

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 268

H. P. 231

House of Representatives, January 15, 1981

Referred to the Committee on Fisheries and Wildlife. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mrs. Reeves of Pittston.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

AN ACT to Permit Deer Hunting with Muzzle-loading Rifles.

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

12 MRSA § 7457-A is enacted to read:

§ 7457-A. Muzzle-loading firearms

1. **Definition.** As used in this section, a muzzle-loading firearm is a rifle of not less than .44 caliber, capable of firing only a single charge, from a barrel of not less than 20-inch length, which is loaded through the muzzle with black powder and a ball or bullet. Ignition is accomplished by a percussion cap or priming charge of a flint, match or wheel lock mechanism.

2. **Open season for hunting deer with muzzle-loading firearms.** There shall be an annual open season for the purpose of hunting deer with muzzle-loading firearms, as defined in subsection 1. The season shall follow upon the closing of the regular gunning season for deer in any area of the State open to the hunting of deer. This season shall be not more than 3 weeks duration. During this annual open season, any person hunting with a muzzle-loading firearm shall possess a permit for hunting with a muzzle-loading firearm and shall also possess a license to hunt under section 7101.

3. **Permits.** A muzzle-loading firearm permit shall be issued by the commissioner to hunt during the annual muzzle-loading open season under subsection 2. The fee for this permit shall be \$9 for Maine residents of 16 years of

age or older and shall be \$15 for nonresidents of 16 years of age or older. The commissioner may not issue a permit to any person who has not attained the age of 16 years by the first of the annual open season under subsection 2.

All requests for muzzle-loading firearms permits shall be submitted prior to Thanksgiving Day. Fees for these permits may not be refunded.

4. Registration of game. All deer killed during the muzzle-loading firearm season shall be registered in accordance with section 7457, except for the following provisions.

A licensed hunter who has killed a deer prior to the muzzle-loading firearm season and whose registration tags have already been used may not hunt under the provisions of this section.

All deer killed under this chapter shall be inspected at a game checking station. Any question on the legality of a kill shall be viewed by a warden. If it appears to the warden that the game has not been legally killed with a muzzle-loading firearm, he shall seize the carcass and prosecute the offender.

5. Applicability of provisions. Except provided in this chapter, the provisions of the part relating to deer are applicable to the taking of deer with muzzle-loading firearms.

STATEMENT OF FACT

This bill permits deer hunting with muzzle-loading rifles for a 3-week period following the regular open season.