec. 7. 12 MRSA §12307, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 121, §6, is amended to read:

§12307. Exception for fall turkey hunting

Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, a person who kills a wild turkey during any fall open season on hunting wild turkey in 2022 established by rule by the commissioner under section 11701 is not required to register or attach a tag to that turkey.

Sec. 8. Report. The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, in conjunction with adopting rules governing electronic registration of turkey pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 12, section 12301-B, shall examine laws governing the tagging and registration of harvested animals to determine if there are laws that should be updated or revised to facilitate an electronic tagging system for turkey. The department shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations, together with any suggested legislation, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters by November 2, 2022. The committee may report out a bill related to electronic tagging to the First Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

Sec. 9. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE, DEPARTMENT OF

Enforcement Operations - Inland Fisheries and Wildlife 0537

Initiative: Provides one-time funding for the capture and banding of turkeys and for a hunter survey to prevent loss of important wildlife management information with the implementation of electronic registration and tagging of turkey.

GENERAL FUND	2021-22	2022-23
All Other	\$0	\$16,000
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<hr/> \$0	<hr/> \$16,000