

Dear Bear Trapper,

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has adopted an emergency rule that limits some methods used to trap bear which may accidentally capture the federally threatened Canada Lynx in Maine. **The emergency rule still allows for bear trapping, subject to the provisions described below.** The rule adopts measures that would prevent further lynx fatalities as outlined in the Department's "2014 Final Incidental Take Plan for Maine's Trapping Program." This emergency rule is effective for 90 days and will cover the 2018 bear trapping season only.

This 90-day emergency rule has been adopted to address only how a cable trap is set for bear. More specifically, the emergency rule adds the following restrictions for bear trapping:

- 1) Cable traps (foot snares) that are set and/or designed to capture a bear when it reaches into the device to obtain bait and/or lure are prohibited.
- 2) Whenever a cable trap (foot snare) is used to trap for bear:
 - a. bait and/or lure may not be placed below ground level; and
 - b. bait and/or lure may not be placed within the loop of the cable

These restrictions make the use of bucket-style bear traps and similar devices illegal for the 2018 bear trapping season. Culvert-style traps and other common methods of bear trapping, including the use of trail sets and blind sets that are set in accordance with the emergency rule, are still legal. The Department will develop a permanent rule proposal to be put in place before the 2019 bear trapping season that will address the issue long term.

All other rules and laws governing bear trapping, including the limit of one bear trap per person and the minimum closing diameter for cable traps, remain in effect. Please refer to the Department's Summary of Trapping Laws, which is available at mefishwildlife.com/laws, for a summary of the other laws and rules for bear trapping.

If you have any questions regarding the emergency rule, please contact us at (207) 287-8000. Bear trappers who purchased a trapping license or bear trapping permit prior to the start of the bear trapping season may request a refund if the emergency rule impacts their plans to trap for bear in 2018.