

129th Legislature (2019)– Summary of Laws Enacted



To read the chaptered law, CTRL + CLICK on the linked chapter number

[PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 9](#) (LD 1298) **An Act To Enhance Fish and Wildlife Laws**

(Effective: By Emergency, March 25, 2019)

This provides the Commissioner the authority to change the closing date of the recreational ice-fishing season by rule without having to go to the legislature. It also amends the rule-making provision of the law governing open seasons for fishing to allow the adoption of an emergency rule.

[PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 14](#) - (LD 79) **An Act To Protect Shooting Ranges**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

This allows a person to discharge a firearm on a sport shooting range that is located within 100 yards of a building if the sport shooting range was established and in regular operation prior to the erection of the building.

[PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 19](#) (LD 490) **An Act To Give the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife the Authority To Extend Any Trapping Season Based on Weather Conditions or Other Factors**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

This allows the Commissioner to extend any open trapping season on any game species for up to 21 days based on sound scientific wildlife management principles, if there are concerns about weather conditions or other unforeseen factors that may prevent management goals from being met.

[PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 42](#) (LD 265) **An Act To Increase Opportunities for Hunters, Anglers and Sporting Camps by Extending the Seasons on Upland Game**

(Effective: By Emergency, April 22, 2019)

This changes the start date for the upland game hunting season to begin on the last Saturday in September (September 28, 2019) and describes upland game that may be hunted as snowshoe hare, gray squirrel, ruffed grouse and bobwhite quail. By way of Department Rulemaking we have also included pheasant so that the pheasant season will begin on the same day as the other upland game listed in this law.

[PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 65](#) (LD 528) **An Act To Increase the Number of Clubs That May Be Issued a Special Dog Training Area License**

(Effective: By Emergency, April 30, 2019)

This increases the number of Special Dog Training Area Licenses that can be permitted in any one county from 5 to 8.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 75 (LD 212) **An Act To Provide a Source of Funding for the ATV Recreational Management Fund and To Establish the ATV Enforcement Fund**

(Effective: By Emergency, May 1, 2019)

This law creates the ATV Enforcement Fund, which is a nonlapsing fund, funded with \$10 from each nonresident ATV registration fee collected. Money from the fund is required to be used for the enforcement of ATV laws, ATV education and the purchase of necessary machinery or equipment related to ATV safety and enforcement activities. It increases the ATV registration fee from \$33 to \$45 for annual registrations for residents. It also increases from \$53 to \$75 the 7-day registrations for nonresidents and from \$68 to \$90 for one-year registrations for nonresidents. It stipulates that \$12 of each registration fee be deposited into the ATV Recreational Management Fund.

The Game Warden Colonel may use money in the fund only for:

- A. Supplementing other funds appropriated to the enforcement operations program;
- B. Regular or overtime personnel services costs of the warden service related to enforcement of ATV laws;
- C. Safety or other education programs conducted by the Department or authorized by the Department that are related to the operation of ATVs; or
- D. The purchase of equipment or machinery determined by the Game Warden Colonel as necessary for effective ATV safety and enforcement activities.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 98 (LD 27) **An Act To Allow the Use of a Crossbow for a Limited Duration during the Archery Season on Deer and the Fall Season on Wild Turkey**

Delayed Implementation Date of January 1, 2020-(Effective Date of Law Language: September 19, 2019)

For a period of 3 years, beginning in 2020, this law allows a person to hunt deer with a crossbow during the open archery season on deer and the fall wild turkey hunting season. It specifies that a person using a crossbow during the open archery season may not harvest an antlerless deer unless that person possesses an antlerless deer permit. It also clarifies that, outside of the open archery season, the use of a crossbow to hunt wild turkey is allowed only during the spring wild turkey hunting season. It requires the commissioner to submit a report by January 1, 2023 to the DIFW Legislative Committee with a recommendation on whether to continue this law or not. The committee may report out a bill based on the report.

Note: Any person using a crossbow during the October archery season will need to have successfully completed both a crossbow safety course, an archery safety course and will need a current crossbow permit and an archery license.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 116 (LD 881) **An Act To Ensure Equitable Treatment of Super Pack License Holders in Antlerless Deer Permit Lotteries**

(Effective: By Emergency, May 16, 2019)

Winners of super pack antlerless deer permits will now be entered into the bonus permit portion of the lottery. They will now have a chance to get both a super pack antlerless deer permit and a bonus permit.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 143 (LD 932) **An Act Regarding the Transfer of a Deceased Person's Moose Permit to a Family Member**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

When a moose permit winner dies prior to the moose hunting season or during the moose hunt, this law states that the Commissioner shall transfer the moose permit to a family member who meets the eligibility requirements.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 190 (LD 121) - **An Act To Require the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife To Promote Safety with Respect to the Handling or Use of Firearms, Watercraft, All-terrain Vehicles and Snowmobiles and in Other Outdoor Activities**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

This asks the Division of Information and Education to include within the annual campaigns, promotion of safety in the handling and use of firearms, watercraft, all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles as well as campaigns promoting safety with respect to other outdoor activities to the extent the division determines doing so would help improve safety in the outdoors. Campaigns to promote safety must be designed to reach target audiences effectively through television, radio, Internet or other communication mediums.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 191 (LD 708) - **An Act To Allow the Transfer of a Moose Hunting Permit to a Disabled Veteran**

(Effective: By Emergency, June 5, 2019)

A person who holds a valid moose permit may transfer that permit to a disabled veteran who meets the eligibility and permit requirements by either returning it to the Department and the Department shall provide for the transfer of the permit to a disabled veteran or the commissioner may authorize the permit holder to transfer the moose permit to a disabled veteran identified by the permit holder. A transferor and a transferee of the permit are subject to the elimination of any accumulated points and the 3-year ineligibility period to reapply for a moose permit.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 199 (LD 865) - **An Act To Provide Funding for Hunting Opportunities for Disabled Veterans**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

This allows the Commissioner of DIFW to accept monetary donations to support hunting opportunities for disabled veterans. It requires the commissioner to transfer those donations to the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services to be deposited into the Hunting Opportunities for Disabled Veteran's Fund, a nonlapsing fund to be used for the purpose of making funds available to organizations that provide disabled veterans with hunting opportunities. The fund may also receive any other monetary gifts, donations or other contributions from public or private sources. The mechanism to distribute those donations have not been decided.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 204 (LD 1109) **An Act Regarding All-terrain Vehicles**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

This law changes the definition of an ATV so that an ATV must be a vehicle that was originally designed by the manufacturer for cross-country travel and prohibits a person from operating a motor vehicle defined within Title 29-A on a designated ATV trail unless the operator has landowner permission. The ATV task force begins meeting the 1st week of September with a goal to be done meeting by the end of November. Corporal Dave Chabot will be representing warden service on the task force.

There are still some questions regarding where mini truck/ UTVs fall in this law but that will be discussed by the ATV Task Force. Willies Jeeps are all still considered motor-vehicles whether converted or not, so they can't be registered as an ATV.

[PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 207](#) (LD 1307) - **An Act To Promote Snowmobiling in Maine**

(Effective: January 1, 2020)

This directs the Commissioner to establish an online notification process by which a nonresident who plans to operate a snowmobile in Maine but not registered to ride in Maine, during the free, 3- day weekend, may provide the operator's name, address, telephone number, e-mail address and the location or locations where the nonresident plans to operate the snowmobile. There is no cost to the snowmobiler to provide this information.

This aims to help DIFW promote nonresident snowmobile operators and general snowmobile recreational activities in the State. It also directs the Office of Tourism to work with DIFW and a statewide snowmobiling organization to use the information collected to promote Maine snowmobiling.

[PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 224](#) (LD 1551) - **An Act To Clarify Fishing Laws between the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Marine Resources as They Relate to Striped Bass in Inland Waters**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

This law will provide that fishing for or possession of striped bass taken from the inland waters of the State in violation of striped bass rules adopted by the Commissioner of DMR is prohibited and is subject to the applicable penalties for violating the fishing rules of DIFW.

[PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 263](#) (LD 1579) **An Act To Create a Limited Fish Stocking Permit**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

This allows the DIFW Commissioner to issue a limited fish stocking permit to a local government to introduce fish only into a great pond within the jurisdiction of the local government that was previously stocked by the Department and in which stocking was suspended prior to January 1, 2019 and has not been resumed by the Department due to inadequate public access. The permit allows the introduction of only the same species of fish that was stocked at the time the Department suspended stocking. The permit allows only the introduction of fish obtained by the local government at its own expense from an in-state commercial facility that meets testing and health guidelines approved by the Department. The permit may be issued only if the local government identifies public access to the great pond that is at least suitable for the hand carrying of boats to the water, includes a parking area and has been marked with signage adequate to ensure public awareness of the public access. "Local government" is defined as a municipality or, in the unorganized territory, a county.

[PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 264](#) (LD 235) - **An Act To Increase Funding To Contain and Manage the Spread of Invasive Aquatic Species**

(Effective: January 1, 2020)

This increases the fees for the lake and river protection stickers that are required for all resident and nonresident motorboats, personal watercraft and seaplanes operating on inland waters and in some cases tidal waters of the State as follows:

Beginning January 1, 2020, the fee for the Lake and River Protection Stickers will change in the following manner:

Resident Lake and River Protection Stickers Fee Increases as of January 1, 2020				
	10 HP or less	10 HP or more / under 50 HP	50 HP or greater / under 115 HP	PWC or greater than 115 HP
Inland Waters	\$25 to \$30	\$30 to \$35	\$36 to \$41	\$44 to \$49
Tidal Waters	Remains at \$15	Remains at \$20	Remains at \$26	Remains at \$34

Nonresident Lake and River Protection Stickers Fee Increases as of January 1, 2020	
All watercraft, PWCs, and seaplanes	\$20 to \$35 (\$1 retained by agent)
Nonresident Lake and River Protection Stickers Fee Increases as of January 1, 2022	
All watercraft, PWCs, and seaplanes	\$35 to \$45 (\$1 retained by agent)

[PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 267](#) (LD 713) - **An Act To Strengthen Maine's Endangered Species Laws**
(Effective: September 19, 2019)

1. Provides that for conviction of certain Class E crimes of negligence related to endangered or threatened species, the maximum allowable fine of \$1,000 must be adjudged;
2. Removes the requirement that, for a first-time offense of negligently feeding, setting bait for or harassing any endangered or threatened species, a law enforcement officer must issue a warning;
3. Provides that for conviction of certain Class D crimes involving intentional acts related to endangered or threatened species, the maximum allowable fine of \$2,000 must be adjudged;
4. Removes the requirement that, for a first-time offense of intentionally feeding, setting bait for or harassing any endangered or threatened species, a law enforcement officer must issue a warning;
5. Provides that for conviction of certain Class D crimes involving intentional conduct related to a delisted species, the maximum allowable fine of \$2,000 must be adjudged;
6. Removes the requirement that, for a first-time offense of intentionally harassing a delisted species, a law enforcement officer must issue a warning; and
7. Removes the prohibition on intentionally feeding or setting bait for a delisted species.

NOTE: Bald eagles are no longer a listed species and Lynx are federally listed but not state listed species.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 324 (LD 1740) - **An Act To Clarify Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Laws Regarding Boating and Hunting Licensing**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

- **Section 2:** will allow persons younger than 18 years of age to transfer a valid antlerless deer permit to a junior hunter. The law to allow transfer of antlerless deer permits to junior hunters, after the start of the firearm season on deer, was established in 2015 and the transfer can only be made from adults to junior hunters.
- **Section 3:** removes the requirement that a license must be obtained from the Department to operate a motorboat carrying passengers for hire and instead requires proof of successful completion of a boater safety education course approved by the national association of state boating law administrators, which the Department already offers online. This also repeals the \$1 fee for the license.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 325 (LD 1717) - **An Act To Clarify and Correct Maine's Fish and Wildlife Laws**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

- **Section 1:** clearly defines what a crossbow and hand-held bow are.
- **Sections 2 and 3:** specifies that lifetime license holders must meet eligibility requirements for hunting with bows and crossbows, the current statute is not clear that a person who purchases a lifetime license to hunt with a crossbow, must have completed a crossbow education course or provide proof of having held a crossbow license in another state. The Department is working on combining the archery and crossbow safety courses into one in the near future.
- **Section 4:** makes technical corrections to the law regarding having a loaded firearm or crossbow in a motor vehicle or hunting or shooting from a motor vehicle or motorboat. When the shooting from a motor vehicle law was modified in 2017, the header did not include loaded firearms to indicate that that was also part of the violation. Defendants who have been charged for having a loaded firearm in a motor vehicle have fought the case, feeling that they are being accused of hunting or shooting from a motor vehicle instead. This should clear up confusion about the title of the section.
- **Section 5:** repeals outdated language regarding carrying a handgun during the regular archery-only season on deer. A person can now carry a handgun based on Title 25 language which does not require a concealed weapons permit and the new law does not require anyone to have a hunting license in order to carry a handgun while hunting with a bow and arrow;
- **Section 6:** clarifies that it is only beaver, and no other species, that may be trapped by the holder of a nonresident trapping license who is not a citizen of the United States. In 2018, the law was amended in a way that insinuated a person who is not a citizen of the United States may purchase a nonresident trapping license specifically for beaver trapping.
- **Section 7:** requires the court to impose a fine of \$20 for each quart of smelts rather than for each fish unlawfully possessed over the limit as adopted by the Commissioner by rule. This was a flat fee fine previously.
- **Sections 8, 9 and 10:** requires any shack or temporary structure used for ice-fishing to be removed by March 31st and in the laws regarding litter control, amend the definition of the term

"abandoned ice-fishing shack. This would still allow a person to use an ice-fishing shack for the day. This repeals language within Title 17 that negatively effects landowners when it comes to an abandoned ice-fishing shack being left on their property. Title 12 law regarding abandoned ice-fishing shacks was changed in 2017 and Title 17 was not, there will no longer be a conflict between the two statutes.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 355 (LD 1818) - **An Act To Clarify and Enhance Certain Maine Wildlife Laws**
(Effective: By Emergency, June 18, 2019)

- **Section 1:** This redefines "antlerless moose" to be a moose without antlers, to exclude moose with very small antlers. An antlerless moose permit allows the permittee to harvest a female moose without antlers or a male calf moose without antlers. This was a recommendation that was put forward as a result of the big game management plan to help ensure hunters do not target small bull moose when hunting with an antlerless permit.
- **Sections 2 & 3:** this allows the Commissioner to prohibit or limit the feeding of deer, bear, moose and wild turkey if there is documented evidence of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in the State or within 50 miles of the border of the State or if there is a reason to believe that the type or location of feed may create a public safety hazard or may have a detrimental effect on deer, bear, moose and wild turkey.
- **Sections 4 & 5 & section 7:** this clarifies that rock pigeons and rock doves are the same species.
- **Section 6:** this changes the expiration date for a wildlife rehabilitation permit to December 31st of the 2nd complete year after the date of issuance. The Department is reviewing policy, rules, and practices related to wildlife rehabilitators that are licensed by our agency. This creates a permit that expires at the end of every 2-calendar years rather than 2 years from the date of issuance. The Department has slowly been trying to make all licenses, permits and registrations expire at the end of the calendar year (when appropriate) for consistency and ease of administration.
- **Section 8:** this updates the description of the boundary of the Beauchamp Sanctuary. A section of Route 1 that is a portion of the Beauchamp Wildlife Sanctuary boundary has been changed such that the current description of the boundary is inaccurate. The new law language follows the current layout of Route 1; and
- **Section 9 (pg. 2):** this clarifies that hunting is prohibited in the Megunticook Lake and Vicinity Sanctuary from April 1st to September 30th, but is allowed for the remainder of the year. The current language is confusing and could lead to misinterpretation by only specifying "use of firearms" not "the act of hunting".

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 443 (LD 1488) - **An Act To Allow Holders of Gold Star Family Registration Plates To Be Issued Complimentary Licenses To Hunt, Trap and Fish**
(Effective: September 19, 2019)

This law provides that the complimentary license to hunt, trap and fish be made available to a person who holds a registration certificate and gold star family registration plate and it will only be available to residents of the State and the license must be a lifetime license.

PUBLIC LAW 2019 CHAPTER 452 (LD 1824) - **An Act To Make Certain Snowmobile and Watercraft Laws Consistent with All-terrain Vehicle Laws**

(Effective: September 19, 2019)

- **Sections 1 & section 8:** this extends to operators of snowmobiles and watercraft certain penalties that apply to violations while operating on an ATV that result in the mandatory revocation of a license. This would bring consistency to all recreational vehicles when it comes to violations that invoke mandatory license revocations. ATV violations have typically had greater fines and penalties than watercraft and snowmobile violations due to the history of the activity in Maine. The included violations will be: Failing or refusal to stop for a law enforcement officer, operating to endanger, and reckless operation;
- **Sections 2, 3 & 4 & sections 5 & 6:** this updates the laws concerning operation of a recreational vehicle while under the influence to more closely mirror the laws governing operation of a motor vehicle while under the influence;
- **Section 7 & sections 11 & 13:** this extends the general prohibition against the fraudulent acquisition or possession of licenses and permits issued by the Department to also apply to registrations of recreational vehicles and repeals specific prohibitions for a person to fraudulently obtain a snowmobile registration which will no longer be necessary;
- **Section 9:** this specifies that, for purposes of the laws governing recreational vehicles, a motor vehicle is not a snowmobile. This would bring consistency with the definition of snowmobile and ATV. The law is clear that the definition of an ATV excludes motor vehicles from being registered as an ATV but the definition of a snowmobile is not clear. There have been several instances when a person converts an old motor vehicle, S.U.V. or a mini-truck into a tracked vehicle that can be operated in a similar manner as a snowmobile. These are larger than a manufactured snowmobile and have potential to cause damage on private land as well as state maintained trail systems;
- **Section 10:** this creates an exemption for motorboat registration fees for motorboats used for governmental purposes and owned and operated in the State by the Federal Government, the State or a political subdivision of the State; and
- **Section 12:** this removes the limiting language “on or adjacent to a snowmobile trail” for the location of a snowmobile collision that constitutes operating a snowmobile to endanger. Snowmobile crashes can occur in locations other than “on or adjacent to a snowmobile trail”. Because the prohibition of “operating a snowmobile to endanger” limits the location in which the violation can legally occur, there has been at least one case lost because that a person could crash on an open lake, field or some other location that would not be considered an official “trail”.

RESOLVES, CARRY-OVERS & REPORT BACKS

RESOLVE CHAPTER 18 - (LD 33) **Resolve, To Encourage the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife To Establish a Youth Turkey Hunting Day during the Fall Season**

This resolve requires the Commissioner to establish youth turkey hunting day during the fall season. This has already been done through Department rulemaking and can be found within DIFW Rule Chapter 16 Hunting. The new rule includes:

- A fall youth wild turkey hunt day set for September 14, 2019;
- It includes a bag limit up to 5 turkeys for the fall season;
- Some WMDs have a 5-bag limit, some a 2-bag limit and some have only a 1-bag limit;
- A person may not take more than 2 turkeys in one day regardless of the bag limit; and
- A person may not exceed a WMD bag limit, the order in which they are taken does not matter.

RESOLVE CHAPTER 35 – (LD 1147) **Resolve, To Direct the Commissioner of DIFW to Study Registration Fees for ATVs and Snowmobiles**

This directs the Commissioner, in consultation with interested parties, to review the registration fees for ATVs and snowmobiles to determine if there are alternatives to the current fee structure. The commissioner shall consider how any change may affect revenues. The commissioner shall submit a report to the DIFW Legislative Committee by February 1, 2020 detailing the alternatives that were considered and the possible effects on revenue that these alternatives may have. The report must include recommendations regarding registration fees for ATVs and snowmobiles and a list of interested parties that participated in any discussions on this topic. The committee may report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 129th Legislature based on the report.

In a separate initiative by Governor Mills there was a directive for DIFW to form an ATV task force. The directive included the following:

- Discuss creating an ATV trail system with consideration to ATV size, weight, environmental impact and other relevant factors;
- Discuss construction and maintenance standards for Maine’s ATV trail system;
- Create a plan to enforce compliance of trail construction and maintenance standards by the State, including discussion of third-party inspections;
- Create a communication and outreach plan for the Maine ATV trail system to include a focus on landowner considerations designed to educate the public on responsible ATV operation;
- Discuss ATV registration requirements based on size, width, weight and/or value; and
- Discuss adequacy of funding for the oversight, construction and maintenance of the Maine ATV trail network.

In addition to what the Governor directed the task force to do, the DIFW Committee asked the task force to:

- focus on signage and
- modification of tracked vehicles into ATVs.

***REPORT BACK:** Due by February 1, 2020. This will require presenting a report from DIFW originating from the work of the task force to the DIFW Committee.

CARRY OVER (LD 638) - An Act To Legalize the Use of Supplemental Minerals To Assist with Wildlife Nutrition

This bill would allow a person to place supplemental minerals for deer from March 1st to July 31st if the supplemental minerals are placed on that person's own land, or on another person's land with the other person's oral or written permission, and the supplemental minerals do not contain any grain or food products.

The Committee voted to allow DIFW to work with the State Veterinarian, DACF and Gerry Lavigne who represents SAM over the next few months, to develop a comprehensive plan to address:

- restrictions on cervid transport across state lines;
- restrictions on feeding when there is CWD risk;
- issues with deer feeding and car-deer collisions and disease spread; and
- the bill sponsor, Senator Davis wanted DIFW to look at inequity issues between large landowners with food plots and hunters who don't have the money to put into food plots and how they can have a similar deer hunting experience as those with more resources.

***REPORT BACK:** Due January 15, 2020. This will require presenting a comprehensive plan on CWD from DIFW staff to the DIFW Committee in winter 2020 and should address concerns raised for both LD 638 and LD 1804. See letter to DIFW for more information. Report will need to include specific things.

CARRY OVER (LD 1804) - An Act Regarding the Baiting of Deer (Concept Bill)

The intent of this bill was to bring equity between large landowners with food plots and hunters who don't have the capability to have food plots. DIFW will be presenting information or proposals related to this concept.

See LD 638 above, the comprehensive plan should cover concerns over both bills.

CARRY OVER (LD 695) - An Act To Require Biodegradable Hooks and Lures for Freshwater Fishing

The Committee voted to carry the bill over to allow the Department time to hold stakeholder discussions to consider both rule/law strategies and outreach strategies and also consider alternatives to a ban on all non-biodegradable lures and hooks. The following recommendations by the DIFW Committee were made related to the stakeholder process:

- Focus on soft plastic lures present in waters that are known to be consumed by fish as opposed to hard plastic lures, and flies and other non-plastic lures that may contain soft and hard plastic components;
- Identify existing and new non-regulatory strategies to reduce the presence of soft plastic lures and non-biodegradable hooks in the environment;
- Review and discuss any strategies, other states have implemented to address concerns with soft plastic lures and non-biodegradable hooks; and
- Assess impacts, both positive and negative, of legislation that would reduce or restrict the use of soft-plastic lures and non-biodegradable hooks to address known fish health impacts.

***REPORT BACK:** Due by January 15, 2020 - This will require presenting a comprehensive plan to the DIFW Committee.

CARRY OVER (LD 1118) – An Act To Give the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Rule-making Authority To Establish a Bear Season Framework and Bag Limits

The goal of the bill was to enable the Department to more quickly respond to necessary changes to manage the bear population with current legal methods by:

- Being able to change seasons and bag limits in rule rather than through the legislative process that may take up to 2 years to propose a change;
- to decrease the bear hunting permit fee to increase hunter participation and to be able to increase the bear bag limit by rule; and
- to require a mandatory bear trapping education course.

The Committee asked that DIFW work out some of the details and come back with a more detailed plan next session.

CARRY OVER (LD 1525) – An Act To Require Insurance on Motorized Watercraft

The DIFW Committee asked the Bureau of Insurance to work with stakeholders to see whether there is a feasible mandatory insurance program that could be put in place for watercraft. They asked for a proposal to the Legislature by January 2020.