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An Act To Allow Persons 70 Years of Age or Older Expanded Crossbow Privileges

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

Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §10952, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. D, §7 and c. 614, §9, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

§ 10952. Open seasons for hunting with bow and arrow and crossbow

1. Hunting with a bow and arrow. A person may, except as otherwise provided in this Part, hunt any wild bird or wild animal with a hand#held bow and arrow during any open season on that bird or animal.

2. Hunting with a crossbow; 70 years of age or older. A person 70 years of age or older may hunt a wild bird or a wild animal with a crossbow during any open season on that wild bird or wild animal subject to the laws of this Part.

This subsection is repealed January 1, 2015.

Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §10953, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 2005, c. 419, §2 and affected by §12, is amended to read:

1. Species and seasons. Except as provided in this Part, a person may hunt bear with a crossbow during the open season on bear as provided in section 11251 and may hunt deer with a crossbow during the open firearm season on deer as provided in section 11401. This subsection does not authorize a person to hunt deer with a crossbow during an expanded archery season established under section 11403 or in an expanded archery zone or during the muzzle-loading-only deer hunting season established under section 11404, except as provided in subsection 1#A.

Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §10953, sub-§1-A is enacted to read:

1-A. Hunting with a crossbow; 70 years of age or older. A person 70 years of age or older may hunt deer with a crossbow during an expanded archery season established under section 11403 or in an expanded archery zone or during the muzzle-loading-only deer hunting season established under section 11404.

This subsection is repealed January 1, 2015.

Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §11403, sub-§2, as amended by PL 2007, c. 163, §2 and affected by §3, is further amended to read:

2. Open archery season on deer. The commissioner shall by rule establish a regular archery-only season beginning at least 30 days prior and extending to the beginning of the regular deer hunting season, as described in section 11401, subsection 1, paragraph A, for the purpose of hunting deer with bow and arrow only. During the regular archery-only season on deer, except as provided in section 10952, subsection 2 and section 10953, subsection 1#A, the following restrictions apply.

A. A person may not take a deer during a regular archery-only season unless that person uses a hand-held bow and broadhead arrow with the following specifications.

(1) Bows must have a minimum draw weight of 35 pounds.

(2) Arrowheads, including mechanical broadheads when open, must be at least 7/8 inch in width.

B. A person may not carry firearms of any kind while hunting any species of wildlife with bow and arrow during the regular archery-only season on deer, except that a person who holds a license that allows hunting with firearms may carry a handgun. This paragraph may not be construed to prohibit a person who holds a valid permit to carry a concealed firearm pursuant to Title 25, section 2003 from carrying a firearm.

C. Except as provided in section 11109#A, subsection 3, if a person takes a deer with bow and arrow during the regular archery-only season on deer, that person is precluded from further hunting for deer during that year.

D. Except as provided in this subsection, the provisions of this Part concerning deer are applicable to the taking of deer with bow and arrow, including the transportation, registration and possession of deer taken by this method.

A person who violates this subsection commits a Class E crime.

Sec. 5. 12 MRSA §11603, sub-§1-A is enacted to read:

1-A. Hunting moose with a crossbow; 70 years of age or older. Notwithstanding subsection 1, a person 70 years of age or older may hunt moose with a crossbow subject to the laws of this Part.

This subsection is repealed January 1, 2015.

Effective 90 days following adjournment of the 125th
Legislature, First Regular Session, unless otherwise indicated.