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Date: (Filing No. H- )

**MARINE RESOURCES**

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

**STATE OF MAINE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
127TH LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 1025, L.D. 1502, Bill, “An Act To Provide Flexibility in the Designation of the Closed Period for Elver Harvesting”

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

**'An Act To Provide Flexibility in the Administration of the Elver Fishery'**

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the title and before the summary and inserting the following:

**'Emergency preamble. Whereas,** acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

**Whereas,** this legislation changes the length of the elver fishing season and eliminates certain limitations on elver fishing; and

**Whereas,** to provide clarity to the Department of Marine Resources and holders of elver fishing licenses prior to the start of the elver fishing season, which will begin in March, this legislation needs to take effect as soon as possible; and

**Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

**Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §6171, sub-§3, ¶¶B and C,** as enacted by PL 2015, c. 80, §1, are amended to read:

B. An unusually large concentration of fishermen might deplete the supply of any marine organism; ~~or~~

C. Immediate action is necessary to comply with changes to federal or interstate fisheries management plans; ~~or~~

**Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §6171, sub-§3, ¶D** is enacted to read:

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**

1 D. Immediate action is necessary pursuant to section 6302-B, subsection 4 to  
2 prohibit elver fishing.

3 **Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §6302-A, sub-§3, ¶E**, as repealed and replaced by PL 2013, c.  
4 588, Pt. E, §5, is amended to read:

5 E. The Penobscot Nation may not issue to members of the nation commercial  
6 licenses for the taking of elvers in any calendar year that exceed the following limits:

7 (1) Eight licenses that allow the taking of elvers with 2 pieces of gear, ~~consisting~~  
8 ~~of an elver fyke net and a dip net, or 2 fyke nets~~; and

9 (2) Forty licenses that allow the taking of elvers with one piece of gear ~~only~~,  
10 ~~consisting of either an elver fyke net or a dip net.~~

11 The commissioner shall by rule allow the Penobscot Nation to issue additional  
12 commercial licenses to members of the nation for the taking of elvers if the  
13 commissioner and the Penobscot Nation determine that elver resources are sufficient  
14 to permit the issuance of new licenses;

15 **Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §6302-A, sub-§3, ¶E-1**, as repealed and replaced by PL 2013,  
16 c. 485, §2, is amended to read:

17 E-1. The Passamaquoddy Tribe may issue to members of the tribe commercial  
18 licenses for the taking of elvers ~~subject to the following limitations:~~ with one piece of  
19 gear;

20 (1) ~~A license that allows the taking of elvers with an elver fyke net may be~~  
21 ~~issued to only 6 members of the tribe in any calendar year; and~~

22 (2) ~~A license that allows the taking of elvers with an elver dip net may be issued~~  
23 ~~to any member of the tribe not authorized to use an elver fyke net;~~

24 **Sec. 5. 12 MRSA §6302-A, sub-§3, ¶G**, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 8, §1, is  
25 repealed and the following enacted in its place:

26 G. The Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians or its agent may not issue to members of  
27 the band more than 16 commercial licenses for the taking of elvers in any calendar  
28 year except that the commissioner shall by rule allow the Houlton Band of Maliseet  
29 Indians or its agent to issue additional commercial licenses for the taking of elvers to  
30 members of the band if the commissioner determines that elver resources are  
31 sufficient to permit the issuance of new licenses.

32 **Sec. 6. 12 MRSA §6302-B, sub-§2**, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 485, §3, is  
33 repealed and the following enacted in its place:

34 **2. Individual allocations.** The following provisions govern the allocation of the  
35 quotas established under subsection 1 to members of each of the federally recognized  
36 Indian tribes.

37 A. The commissioner may enter into an agreement with a federally recognized  
38 Indian tribe in the State that does not provide for individual allocations of the quota  
39 established under subsection 1 to members of that tribe, nation or band. If the

1 commissioner enters into an agreement pursuant to this paragraph, the following  
2 provisions apply.

3 (1) An elver transaction card under section 6305 must be issued to each person  
4 to whom the tribe, nation or band issues a license under section 6302-A,  
5 subsection 3.

6 (2) The holder of a license issued under section 6302-A, subsection 3 must meet  
7 the reporting requirements established by rule pursuant to section 6173.

8 (3) The quota established under subsection 1 applies to all elvers taken under  
9 licenses issued by the tribe, nation or band under section 6302-A, subsection 3.

10 (4) When the quota established under subsection 1 is reached, the department  
11 shall notify the tribe, nation or band. When the quota established under  
12 subsection 1 is reached, the holder of a license issued by the tribe, nation or band  
13 under section 6302-A, subsection 3 may not thereafter take, possess or sell elvers.  
14 Taking, possessing or selling elvers after the quota established under subsection 1  
15 is reached is deemed a violation by the license holder of the prohibition on  
16 fishing in excess of the person's individual quota in section 6505-A, subsection  
17 3-A.

18 B. This paragraph governs the allocation of the quotas established in subsection 1 to  
19 members of a federally recognized Indian tribe in the State when the commissioner  
20 has not entered into an agreement with members of the tribe, nation or band under  
21 paragraph A that applies to members of that tribe, nation or band.

22 (1) If there is no agreement under paragraph A between the commissioner and  
23 the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Passamaquoddy Tribe shall allocate to each person  
24 to whom it issues a license under section 6302-A, subsection 3, paragraph E-1 a  
25 specific amount of the quota allocated to the Passamaquoddy Tribe under  
26 subsection 1, paragraph A and shall provide documentation to the department of  
27 that allocation for each individual license holder. The Passamaquoddy Tribe  
28 shall allocate all of the quota that it has been allocated and may not alter any  
29 individual allocations once documentation has been provided to the department.

30 (2) If there is no agreement under paragraph A between the commissioner and  
31 the Penobscot Nation, the Penobscot Nation shall allocate to each person to  
32 whom it issues a license under section 6302-A, subsection 3, paragraph E a  
33 specific amount of the quota allocated to the Penobscot Nation under subsection  
34 1, paragraph B and shall provide documentation to the department of that  
35 allocation for each individual license holder. The Penobscot Nation shall allocate  
36 all of the quota that it has been allocated and may not alter any individual  
37 allocations once documentation has been provided to the department.

38 (3) If there is no agreement under paragraph A between the commissioner and  
39 the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians  
40 shall allocate to each person to whom it issues a license under section 6302-A,  
41 subsection 3, paragraph G a specific amount of the quota allocated to the Houlton  
42 Band of Maliseet Indians under subsection 1, paragraph C and shall provide  
43 documentation to the department of that allocation for each individual license

1 holder. The Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians shall allocate all of the quota that  
2 it has been allocated and may not alter any individual allocations once  
3 documentation has been provided to the department.

4 (4) If there is no agreement under paragraph A between the commissioner and  
5 the Aroostook Band of Micmacs, the Aroostook Band of Micmacs shall allocate  
6 to each person to whom it issues a license under section 6302-A, subsection 3,  
7 paragraph F a specific amount of the quota allocated to the Aroostook Band of  
8 Micmacs under subsection 1, paragraph D and shall provide documentation to the  
9 department of that allocation for each individual license holder. The Aroostook  
10 Band of Micmacs shall allocate all of the quota that it has been allocated and may  
11 not alter any individual allocations once documentation has been provided to the  
12 department.

13 The department shall issue an elver transaction card under section 6305 to a person  
14 licensed by the Passamaquoddy Tribe under section 6302-A, subsection 3, paragraph E-1,  
15 the Penobscot Nation under section 6302-A, subsection 3, paragraph E, the Houlton Band  
16 of Maliseet Indians under section 6302-A, subsection 3, paragraph G or the Aroostook  
17 Band of Micmacs under section 6302-A, subsection 3, paragraph F only upon receipt of  
18 adequate documentation specifying the individual quota allocated to that person by the  
19 tribe, nation or band under this subsection.

20 **Sec. 7. 12 MRSA §6302-B, sub-§4** is enacted to read:

21 **4. Emergency prohibition.** The commissioner may adopt emergency rules to  
22 prohibit the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, the Aroostook Band of  
23 Micmacs or the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians from fishing for elvers under a license  
24 issued under this Title if the commissioner finds that the tribe, nation or band has  
25 authorized fishing for elvers in a way that the commissioner determines will cause the  
26 tribe, nation or band to exceed the annual allocation set forth in subsection 1.

27 **Sec. 8. 12 MRSA §6505-A, sub-§5**, as amended by PL 1999, c. 534, §3, is  
28 further amended to read:

29 **5. Gear.** ~~Except as prohibited by section 6575-B, subsection 2-B, a~~ A person issued  
30 a license under this section may utilize one elver fyke net, one Sheldon eel trap or one dip  
31 net to fish for or take elvers without paying the fee required for a first net or trap pursuant  
32 to section 6505-B. A license issued under this section must identify the number and types  
33 of nets that the license holder may use pursuant to this section ~~and~~ section 6505-B and  
34 section 6575-B.

35 **Sec. 9. 12 MRSA §6575, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 1999, c. 7, §7, is further  
36 amended to read:

37 **1. Open season.** It is unlawful for a person to fish for or take elvers within the  
38 waters of the State except during the open season from noon on March 22nd to noon on  
39 ~~May 31st~~ June 7th.

40 **Sec. 10. 12 MRSA §6575, sub-§1-A** is enacted to read:

1 **1-A. Federally recognized Indian tribes; violation.** It is unlawful for a person to  
2 fish for or take elvers in violation of rules adopted by the commissioner under section  
3 6302-B, subsection 4.

4 **Sec. 11. 12 MRSA §6575-A,** as amended by PL 2013, c. 468, §26, is repealed.

5 **Sec. 12. 12 MRSA §6575-B, sub-§2-B,** as amended by PL 2005, c. 533, §3, is  
6 further amended to read:

7 **2-B. Type and amount of gear.** It is unlawful for a person to immerse elver fishing  
8 gear other than the types and amounts ~~authorized pursuant to this subsection~~ listed on the  
9 person's license pursuant to section 6505-A, subsection 5. A person may not immerse an  
10 amount of elver fishing gear that exceeds the amount of elver fishing gear listed on the  
11 person's license for the previous elver fishing season. A person may elect which types of  
12 gear are listed on the person's license prior to the issuance of the license for that elver  
13 fishing season. The commissioner may adopt rules to implement this subsection. Rules  
14 adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5,  
15 chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

16 ~~A. A person who is issued an elver fishing license pursuant to section 6505-A,~~  
17 ~~subsection 2, paragraph C may not immerse elver fishing gear other than the types~~  
18 ~~and amounts of gear the person was authorized to immerse during the previous elver~~  
19 ~~fishing season, except that a person may surrender the authority to use an elver fyke~~  
20 ~~net in order to use an elver dip net.~~

21 **Sec. 13. 12 MRSA §6575-B, sub-§8,** as enacted by PL 2013, c. 468, §27, is  
22 repealed.

23 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this  
24 legislation takes effect when approved.'

## 25 SUMMARY

26 This amendment replaces the bill and changes the title. This amendment allows a  
27 license holder in the elver fishery to choose which type of elver fishing gear the license  
28 holder employs. This amendment allows the Commissioner of Marine Resources to enter  
29 into an agreement with a federally recognized Indian tribe that does not require allocation  
30 of individual quota, as long as all elvers caught by the tribe, nation or band with whom  
31 the commissioner has entered into the agreement are tracked using elver transaction cards  
32 and reporting requirements are met. This amendment provides that, in the absence of an  
33 agreement between the commissioner and a federally recognized Indian tribe, individual  
34 allocations of elver fishing quota are required. This amendment provides that the  
35 commissioner may adopt emergency rules to close the elver fishery to a federally  
36 recognized Indian tribe if the commissioner finds that the tribe, nation or band has  
37 authorized fishing under a license issued under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 12 that  
38 will cause the tribe, nation or band to exceed its overall annual elver fishing quota. This  
39 amendment extends the end of the elver fishing season from May 31st to June 7th. This  
40 amendment removes the provision of law that prohibits the taking of elvers from noon  
41 Friday to noon Sunday. It also removes the prohibition on the use of an elver fyke net to  
42 take elvers from the St. Croix River and its tributaries.