

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 Improve and Promote Maine's Landlocked Salmon Resources

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

Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §12462 is enacted to read:

§ 12462. Management of landlocked salmon

1. Salmon management. By October 1, 2009, the commissioner shall:

A. Initiate a pilot project to stock Echo Lake and Eagle Lake on Mount Desert Island with fall fingerling hatchery salmon on an alternate-year basis; and

B. Initiate the rule-making process to restrict salmon fishing to catch and release on one or more waters where salmon is the primary fishery.

2. Large landlocked salmon. By July 1, 2014, the commissioner shall manage no fewer than 75 inland waters to ensure that a significant portion of the landlocked salmon populations within those waters contain salmon that exceed 4 pounds in weight.

3. Report. Beginning January 15, 2010, the commissioner shall report annually by January 15th to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters about the progress made toward meeting the requirements of this section.

Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Sec. 2. Experimental landlocked salmon brood stock program. By October 1, 2009, the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall initiate a 5-year experimental program to enhance salmon brood stock by taking salmon eggs exclusively from salmon brood stock that is 5 years of age or older and develop a new salmon brood stock source composed of wild salmon. During the program, the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall provide no later than January 15th annually to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters an update on the program.

SUMMARY

This bill provides that by no later than July 1, 2014 that no fewer than 75 inland waters containing landlocked salmon will be managed to produce salmon that exceed 4 pounds in weight. It also provides that, by October 1, 2009, the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife will initiate:

1. A pilot project to stock Echo Lake and Eagle Lake on Mount Desert Island with only fall fingerling hatchery salmon on an alternate-year basis; and

2. The rule-making process to restrict salmon fishing to catch and release on one or more waters where salmon is the primary fishery.

Finally, this bill provides that, by October 1, 2009, the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife will initiate a 5-year experimental program to enhance landlocked salmon brood stock by taking landlocked salmon eggs from salmon brood stock that is 5 years of age or older and develop a new landlocked salmon brood stock source composed of wild salmon.