



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
INLAND FISHERIES & WILDLIFE
353 WATER STREET
41 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA ME 04333-0041



November 14, 2025

Dear Bass Club Representative:

The 2026 Bass Tournament Permit Drawing (drawing) will be held virtually on **December 11, 2025 (Zoom instructions attached)**. Clubs must pre-register no later than **Monday, December 1, 2025**. Attached is additional information on the bass tournament drawing and rules as well as our website: www.maine.gov/ifw.

Please make sure your club has submitted all required 2025 aquatic plant and live well inspection forms no later than **November 24, 2025; registration forms received from clubs who have outstanding aquatic plant and live well inspection forms will be returned.**

Bass tournaments may only be conducted on the water body as named on the permit; the Department retains the authority to change these boundaries as necessary to appropriately manage these waters for multiple user groups.

Applications for each tournament selected at the drawing **must be completed and submitted** to the Department, along with appropriate change form (date and/or club), and applicable fees, **no later than January 26, 2026**. Permits will not be issued if applications are not received by this date and those dates/waters will be released to other applicants.

Please remember that the 3rd Saturday in July is loon count and no tournaments on that date will be allowed to start assembling before 9:00 AM (July 18, 2026).

The annual tournament for the Special Olympics will be held on Sunday May 3, 2026 on Cobbosseecontee Lake.

Requests for 2026 Multi-day tournament permits are full and we will not be accepting requests for 2026 multi-day tournaments. Below are the 2026 multi-day tournaments:

China Lake September 12th and 13th
Cobbosseecontee Lake September 12th and 13th
Messalonskee Lake September 18th and 19th
Sebago Lake September 19th and 20th
Androscoggin River October 17th and 18th
Great Pond (Belgrade) October 19th and 20th

Thank you for your part in providing the requested information in a timely manner to support a successful Drawing. Please feel free to call if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Latti, Director of Fisheries

PHONE: (207) 287-8000

FISH AND WILDLIFE ON THE
WEB:
Mefishwildlife.com

EMAIL ADDRESS:
info.ifw@maine.gov

2026 Bass Tournament Permit Drawing via Zoom

Instructions for Registered Participants

Date/Time: December 11, 2025 7:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife along with Maine BASS Nation are inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting for the 2026 Bass Tournament Permit Drawing. This will be an online meeting with no in person event.

If you have not downloaded the Zoom app, you can download it via this link (recommended to do this before the date of the drawing): <https://zoom.us/download>

You do not need video for the meeting but is preferred. Call-in instructions are below electronic link.

Time: Dec 11, 2025 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system. Monthly:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/tZcvceysqzMqE9GhfVWfnGeAXhXv_eqHWcwo/ics?icsToken=DH8tCAGS_11Y8Qoy3gAALAAAAEeLN3yA9ecb9D2PE8MBgoMKYj5LUn4g6Bfl7DwmoSEANGQGYJqNSOQW-3HiId-8-sXsCCALnqi_GqE1mTAwMDAwMQ&meetingMasterEventId=McptB5PYRk6zzejs-5551A

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83265458095?pwd=8Wn8Wndxuz7WfXZnVsOepZjooWpNGo.1>

Meeting ID: 832 6545 8095

Passcode: 231343

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,83265458095#,,,,*231343# US (New York)

+13017158592,,83265458095#,,,,*231343# US (Washington DC)

Join instructions

https://us06web.zoom.us/meetings/83265458095/invitations?signature=1HozETACWUh6tfNTme5C6ZV_hSX3mZQMVsx-Px100AU

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

2026 Bass Tournament Permit Drawing

The 2026 Bass Tournament Permit Drawing (Drawing) will be held virtually on Thursday, **December 11, 2025** at 6:30 PM via Zoom.

Only qualified clubs may participate, and those clubs must be pre-registered for the Drawing in accordance with the following (NO EXCEPTIONS):

Qualified Applicants are defined as those applicants who are currently compliant with permit conditions, including filing all required Aquatic Inspection forms by **November 24, 2025**. Requests for registration received from applicants who are not deemed qualified will not be accepted and will be returned. Multiple registration requests from one club with name variations will not be accepted (examples: Pine Tree Club – North, Pine Tree Club – Summer).

Pre-Registration Requirements (Deadline to submit is Monday December 1st):

- Submission of completed Pre-registration form;
- Submission of notarized Affidavit form that **includes a list of all members with contact information and that indicates which members have participated in an aquatic and live-well inspection training program endorsed by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) within the last five years;**
- Submission of a **non-refundable** check or money order in the amount of **\$156.00** (made payable to “Treasurer, State of Maine”). *The non-refundable payment will be applied against the total fees due for all tournaments selected at the Drawing during the final application submission process. Applicants will be responsible for fees associated with additional tournaments selected at the Drawing. Applicants that do not show or select tournaments at the drawing that require at least \$156 in fees, **will not** be refunded and future credits **will not** be allowed.*

All the above must be received at MDIFW office in Augusta **NO LATER** than the close of business (**4:30 PM**) on **Monday, December 1, 2025**. Pre-registration requests should be mailed (or hand delivered) to: MDIFW, Attn: Fisheries Division, 353 Water Street, 41 SHS, Augusta, ME 04333. Incomplete pre-registration requests will not be processed.

Issuance of List of Qualifying Applicants & Drawing Order – on or about **December 8, 2025**, MDIFW will publish a list of qualifying registrants. Only those listed will be permitted to participate in the 2026 drawing. The list will also designate the drawing position of each applicant. This process will be administered by MDIFW through a random selection of qualified applicants.

Deferrals – Only the first round of the Drawing will include an opportunity for applicants to defer their pick to another applicant. Applicants may negotiate deferrals with other applicants up until the start of the Drawing. No time will be allotted for deferrals once the Drawing has begun.

Drawing details – the following outlines specific details of the Drawing process:

- Registrants who arrive after the Drawing has begun will forfeit their position and will be placed at the end of the Drawing order for each remaining round. No deferrals of late arrivals will be allowed.
- Payments must be mailed with submission of applications in accordance with the requirements detailed below.
- Confirmation of each registrant's tournament selections will be issued at the end of the Drawing – please be sure to review before you leave the drawing!

Securing Permits – Applicants will have until the close of business (4:30 PM) on **January 24, 2025**, to submit applications, date/club change requests and required fees.

- You must complete applications for all tournaments selected at the Drawing and submit to MDIFW by **January 24, 2025**; otherwise, tournaments will be forfeited, and permits will not be issued.
- Any requested date/club changes after **January 26, 2026**, will incur a \$7.00 fee (waterbody and club name changes will not be allowed after this date). Date and club names will be allowed until **January 25, 2026**, with submission of the 2026 Bass Tournament Drawing Application Change Form by the club who selected the tournament at the Drawing.
- Applications for remaining available waters will be accepted starting on **February 20, 2026**, on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Mail applications, along with any applicable fees (check made payable to “Treasurer, State of Maine”) to: MDIFW, ATTN: Fisheries Division, 353 Water St., 41 SHS, Augusta, ME 04333.

Forms – All forms can be found on our website at: www.maine.gov/ifw

Please contact Jeffrey Palmer with any questions at 207-287-5261 or
by email at Jeffrey.palmer@maine.gov

AFFIDAVIT

I, _____ of _____, ME
Name Town

am _____ of a bass fishing organization currently known as
Title

Name of bass organization

I hereby certify that the bass fishing organization herein named is a bona fide independent bass fishing organization having a slate of officers, as follows:

President _____

Vice President _____

Secretary _____

Treasurer _____

A list of members with contact information and indication of which members have participated in an aquatic and live-well inspection training program endorsed by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection within the last five years must be included with this form.

I understand that the purpose of this affidavit is to certify eligibility for making application to conduct bass tournaments on Maine inland waters and that obtaining a permit through misstatement, misrepresentation or fraud is a criminal violation under Title 12, §10757.

I certify that all the information given in this affidavit is true and accurate. I understand that the information I have provided in this affidavit may be checked for accuracy and that falsely completing this affidavit may result in court action against me.

Date

Signature

STATE OF MAINE

_____, ss.
(County)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 20____

Notary Public/Attorney
My Commission Expires:

**Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
Fisheries Division
353 Water Street, 41 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0041
Phone: 207-287-5261**

2025 Maine Bass Tournament Permit Drawing Request for Registration

****Registration Forms Due by December 1, 2025****

Name of organization: _____

Representative's Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____
(Street, PO Box, Apt.)

City State Zip Code

Email Address: _____

Alternate Email: _____

Phone Numbers: Daytime: _____ **Cell:** _____

Submit form along with an executed Affidavit and check made payable to "Treasurer, State of Maine" in the amount of \$156.00 by the close of business (4:30 PM) on **Monday, December 1, 2025.**

Incomplete registration requests will not be processed.

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

353 Water Street, 41 SHS Augusta, ME 04333-0041

Phone 207-287-5261 - www.maine.gov/ifw

REQUEST FOR 2026 BASS TOURNAMENT DRAWING APPLICATION CHANGE

- This form is only valid through January 26, 2026
- This form is to be used to change tournament date and/or club name only for those tournaments selected at the annual bass drawing.
- This form must be completed by the club that originally selected the tournament at the drawing.
- Waterbodies cannot be changed.

We, _____
Club Name

request the following changes to the bass tournament permit application as indicated below:

Waterbody Name: _____

Original Date of Tournament (as selected at Drawing): _____

Change Date to: _____ OR _____
1ST Preference 2ND Preference

Please Transfer Permit to Another Club: _____
Club Name

Signature of Club Representative

Date

Return form with permit application by **January 26, 2026** to: Inland Fisheries and Wildlife - Fisheries Division, 353 Water St., 41 SHS, Augusta ME 04333-0041.

The Maine Department of the Secretary of State maintains the “official” record of Chapter Rules for state agencies. Updates to the Fishing Derby and Bass Tournament section of Chapter 2 that were proposed and approved during the summer of 2023 will go into effect on January 1, 2024. While we have taken care with the accuracy of the following document, this is a summary and is not the "official" Secretary of State document (which will become available after the effective date of January 1, 2024).

For more information please visit: <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/guide.html>

Chapter 2: RULES PERTAINING TO COMMERCIAL FISHING, FISH CULTURE AND FISHING DERBIES AND TOURNAMENTS

2.04 Rules Pertaining to Fishing Derbies

A. Scope of Rules

These rules shall be applicable only to fishing derbies as authorized by Title 12, M.R.S.A., Sections 12504 & 12504-A.

B. Applications

1. An application for a permit to conduct a fishing derby shall be on such forms as the department requires. The following information is required:
 - a. Name and address of the sponsor
 - b. Rules of the derby
 - c. Body(s) of water affected
 - d. Date(s) and time(s) of the derby
 - e. Prize structure
2. *(Repealed. This fee has been established by the Legislature, P.L. 1991, c.443)*
3. Applications for open water fishing derbies will be accepted after January 1 annually.
4. Applications for ice fishing derbies will be accepted after September 1 annually.
5. Applications for fishing derbies will be processed in order of receipt.

C. Restrictions

1. No fishing derbies will be permitted on any single body of water having a surface area of less than 100 acres and managed by the department for cold water fish species (trout, salmon and/or togue) or if the issuance of a permit would be inconsistent with the fisheries management objectives of the waters being affected.
2. Open water fishing derbies are not allowed to be held between April 1 – June 15, except where fishing derbies are consistent with the fisheries management objectives of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.
3. No more than 4 derbies will be permitted on any single body of water in any calendar year. County-wide or state-wide derbies shall not be counted as a derby on any one body of water.

4. The total cash value of prizes to be awarded at any single fishing derby (excluding door prizes) shall not exceed \$10,000, except:
 - a. when the derby is of a regional or statewide nature, involves more than a single body of water, or only involves waters not managed by the department for cold water fish species (trout, salmon and/or togue), in which case the total cash value of prizes to be awarded (excluding door prizes) shall not exceed \$25,000.
5. No derby shall occur at a public access facility in a manner that prevents non-event participants from launching and retrieving watercraft.
6. The Commissioner has the authority to put any condition necessary on any derby to assure that appropriate measures are taken to protect biological resources and address social concerns.

D. Requirements

1. Except as otherwise provided by law, all anglers in the derby must comply with the licensing requirements of Title 12, M.R.S.A., Sections 10751 to 10759.
2. A copy of the derby permit and a copy of the rules affecting the derby shall be conspicuously displayed during each derby at a location accessible to all derby contestants.
3. Watercraft participating in an open water derby must be inspected for invasive aquatic plants prior to launching and for a second time after the watercraft is retrieved from the water. Inspections may be performed by the watercraft operator, a passenger, or an available courtesy boat inspector.

2.05 Regulations Pertaining to Bass Fishing Tournaments

A. Scope

These rules shall be applicable to bass fishing tournaments as authorized by Title 12, M.R.S.A., Section 12505.

B. Definition of a Bass Club

For purposes of determining eligibility to apply for a permit to conduct a one-day bass tournament, a "bass club" is defined as any organized group of five or more individual bass anglers which is able to satisfy one of the following criteria.,

1. Provide current documentation of being a member club in a nationally recognized bass fishing organization; or
2. Provide a current listing of club officers and members along with a signed affidavit affirming that the club (consisting of at least 5 members), although not affiliated with any nationally recognized bass fishing organization, is a bona-fide independent fishing club. The affidavit must include a list of all members with contact information and must indicate those members who have participated in an approved aquatic plant and livewell inspection training program within the last five years.

NOTE: It is a Class E crime to obtain a permit through fraud, misstatement, or misrepresentation - Title 12 M.R.S.A., Section 10757.

C. Requirements (General)

1. Any bass club which sponsors a bass tournament must submit a completed bass tournament questionnaire, when requested to do so by an agent of the Commissioner, provided that such request must be made in writing to the sponsoring club prior to the day of the tournament.
2. Each tournament requires at least two aquatic plant and live-well inspectors, who have participated in an aquatic plant and livewell inspection training program within the last five years, to conduct weed and live-well inspections. Each watercraft will first be inspected immediately before a tournament participant launches prior to the tournament and for a second time after retrieval from the water immediately after the conclusion of the tournament for that participant. For watercraft that pre-fish prior to a permitted event, or continue to fish following the permitted event, an aquatic plant inspection must be completed by the operator, a passenger, or an available courtesy boat inspector.
3. All anglers in the tournament must possess a valid Maine fishing license unless of an age where a license is not required.
4. Bass tournament watercraft must be specifically identified in a plainly visible manner and a roster of participants must be available on site.
5. Only one permit will be issued on a waterbody for a specific date.
6. All fishing will be restricted to artificial lures.
7. No weigh-in bass tournaments will be permitted on a body of water less than 500 surface acres.
8. A copy of the tournament permit and a copy of the rules affecting tournaments shall be conspicuously displayed during each tournament at a location accessible to all tournament contestants.
9. Tournaments are limited to one watercraft per 35 acres with a maximum of 100 watercraft.
10. Tournaments may be Catch/Measure/Release or Weigh-In.
 - a) For Catch/Measure/Release tournaments in waters managed by MDIFW under the South Zone General Law, all bass caught must be immediately released to the location from which caught. Youth tournaments are to be Catch/Measure/Release only. There will be no application fee for Youth tournament permits.
 - b) For Weigh-In tournaments in waters managed by MDIFW under the South Zone General Law, all bass retained shall be kept in a livewell being operated with the pump(s) in a mode that constantly exchanges livewell water with fresh lake or river water as a flow-through system, except when watercraft are being operated under power of the main outboard while changing locations, or while motoring to shore immediately prior to weigh-in, at which time the pump(s) may be operated in a manner that aerates a fixed volume of water in the livewell. All bass taken shall be returned to the water from which it was caught, unharmed as far as possible, at the conclusion of the tournament day. The daily limit shall be 5 bass per participant with no weight limit.
11. The total cash value of prizes for single-day tournaments shall not exceed \$25,000.
12. The Commissioner has the authority to put any condition necessary on any tournament to assure that appropriate measures are taken to protect biological resources and address social concerns.

13. Weigh-In tournaments are not permitted in Hancock & Washington Counties from May 20 to June 30 (dates inclusive). In all other South Zone counties weigh-in tournaments are not permitted from May 8 to June 14 (dates inclusive).
14. Weigh-in tournaments are not permitted in Maine and New Hampshire Border waters from May 15 to June 30 (dates inclusive).
15. There will be no more than seven weigh-in tournaments per calendar year on any water greater than 500 acres.
16. Bass tournaments are not permitted in any waters managed by MDIFW under the North Zone General Law, except for the following waters which are exempted due to a recent history of ongoing bass tournaments: Indian Pond in Saint Albans; Moose Lake (Great) in Athens, Harmony, Hartland, and Saint Albans; Schoodic Lake in Brownville, Lake View Plt, and T4 R9 NWP; Sebec Lake in Bowerbank, Dover-Foxcroft, Sebec, and Willimantic; and Wesserunsett Lake (Hayden Lake) in Madison. On these five exempted waters, bass tournaments may be permitted as Catch/Measure/Release tournaments or Weigh-In tournaments as above, however bass tournament participants are not prohibited from harvesting bass during a permitted bass tournament.
17. No bass tournament shall occur at a public water access facility in a manner that prevents non-event participants from launching and retrieving watercraft.

D. Multi-Day-Tournaments

The following section applies to multi-day bass tournaments and shall be considered “in addition to” the requirements listed in Sections 2.05.B and 2.05.C above. All other existing State laws and rules pertaining to bass tournaments which are not modified herein continue to apply to multi-day tournaments.

1. Multi-day permit applications will be accepted up to 24 months prior to planned date of the tournament.
2. Multi-day permits will only be allowed for a statewide, multi-state or national championship tournament of a nationally recognized fishing organization. The organization must provide current documentation of being a nationally recognized bass fishing organization at the time of application.
3. Each day of a multi-day tournament prior to Labor Day will be deducted from the number of one-day weigh-in tournaments allowed per water but these one-day tournaments may be replaced after Labor Day. Multi-day tournaments may be held after Labor Day without displacing one-day weigh-in tournaments.
4. Multi-day tournaments are only permitted on bodies of water greater than 2000 acres.
5. The maximum number of multi-day tournaments/year shall be six statewide, no more than one per water, per calendar year.
6. Number of watercraft permitted for a multi-day tournament will be based on 1 watercraft per 35 acres, maximum of up to 300 watercraft.
7. The total cash value of prizes for multi-day tournaments shall not exceed \$300,000.

E. Maine and New Hampshire Border Waters

The following section applies to bass tournaments on Maine and New Hampshire Border Waters and shall be considered “in addition to” the requirements listed in Sections 2.05.B and 2.05.C

above. All other existing State laws and rules pertaining to bass tournaments which are not modified herein continue to apply to Maine and New Hampshire Border water tournaments.

CATCH/ MEASURE/ RELEASE (CMR)/ WEIGH IN TOURNAMENTS

1. In Weigh-In tournaments, all bass caught shall be kept on a water-circulating live-well with the intent to keep the retained bass alive. All bass entered for the weigh-in at bass tournaments shall be released unharmed into the same water body where caught as follows: in lakes and ponds, not less than 300 feet away from the shoreline; in rivers at mid-channel not less than 300 feet away from the weigh-in site. Boats designated by the bass tournament sponsor may hold more than the daily limit of bass solely for the purpose of releasing bass after weigh-in.
2. The daily limit shall be 2 bass per participant from April 1 to May 14 with no minimum length or weight limit. The daily limit shall be 5 bass per participant from July 1 to November 30 with no minimum length or weight limit.
3. There will be no more than ten weigh-in tournaments on any water greater than 500 acres, only four of which may be open tournaments.