

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document

No. 498

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H. P. 409

House of Representatives, January 30, 1975

Referred to the Committee on Marine Resources. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Tyndale of Kennebunkport.

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STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED  
SEVENTY-FIVE

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AN ACT Relating to the Conservation of Shellfish.

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

**Sec. 1.** 12 MRSA, § 4002, first ¶, as amended by PL 1967, c. 337, § 3, is further amended to read:

It is unlawful for any person to fish for or take scallops from the coastal waters of the State between the 15th day of April and the 31st day of the following ~~October~~ ~~November~~ ~~inclusive~~ of each year, except as provided in this section.

**Sec. 2.** 12 MRSA, § 4003, first ¶, is amended to read:

It is unlawful for any person to take or have in his possession scallops which are less than ~~3~~ 4 inches in the longest diameter to the amount of more than 10% of any lot.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill is to conserve the dwindling supply of scallops in the coastal waters of the State and to insure that the fishermen whose livelihood depends upon the continued availability of this resource continue to be employed.

The scallop catch in the coastal waters of the State represents a resource of \$1,000,000 per year.

The \$1,000,000 a year level was attained for the 1972 fishing season and sustained only through the 1973 season.

This exceptional yield was directly attributable to the 50% increase in the number of scallop licenses issued in 1972.

Although the number of licenses issued increased in 1973, by approximately 25%, the scallop catch declined by approximately 18%.

For 1974 the number of licenses issued remained at the 1973 level but the scallop catch declined by a dramatic 64% of the 1973 yield.

The decline in the scallop catch in only 3 years of sustained fishing pressure has been an intolerable 70%.

This severe 3-year decline indicates the scallop resource cannot sustain the fishing pressure.

The value of this resource declined by 41% over same 3-year period. The \$ return per license holder in 1972 was \$3,437 and in 1974 a mere \$930.

This bill represents an initial step to conserve the supply of scallops by extending the closed season one month and by increasing the size of scallops which are too small to be taken by fishermen.