



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 275

S.P. 87

In Senate, January 22, 2019

An Act To Change the Bag Limits on Wild Turkey

Reference to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator MIRAMANT of Knox.
Cosponsored by Representative EVANGELOS of Friendship and
Senators: BELLOWS of Kennebec, CYRWAY of Kennebec, President JACKSON of
Aroostook, Representatives: BERRY of Bowdoinham, LANDRY of Farmington,
MASTRACCIO of Sanford, PLUECKER of Warren, RISEMAN of Harrison.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §11701, first ¶**, as amended by PL 2017, c. 85, §3, is further
3 amended to read:

4 The commissioner by rule may establish open seasons for hunting wild turkeys,
5 designate areas that are open to the taking of wild turkeys in any part of the State,
6 prescribe the form and regulate the number of permits to be issued, determine the number
7 and sex of the birds to be harvested, establish bag limits in accordance with subsection 4,
8 establish permit eligibility requirements, establish legal hunting times, specify the types
9 of weapons to be used during any open wild turkey hunting season and make any other
10 rules that the commissioner considers necessary for the protection of the wild turkey
11 resource. The rules must permit the use of a crossbow during an open season for hunting
12 wild turkey, except that a person may not hunt wild turkey with a crossbow from October
13 1st until the first day of the open season established by the commissioner in the following
14 year.

15 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §11701, sub-§4** is enacted to read:

16 **4. Bag limits; report.** The commissioner shall allow for the taking of wild turkeys
17 in amounts that are twice the bag limits that are established by rules that are in effect on
18 January 1, 2018 for any area open to the taking of wild turkeys in any part of the State
19 during any open season for hunting wild turkeys.

20 By January 1, 2020, and annually thereafter, the commissioner shall submit a report to the
21 joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and
22 wildlife matters on the health of the wild turkey population in the State. The report may
23 include recommendations regarding bag limits on wild turkey and any recommendation
24 to ensure the health of the wild turkey population. The joint standing committee of the
25 Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters may report out a
26 bill to implement any recommendations contained in the report or to address any other
27 issues identified in the report.

28 **Sec. 3. Rules.** The Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall amend the
29 hunting rules of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife as soon as practicable to
30 be consistent with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 12, section 11701, subsection 4.

31 **SUMMARY**

32 This bill requires the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to double the
33 bag limits on wild turkey in effect on January 1, 2018. It also requires the commissioner
34 to submit a report by January 1, 2020, and annually thereafter, that includes
35 recommendations regarding bag limits on wild turkey. It gives the joint standing
36 committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters
37 authority to report out a bill based on the report.