

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND THIRTEEN

H.P. 161 - L.D. 200

An Act To Expand Wild Turkey Hunting Opportunities**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §11155, sub-§1-B, as repealed and replaced by PL 2009, c. 213, Pt. OO, §8, is amended to read:

1-B. Issuance; permit fee. The commissioner, through the commissioner's authorized agent, shall issue a combined fall and spring wild turkey hunting permit that allows an eligible person to take one male wild turkey in the spring and one wild turkey in the fall. The fee for a combined fall and spring wild turkey hunting permit is \$20 for residents and \$54 for nonresidents and aliens. The holder of a combined fall and spring wild turkey hunting permit is eligible to purchase a 2nd spring wild turkey permit that allows the taking of one additional male wild turkey at a cost of \$20 for residents, nonresidents and aliens. This subsection is repealed January 1, 2014.

Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §11155, sub-§1-C is enacted to read:

1-C. Issuance; permit fee. Beginning January 1, 2014, the commissioner, through the commissioner's authorized agent, shall issue in wildlife management districts that are open by rule for wild turkey hunting a combined fall and spring wild turkey hunting permit that allows an eligible person to take wild turkeys in the spring and fall seasons in accordance with section 11701. The fee for a combined fall and spring wild turkey hunting permit is \$20 for residents and nonresidents.

Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §11701, as affected by PL 2003, c. 614, §9 and amended by c. 655, Pt. B, §179 and affected by §422 and Pt. C, §§2 and 6, is further amended to read:

§11701. Authority of commissioner; wild turkey hunting

The commissioner may establish open seasons for hunting wild turkeys, designate areas that are open to the taking of wild turkeys in any part of the State, prescribe the form and regulate the number of permits to be issued, determine the number and sex of the birds to be harvested, establish bag limits, establish permit eligibility requirements, establish legal hunting times, specify the types of weapons to be used during any open

wild turkey hunting season and make any other rules that the commissioner considers necessary for the protection of the wild turkey resource.

1. Spring season. The commissioner shall establish by rule a spring open season for hunting wild turkeys. Unless the commissioner determines that sound management principles require otherwise, the rule must allow during the spring open season for hunting wild turkeys:

A. A person to take up to 2 wild turkeys without any additional fee for the taking of the 2nd wild turkey;

B. A person to hunt from 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset. This paragraph is repealed August 1, 2016; and

C. A person to hunt wild turkeys using a crossbow, in addition to any other weapons allowed by the rule.

2. Fall season. Beginning with the 2014 fall open season, the commissioner shall establish by rule a fall open season for hunting wild turkeys. Unless the commissioner determines that sound management principles require otherwise, the rule must establish a fall open season that includes the month of October and allow a person to take up to 2 wild turkeys regardless of sex without any additional fee for the taking of a 2nd wild turkey.

3. Youth day. The commissioner shall establish by rule a spring youth hunting day for hunting wild turkeys from 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset. The day must be the Saturday prior to the opening of the spring open season for hunting wild turkeys under subsection 1.

A person who violates this section commits a Class E crime for which the court shall impose a fine of not less than \$500, none of which may be suspended. The court also shall impose a fine of \$500 for each turkey unlawfully possessed, none of which may be suspended.

Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §12301-A, sub-§3, ¶B, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §226 and affected by §422, is amended to read:

B. Attach a seal to each bear, deer, moose or wild turkey in the manner directed and with the materials furnished by the commissioner; ~~and~~

Sec. 5. 12 MRSA §12301-A, sub-§3, ¶C, as amended by PL 2011, c. 660, §1, is further amended to read:

C. Collect \$5 and retain \$2 for each seal from the person registering a bear, deer; or moose or wild turkey. The remaining \$3 must be returned to the department by the agent pursuant to section 10801, subsection 3-; and

Sec. 6. 12 MRSA §12301-A, sub-§3, ¶D is enacted to read:

D. Collect and retain \$2 for each wild turkey registered.

Sec. 7. Lapsed balances; Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife carrying account. On or before June 30, 2014 and on or before June 30, 2015 the State Controller shall lapse \$86,757 and \$98,895, respectively, from the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Carrying Balances - General Fund account to the General Fund unappropriated surplus to offset the loss in revenue from changes made to wild turkey hunting permit fees.