

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Date: 3/14/14

L.D. 1625  
(Filing No. H-687)

Minority  
MARINE RESOURCES

Reproduced and distributed under the direction of the Clerk of the House.

STATE OF MAINE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
126TH LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "B" to H.P. 1197, L.D. 1625, Bill, "An Act To Clarify the Law Concerning Maine's Elver Fishing License"

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

'An Act Concerning Maine's Elver Fishery'

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and before the emergency clause and inserting the following:

'Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §6210, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 468, §8, is amended to read:

§6210. Procedure for administrative assessment of penalty for pecuniary gain

The department in an adjudicatory proceeding may impose an administrative penalty for a violation of section 6575-K or section 6864, subsection 7-A equal to the pecuniary gain from that violation in accordance with this section.

**1. Definition.** As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, "pecuniary gain" means the amount of money or the value of property at the time a person violates section 6575-K or section 6864, subsection 7-A that the person derives from the violation.

**2. Initiation and notice.** If the Chief of the Bureau of Marine Patrol delivers to the commissioner a written statement under oath that the chief has probable cause to suspect that a violation of section 6575-K or section 6864, subsection 7-A has been committed, the commissioner shall immediately examine the statement and determine whether to conduct an adjudicatory proceeding for the purpose of imposing an administrative penalty under this section. If the commissioner determines that the imposition of a penalty is necessary, the commissioner shall immediately notify the person who is alleged to have violated the law in accordance with Title 5, section 9052. The notice must state that the person may request a hearing in writing within 10 days of the notice.

**3. Hearing.** If a hearing is requested pursuant to subsection 2, it must be held within 30 business days after receipt by the commissioner of the request for a hearing, except that a hearing may be held more than 30 business days after the request if the delay is

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

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1 requested by the person requesting the hearing and mutually agreed to in writing. The  
2 hearing must be held in accordance with the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, except  
3 that:

4 A. Notwithstanding Title 5, section 9057, issues of the hearing are limited to whether  
5 the person requesting the hearing committed a violation of section 6575-K or section  
6 6864, subsection 7-A; and

7 B. Notwithstanding Title 5, section 9061, the decision of the presiding officer under  
8 Title 5, section 9062 must be made not more than 10 business days after completion  
9 of the hearing. The presiding officer must be the commissioner or the commissioner's  
10 designee.

11 Any decision to impose an administrative penalty under this section must be based on  
12 evidence in the record of the pecuniary gain, which may include evidence of the fair  
13 market value of any elvers illegally possessed by the person at the time the violation was  
14 committed. The penalty may be based on evidence of the amount of money or value of  
15 property the person received for elvers sold in violation of section 6575-K or section  
16 6864, subsection 7-A.

17 **4. Appeal.** A decision of the commissioner or the commissioner's designee to assess  
18 an administrative penalty for pecuniary gain pursuant to this section may be appealed to  
19 the Superior Court if the appeal is filed with the court within 30 days of the decision.

20 **5. Request for hearing on penalty amount; place of hearing.** The license holder  
21 may request a hearing regarding the amount of the administrative penalty assessed under  
22 this section. A hearing must be requested in writing within 10 days from the receipt of the  
23 notice of the penalty. The hearing must be held within 10 days of the request unless a  
24 longer period of time is mutually agreed to by the commissioner or the commissioner's  
25 designee and the license holder who requests the hearing in writing. The hearing must be  
26 conducted in the Augusta area.

27 **6. Disposition of penalty.** The commissioner shall deposit any payments for  
28 administrative penalties collected pursuant to this section into the Eel and Elver  
29 Management Fund established under section 6505-D.

30 **Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §6404-M** is enacted to read:

31 **§6404-M. Suspension or revocation based on conviction of a violation of an elver**  
32 **individual fishing quota**

33 The commissioner shall suspend or revoke the elver fishing license of any license  
34 holder convicted of violating section 6575-K.

35 **1. First offense.** For the first offense, the commissioner shall suspend the license  
36 holder's license for one year.

37 **2. Second offense.** For a 2nd offense, the commissioner shall permanently revoke  
38 the license holder's license.

39 **Sec. 7. 12 MRSA §6505-A, sub-§3-A** is enacted to read:

40 **3-A. Elver fishing quotas.** The commissioner may adopt rules to establish,  
41 implement and administer an elver individual fishing quota system in order to ensure that

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1 the elver fishery annual landings do not exceed the overall annual quota established by  
2 the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. A person issued a license under this  
3 section or section 6302-A, subsection 3, paragraph E, E-1, F or G may not take, possess  
4 or sell elvers in excess of the weight quota allocated to that person under the quota  
5 system. The rules must:

6 A. Establish an overall annual quota for the State; and

7 B. Specify a formula to establish individual elver fishing quotas for persons licensed  
8 under this section or section 6302-A, subsection 3, paragraph E, E-1, F or G. The  
9 formula may take into account the amount of elvers a person licensed under this  
10 section or section 6302-A, subsection 3, paragraph E, E-1, F or G lawfully harvested  
11 in previous seasons, based on final harvesting reports. The rules must specify the  
12 date by which harvester reports are considered final for the purpose of determining  
13 individual quotas.

14 If persons issued licenses under this section or section 6302-A, subsection 3, paragraph E,  
15 E-1, F or G collectively exceed the overall annual quota, the number of pounds by which  
16 the license holders exceeded that overall annual quota must be deducted from the  
17 following year's overall annual quota. If the overage exceeds the overall annual quota  
18 allocated to a person licensed under this section or section 6302-A, subsection 3,  
19 paragraph E, E-1, F or G for the following year, the overage must be deducted from the  
20 overall annual quota allocated to a person licensed under this section or section 6302-A,  
21 subsection 3, paragraph E, E-1, F or G in subsequent years until the entire overage has  
22 been accounted for.

23 The commissioner may adopt or amend rules on an emergency basis if immediate action  
24 is necessary to establish and implement the elver individual fishing quota in advance of  
25 the beginning of the elver fishing season.

26 Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5,  
27 chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

28 **Sec. 8. 12 MRSA §6575-K** is enacted to read:

29 **§6575-K. Elver individual fishing quota**

30 **1. Prohibition on possession or sale of elvers in excess of elver individual fishing**  
31 **quota.** A person may not possess or sell a weight of elvers that exceeds the elver  
32 individual fishing quota that person has been allocated for the fishing season pursuant to  
33 section 6505-A, subsection 3-A.

34 **2. Prohibition on fishing after elver individual fishing quota has been reached.**  
35 A person who has sold a weight of elvers that meets or exceeds that person's elver  
36 individual fishing quota may not fish for or possess elvers for the remainder of the  
37 season, except that such a person who has been issued a license to fish for elvers may in  
38 accordance with section 6575-D assist another person who has been issued a license to  
39 fish for elvers who has not met or exceeded that person's elver individual fishing quota as  
40 provided in section 6505-A, subsection 3-A. All gear tagged by a license holder who has  
41 met or exceeded that person's elver individual fishing quota must be removed. A marine  
42 patrol officer may seize the elver transaction card of a license holder who has met or  
43 exceeded that person's elver individual fishing quota.

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3. Violation. An individual who in fact violates this section commits a crime in accordance with section 6204 for which a fine of \$2,000 must be imposed, none of which may be suspended.'

**SUMMARY**

This amendment, which is the minority report of the committee and replaces the bill, authorizes the Commissioner of Marine Resources to establish by rule an elver fishing quota for the State and to allocate elver individual fishing quotas to elver harvesters licensed by the State and Maine's federally recognized Indian tribes by a formula that may take into account previous years' landings. The majority report allocates a portion of the State's overall elver fishing quota to the tribes and directs each of the tribes to assign elver individual fishing quotas to its members. This amendment leaves in place the statute limiting the number of elver fishing licenses that may be issued by the Passamaquoddy Tribe to tribal members to 200 licenses. This amendment makes it a Class D strict liability crime with a mandatory \$2,000 fine for violating prohibitions on possessing, fishing for or selling elvers in excess of a person's elver individual fishing quota and on fishing after a person's elver individual fishing quota has been met.

**FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**

(See attached)



Approved: 03/13/14 *MRC*

# 126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 1625

LR 2543(03)

**An Act To Clarify the Law Concerning Maine's Elver Fishing License**

**Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment**

**Committee: Marine Resources**

**Fiscal Note Required: Yes**

*B (CH-687)*

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## Fiscal Note

Minor cost increase - General Fund  
Minor revenue increase - General Fund

### Correctional and Judicial Impact Statements

Establishes new Class D crimes.

The collection of additional fines may also increase General Fund revenue by minor amounts.

### Fiscal Detail and Notes

Any additional costs to the Department of Marine Resources to establish a framework for an elver individual fishing quota system are expected to be minor and can be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.