

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## An Act To Require Permits for Wildlife in Captivity and Notification of the Escape of Exotic Wildlife in Captivity

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

**Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §12152, sub-§1-A**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 374, §5, is amended to read:

**1-A. Permit required; definition.** Except as otherwise provided in this Part, a person may not import exotic wildlife into or possess wildlife in the State or receive ~~or possess~~ exotic wildlife imported into the State without a permit issued under this section. ~~The department shall maintain a list of unregulated fish and wildlife species that is available to the public.~~ Each day a person violates this subsection that person commits a Class E crime for which a minimum fine of \$50 and an amount equal to twice the applicable permit fee must be imposed. The commissioner may grant a permit to introduce, import, transport, receive or possess fish or gametes in accordance with the provisions of section 12509. For the purposes of this section, "exotic wildlife" means any fish or wildlife that is not native to the State.

**Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §12152, sub-§2**, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 and affected by c. 614, §9, is amended to read:

**2. Application.** Except as otherwise provided in this Part, this section applies to the possession of any wildlife ~~regulated by the State that is held in captivity and to the importation of~~ exotic wildlife from an area outside the State, including:

- A. ~~All species listed under state law as threatened or endangered;~~
- B. ~~All species other than those listed in paragraph A not included on a list of unregulated, nonnative species that is maintained by the commissioner to facilitate the issuance of importation permits; and~~
- C. ~~Species identified in rules adopted by the commissioner.~~

**Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §12152, sub-§5**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 374, §10, is further amended to read:

**5. Rules.** The commissioner ~~may~~ shall adopt rules necessary for the administration of this section, including provisions specifying criteria for issuing a permit under this section to ensure that all wildlife possessed under these permits receives humane treatment and proper husbandry and security, and to safeguard the interests of the wildlife and citizens of the State. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A. Rules adopted may include but are not limited to rules that:

- A. Maintain updated inspection provisions for applicants attempting to acquire a permit to possess ~~or introduce, import and possess~~ fish or wildlife in captivity or import exotic wildlife;
- B. Maintain a fee structure to establish fees for inspection provisions for regulated species;

C. Provide a process that allows authorized independent contractors to meet with permit applicants to educate applicants on minimum standard facility requirements and to inspect current facilities to recommend approval or denial of a permit; ~~and~~

D. Charge a responsible party for the cost incurred to remove or euthanize unpermitted ~~regulated~~ fish or wildlife species; ~~and~~

E. Require exotic wildlife permitted under this section to carry or be embedded with a device capable of remotely providing global positioning coordinates or other mapping or location information.

**Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §12152, sub-§7** is enacted to read:

**7. Notification requirements.** When exotic wildlife permitted under this section escapes or is otherwise not within the control of the person who possesses the permit for that wildlife, the permit holder must provide notice of the escape to the Bureau of Warden Service and all landowners within the range of travel of that wildlife measured from the location where the wildlife was last under the control of the permit holder. The commissioner shall determine the range of travel for all exotic wildlife permitted under this section.

## SUMMARY

This bill provides that a permit is required to import exotic wildlife into or possess wildlife in the State or receive exotic wildlife. The Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is required to adopt rules that specify the criteria for issuing such a permit. The bill allows the commissioner to adopt rules to require permitted exotic wildlife to carry or be embedded with a tracking device. The bill requires the holder of a permit for exotic wildlife to provide notice to the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Bureau of Warden Service and all landowners within the range of travel of the wildlife in the event of an escape of the wildlife.