

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE

H.P. 699 - L.D. 943

An Act To Improve Turkey Tagging

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

Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §11752, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §181 and affected by §422, is amended to read:

2. Tagging. ~~Prior~~ Except as provided in section 12307, prior to presenting a wild turkey for registration, a person may not possess or leave in the field or forest a wild turkey killed by that person unless the wild turkey has securely attached to it a plainly visible tag that conforms to the requirements established under this section.

Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §12302-A, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §228 and affected by §422, is amended to read:

1. Requirement. ~~A~~ Except as provided in section 12307, 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 enacted by PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §230 and affected by §422, is amended to read:

1. Time limits. Except as provided in subsection 1-A and in section 12307, a person may not keep any of the following unregistered wild animals at home or any place of storage for more than 18 hours:

- A. Bear;
- B. Deer;
- C. Moose; or
- D. Wild turkey.

Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §12304-A, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §232 and affected by §422, is amended to read:

1. Prohibition. Except as provided in subsection 2 and in section 12307, a person must present the following wild animals for registration in their entirety:

- A. Bear;
- B. Deer;
- C. Moose; or
- D. Wild turkey.

Sec. 5. 12 MRSA §12306, sub-§1, as affected by PL 2003, c. 614, §9 and amended by c. 655, Pt. B, §234 and affected by §422, is further amended to read:

1. Prohibition. A 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, unless that animal is possessed in accordance with chapter 921:

- A. Bear;
- B. Deer;
- C. Moose; or
- D. Wild turkey.

Sec. 6. 12 MRSA §12307 is enacted 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 established by rule by the commissioner under section 11701 is not required to register or attach a tag to that turkey.

Sec. 7. Evaluation of electronic tagging. The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall determine the direct costs of and timeline required for implementing an electronic tagging system for wild turkey. The department shall also evaluate whether and how such a system could be effectively implemented and any related costs and benefits of such a system. The department shall report the department's findings and recommendations to the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife by January 3, 2022 and the committee may report out a bill related to turkey tagging to the Second Regular Session or any special session of the 130th Legislature.