

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1113

S. P. 371

In Senate, March 4, 1981

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

MAY M. ROSS, Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator Usher of Cumberland.

STATE OF MAINE

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

AN ACT to Remove the Length Limit on Ice Fishing Catch.

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

Sec. 1. 12 MRSA § 7572, sub-§ 3, as enacted by PL 1979, c. 420, § 1, is amended to read:

3. Open water fishing provisions applicable. Unless otherwise specified, ~~the legal lengths~~ the restrictions on use or possession of live fish as bait, and the daily limits which have been established for open water fishing in each county shall apply to all waters open to ice fishing in those counties. **The provisions for legal lengths shall not apply to ice fishing.**

Sec. 2. 12 MRSA § 7572, sub-§ 5 is enacted to read:

5. Bag limits. A person licensed to fish shall keep all fish he catches and may not continue to fish after he has caught his bag limit for any fish.

STATEMENT OF FACT

Minimum length limits were established to conserve certain fish species, but sometimes they accomplish exactly the opposite. Ice fishermen use bait rather than artificial lures or flies. Fish hooked on bait are hooked more deeply and are much more likely to die. With minimum length limits, an ice fisherman might catch half a dozen sublegal salmon before they catch one legal fish, and all the fish that are hooked and released are likely to die. This bill requires ice fishermen to keep all of the fish they catch, regardless of size, until they reach the bag limit.