

Town of Waldoboro, Maine
Shellfish Conservation Ordinance

Suggested revisions July 30, 2024

1. Authority.

This ordinance is enacted in accordance with 12 M.R.S.A. § 6671.

2. Purpose.

To establish a Shellfish Conservation Program for the Town of Waldoboro which will insure the protection and optimum utilization of shellfish resources within its limits. These goals will be achieved by means which may include:

- a. Improving water quality;
- b. Licensing;
- c. Limiting the number of shellfish harvesters;
- d. Restricting the time and area where digging is permitted;
- e. Limiting the minimum size of clams taken.

3. Shellfish Conservation Committee.

The Shellfish Conservation Program for the Town of Waldoboro will be administered by the Shellfish Conservation Committee consisting of nine (9) members to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen for terms of three years, except the initial appointment which shall be for 1, 2, or 3 years. The Selectmen shall appoint a person to fill a vacancy for the unexpired term if a member terminates. The committee shall choose a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary. Any committee member who has more than three (3) unexcused absences from committee meetings in a year shall be removed and replaced with a new member by the Selectmen. The Committee shall act by majority vote calculated on the basis of those present and voting. *(Note Section 3 - Amended June 10, 2004)*

The Committee's responsibilities include:

- a. Establishing annually in conjunction with the Department of Marine Resources the number of shellfish digging licenses to be issued;
- b. Reviewing annually the status of the resource using the results of clam flat, harvester or dealer surveys and other sources of information and preparing in conjunction with and subject to the approval of the department a plan for implementing conservation measures; *(Note - Section 3.b amended June 15, 2000)*
- c. Submitting to the Board of Selectmen proposals for the expenditures of funds for the purpose of shellfish conservation;
- d. Keeping this ordinance under review and making recommendations for its amendments;

- e. Securing and maintaining records of shellfish harvest from the town's managed shellfish areas and closed areas that are conditionally opened by the Department of Marine Resources;
- f. Recommending conservation closures and openings to the Board of Selectmen in conjunction with the Area Biologists of the Department of Marine Resources;
- g. Submitting an annual report to the Municipality and the Department of Marine Resources covering the above topics and all other committee activities;
- h. To work with the officials of the Town of Waldoboro and various State of Maine Departments to improve water quality which will result in more shellfish producing areas to be opened for harvesting.

4. **Definitions.**

- a. **Resident** - The term "resident" refers to a person who has been physically residing at a fixed, permanent and principle home in this municipality for at least one (1) year (365 days) prior to the time of claim of such residence is made. Proof of residency will require 2 forms of documentary evidence of Waldoboro residency for one (1) full year (365) days prior to issuance of license. This evidence must be in the licensee name and contain an actual physical Waldoboro address (no P.O. Box) and must prove residency for one (1) year (365 days) prior to issuance of license. Some specific examples are listed below. **Note - this is not an all inclusive list:** Valid Maine Driver's License/Vehicle Registration, utility, electric or water/sewer bill, cell phone bill Maine resident hunting and or fishing License. A contract, mortgage agreement, lease, insurance policy, or official document issued by a government entity. All proof of residency must clearly identify dates that residency began.
- b. **Nonresident** - The term "nonresident" means anyone not qualified as a resident under this ordinance.
- c. **Shellfish, Clams and Intertidal Shellfish Resources** - When used in the context of this ordinance the words "shellfish", "clams", and "intertidal shellfish resources" mean soft shell clams (*Mya are aria*) and razor clams (*Enosis directus*).
- d. **Municipality** - Refers to Town of Waldoboro, Maine.
- e. **Junior Resident** - The term "Junior Resident" means a resident of the Town of Waldoboro 10-18 years of age.
- f. **Junior Non Resident** - The term "Junior Non Resident" means a non resident of the Town of Waldoboro 10-18 years of age.
- g. **Lot** - The word "lot" as used in this ordinance means the total number of soft shell clams in any bulk pile. Where soft shell clams are in a box, barrel, or other container, the contents of each box, barrel, or other container constitutes a separate lot.
- i. **Shellfish Conservation Work** – The term Shellfish Conservation as used in this ordinance shall be broadly defined and shall include, but is not limited to, such activities as reseeded, river clean up, pollution abatement, predator eradication,

surveying and information gathering, testing and sampling and any another activity that the Shellfish Conservation Committee deems as fostering the general purposes of this ordinance. *(Note - amended February 25, 2014)*

5. Licensing.

Municipal Shellfish Digging License is required for anyone ten (10) years or older. It is unlawful for any person to dig or take shellfish from the shores and flats of this municipality without having a current license issued by this municipality as provided by this ordinance. **A Commercial Digger must also have a valid State of Maine Commercial Shellfish License issued by the Department of Marine Resources. (Amended November 8, 2024)**

a. Designation, Scope and Qualifications:

1. Resident Commercial Shellfish License:

The license is available to residents of the Town of Waldoboro and entitles the holder to dig and take any amount of shellfish from the shores and flats of this municipality and reciprocating municipalities.

2. Nonresident Commercial Shellfish License:

The license is available to nonresidents of this municipality and entitles the holder to dig and take any amount of shellfish from the shores and flats of this municipality.

3. Resident Recreational Shellfish License:

The license is available to residents and real estate taxpayers of this municipality and entitles the holder to dig and take no more than one peck of shellfish in anyone day for the use of licensee and licensee's immediate family. Applicants who have reached 60 years of age shall be entitled to a free license. A person holding a Maine State Commercial Shellfish license shall not be issued or hold a resident or non-resident recreational clam harvest license. *(Note - Section 5.a.3 Amended June 15, 2000, June 16, 2005, June 14, 2016)*

4. Nonresident Recreational Shellfish License:

The license is available to any person not a resident of this municipality and entitles the holder to dig and take not more than one peck of shellfish in anyone day for the use of licensee and licensee's immediate family. Applicants who have reached 60 years of age shall be entitled to a free license. A person holding a Maine State Commercial Shellfish license shall not be issued or hold a resident or non-resident recreational clam harvest license. *(Note - Section 5.a.4 Amended June 15, 2000, June 16, 2005, February 12, 2008, June 14, 2016)*

5. Junior Resident Commercial Shellfish License:

The license is available to junior residents of the Town of Waldoboro and entitles the holder to dig and take any amount of shellfish from the shores and flats of this municipality and reciprocating municipalities. Junior licenses will be issued yearly to any junior (10-18) enrolled in school. A junior license holder will be entered into the appropriate class at age 19. *(Note - Section 5.a.5 Amended June 15, 2000, June 9, 2015.)*

6. Junior Non-Resident Commercial Shellfish License:

The license is available to junior non-residents and entitles the holder to dig and take any amount of shellfish from the shores and flats of this municipality and reciprocating municipalities. Junior licenses will be issued yearly to any junior (10-18) enrolled in school. A junior license holder will be entered into the appropriate class at age 19. *(Note - Section 5.a.6 Adopted June 15, 2000, June 9, 2015)*

7. Open License Sales:

When the Shellfish Conservation Committee determines limiting shellfish licenses is not an appropriate shellfish management option for one or more license categories for the following year:

Notice of dates, places, times and the procedures for the license sales shall be published in a trade or industry publication, or in the newspaper or combination of newspapers with general circulation, which the municipal officers consider effective in reaching persons affected, not less than 10 days prior to the initial sale date and shall be posted in the municipal offices. A copy of the notice shall be provided to the Commissioner of Marine Resources.

Towns with unlimited commercial or recreational license allocations shall make available and issue if applicable on the first day of license sales, to qualifying non-residents, no less than 10% of the total number of resident licenses issued in the previous year. Thereafter, non-resident licenses will be issued according to the 10% rule in accordance with 12 MRS 6671(3-A)(E) and (F).

One Day Recreational License:

This license allows the license holder to dig, take and possess no more than one peck of shellfish during the one and only day, or any part thereof, for which the license has been purchased. A person 10 years of age or younger must be accompanied by a licensed adult. Applicants may receive 10 one day licenses per licensing year; and no more than 2 one day recreational

licenses in a month. A person holding a Maine State Commercial Shellfish license shall not be issued or hold a resident or non- resident recreational clam harvest license.

8. License Must Be Signed:

The licensee must sign the license to make it valid.

b. Application Procedure:

Any person may apply to the Town Clerk for the licenses required by this ordinance on forms provided by the municipality.

1. Contents of Application:

The application must be in the form of an affidavit and must contain the applicant's name, current address, birth date, height, weight, and signature *(Amended, June 9, 2015)*

2. Misrepresentation:

Any person who gives false information on a license application will cause said license to become invalid and void. Proof of identity and residency may be required to obtain a license. *(Amended June 9, 2015)*

c. Fees:

The fees for the licenses are as stated on the reverse side of the application and must accompany in full the application for the respective license. Effective January 1, 2006 the Board of Selectmen shall establish shellfish license fees under such terms and conditions as they deem advisable, after notice and public hearing. Before making any adjustment, the board will consider the recommendation of the Shellfish Conservation Committee. The Town Clerk shall pay all fees received to the Town Treasurer. Fees received for shellfish licensing shall be used by the town for shellfish management, conservation and enforcement.

Applicants for a commercial shellfish harvester's license for the issuance year 2014-2015 and beyond may volunteer to perform (6) six hours of shellfish conservation work in exchange for a reduction in the license fee. The fee reduction can total \$60. Applicants who complete conservation time (or conservation credit activities) in order to be eligible for a shellfish license according to the Municipal Shellfish Conservation Ordinance shall remain eligible until they have been issued or offered a shellfish license by the municipality so long as the applicant applies annually for a license. If the applicable state or federal minimum wage, multiplied by (6) six, is greater than \$60, then the reduction in the license fee shall be that greater amount. Work performed shall be approved by the Shellfish Conservation

Committee. At a minimum four (4) hours must be conservation reseeding unless waived in whole or in part by the Shellfish Conservation Committee.

Applicants who, by the 2nd Monday in July, have not reached 19 years of age are exempt from any and all conservation work. Applicants that have reached 60 years of age, or are not able to perform voluntary shellfish conservation work due to the fact that they were on active military duty, shall also be entitled to the above described reduction in the license fee and shall not have to perform the (6) six hours of conservation work.

In the event of an occurrence of an unusual amount of river closures to shellfish harvesting during the months of June and July, the Shellfish Conservation Committee, in conjunction with the DMR, may request that the Board of Selectmen determine that an emergency situation exists for the purchasing of licenses. If an emergency situation is determined, the Board of Selectmen, with guidance from the Shellfish Committee, may adjust the issuance dates and/or payment dates for licenses. *(Note - Amended March 9, 1993; January 8, 1994; June 15, 2000; June 10, 2004, June 16, 2005, May 1, 2007, February 12, 2008, November 3, 2009, June 9, 2015)*

d. Limitation of Diggers:

Clam resources vary in density and size distribution from year to year and over the limited soft clam producing area of the town. It is essential that the town carefully manage its shellfish resources. Following the annual review of the town's clam resources, its size distribution, abundance and the warden's reports, as required by Section 3, the Shellfish Conservation Committee in consultation with the DMR area biologist will determine whether limiting commercial or recreational shellfish licenses is an appropriate shellfish management option for the following year. *(Amended June 9, 2015)*

1. Prior to February 15 the committee shall report its findings and document recommendations for the allocating of commercial and recreational licenses to be made available for the following license-year to the Commissioner of Marine Resources for concurrence. *(Note - Section 5.d.1 Amended June 15, 2000 and February 25, 2014)*
2. After receiving approval of proposed license allocations from the Commissioner of Marine Resources and prior to May 15, the Shellfish Conservation Committee shall notify the Town Clerk in writing of the number and allocation of shellfish licenses to be issued. *(Note - Section 5.d.2 Amended June 15, 2000)*

3. Notice of the number of licenses to be issued and the procedure for application shall be published in a trade or industry publication, or in a newspaper or combination of newspapers with general circulation, which the municipal officers consider effective in reaching persons affected, not less than ten (10) days prior to the period of issuance and shall be posted in the municipal offices until the period concludes. The Town Clerk will prepare a list of the persons eligible for licenses in Classes A through C. The public notification of license availability shall include a statement that the list is posted at the Town Office. **All applications and conservation fee/time must be completed and turned in on the 3rd Thursday of June by close of business. If this is not completed you are not eligible for the sale of a license on the dates listed below, you may be eligible to apply for a license left over on the first come first serve date.** No shellfish licenses may be reserved and licenses cannot be transferred or resold. New applicants for a shellfish license who meet the requirements of this article must obtain the shellfish license in person. Previous year license holders may delegate an individual to purchase their license if they are unable to do so on their two day issuing dates. A written authorization must accompany delegated individual.

4. The Town Clerk shall issue resident commercial and non-resident commercial licenses according to the selection process described below. Resident applications and non-resident applications shall be segregated in each class. If the number of applicants in a class exceeds the available number of licenses in that class preference will be given to those individuals that have completed conservation work and the remaining licenses will be selected by lottery. The classes shall be followed in descending order. A number equivalent to no less than ten percent of the total number of resident commercial licenses, regardless of class, shall be issued to non-resident commercial applicants. The classes are:
 - a. Applicants who have held commercial licenses for three (3) of the last three (3) years.
 - b. Applicants who have held commercial licenses for two (2) of the last three (3) years.
 - c. Applicants who have held commercial licenses for one (1) of the last three (3) years.
 - d. Applicants who have held commercial licenses for zero (0) of the last three (3) years.

On the second Monday in July the Town Clerk shall issue licenses in Class

A. The licenses shall be purchased by the end of business on Tuesday of that week.

If licenses remain, the Town Clerk shall issue licenses in Class B on Wednesday of that week. The licenses shall be purchased by the end of business on Thursday.

If licenses remain, the Town Clerk shall issue licenses in **Class C on the third Monday of July. The licenses shall be purchased by the end of business on Tuesday of that week.**

If licenses remain, the Town Clerk shall issue licenses in **Class D on Wednesday of that week.** The licenses shall be purchased by the end of business on Thursday of that week.

If licenses remain, the Town Clerk shall issue them to residents and non-residents on a first-come, first-serve basis as allocated.

If licenses remain unsold after the period of issuance (definition: the first 90 days during which a municipality reserves or sells shellfish harvest licenses each year) shall be made available to residents and non-residents alike on a first come, first served basis or by lottery using an official, written list that is posted publicly. Licenses unsold during the period of issuance shall be issued for the original allocated fee in each category regardless of residency. (Note - amended February 25, 2014, June 9, 2015, November 8, 2024).

The Town Clerk or the Town Clerk's designee shall begin to issue resident and non-resident recreational shellfish licenses on July 15.

For the purpose of the above selection process, a Waldoboro resident who establishes residency in another place outside of Waldoboro, shall not be considered as previously having a Waldoboro resident Commercial Shellfish License. *(Note - Section 5.d.4 - Licensing amended June 11, 1996, February 27, 2007, and February 12, 2008) (Note - Section 5.d.5 Enacted March 5, 1993 and Repealed January 8, 1994)*

- e. License Expiration Date:
Each license issued under authority of this ordinance expires at midnight on the thirty-first day of July next following date of issue. *(Note - Amended March 5, 1993; June 11, 1996 and June 15, 2000)*

~~f. Reciprocal Harvesting Privileges:~~

~~Licenses from any other municipality cooperating with this municipality on a joint shellfish management program may harvest shellfish according to the terms of this license. There is no joint program so suggest cutting this section out.~~

g. Suspension:

Any shellfish licensee having three convictions for a violation of this ordinance shall have his shellfish license automatically suspended for a period of thirty (30) days.

1. A licensee whose shellfish license has been suspended pursuant to this ordinance may reapply for a license only after the suspension period has expired.
2. The suspension shall be effective from the date of mailing of a Notice of Suspension by the Town Clerk to the licensee.
3. Any licensee whose shellfish license has automatically been suspended pursuant to this section shall be entitled to a hearing before the Shellfish Conservation Committee upon the filing of a written Request for Hearing with the Town Clerk within thirty (30) days following the effective date of suspension. The licensee may appeal the decision of the Shellfish Conservation Committee before the Board of Selectmen by filing a written Request for Appeal with the Town Clerk within seven (7) days of the decision of the Shellfish Conservation Committee.

6. **Opening and Closing of Flats.**

The Municipal Officers, upon the approval of the Commissioner of Marine Resources, may open and close areas for shellfish harvest. Upon recommendations of the Shellfish Conservation Committee and concurrence of the Department of Marine Resources area biologist that the status of shellfish resource and other factors bearing on sound management indicate that an area should be opened or closed, the Municipal Officers may call a public hearing, and shall send a copy of the notice to the Department of Marine Resources. The decision of the Municipal Officers made after the hearing shall be based on findings of fact. Notification of municipal conservation closures or openings shall be provided in accordance with DMR regulation, Chapter 7.50 (c). *(Note - Amended June 14, 2016)*

It shall be unlawful for any person to harvest, take or possess shellfish from any areas closed by the Town of Waldoboro in accordance with DMR Regulations, Chapter 7. Harvesting shellfish in a closed area is a violation of this municipality's ordinance and is punishable under MSRA Title 12 sub 6671.

Boundaries of conservation closures are explicitly defined in the conservation closure application submitted by the Town of Waldoboro to DMR and are part of the resulting permit issued by DMR. The permits are posted at the town office and online: <http://www.maine.gov/dmr/shellfish-sanitation-management/programs/municipal/ordinances/towninfo.html>.

7. **Minimum Legal Size of Soft Shell Clams.**

It is unlawful for any person to possess soft shell clams within the Town of Waldoboro, County of Lincoln, which are less than two (2) inches in the longest diameter except as provided by subsection b of this section.

1. **Possess** - For the purpose of this section, "possess" means dig, take, harvest, ship, transport, hold, buy, and sell retail and wholesale soft shell clam shell stock.

b. **Tolerance:**

Any person may possess soft shell clams that are less than two (2) inches if they comprise less than 10% of any lot. The tolerance shall be determined by numerical count of not less than one peck nor more than four pecks taken at random from various parts of the lot or by a count of the entire lot if it contains less than one peck.

c. **Penalty:**

Whoever violates any provision of this ordinance shall be punished as provided by 12 MRSA Section 6681.

8. **Taking of Razor Clams.**

In accordance with DMR Regulations Chapter 10.06 it shall be unlawful for any person to harvest, take or possess razor clams within the Town of Waldoboro, County of Lincoln, which are less than four (4) inches. It shall be unlawful to fish or take razor clams by using electrical fields emitted by any kind of device including electrodes.

9. **Molesting municipal shellfish gear placed in protect areas.**

A municipality may, as part of a municipal shellfish conservation program, place protective netting, fencing, traps, or other gear in the intertidal zone to provide protection from shellfish predators. Any netting, fencing, traps or other gear placed for this purpose must be clearly marked with signs or tags that identify the municipality that placed the gear and indicate the purpose of the gear.

a. A person may not tamper with, molest, disturb, alter, destroy or in any manner handle gear placed by a municipality in accordance with this subsection.

b. Penalties:

Any Town of Waldoboro Licensee who is found to be in violation of the molestation of any Town of Waldoboro Shellfish Conservation Committee conservation efforts will have their license terminated.

Any person who is found to be in violation of this ordinance will never be able to apply for any Town of Waldoboro Shellfish license.

Any person who violates this Ordinance or the policies adopted in the Annual Shellfish Management Plan shall be punished as provided by 12MRSA Section 6671.

Any Licensee whose shellfish license has automatically been terminated pursuant to this section shall be entitled to a hearing before the Shellfish Conservation Committee upon the filing of a written Request for a Hearing with the Town Clerk within thirty (30) day following the effective date of suspension. The licensee may appeal the decision of the Shellfish Conservation Committee before the Select Board by filing a written Request for Appeal with The Town Clerk within seven (7) days of the decision of the Shellfish Conservation Committee.

10. Stopping for inspection. A person shall produce their license on demand of any Certified Municipal Shellfish Conservation Warden in uniform and having "probable cause" to take such action. It is unlawful for the operator of a motor vehicle, boat, vessel, or conveyance or any kind, or any person:

a. To deliberately fail or refuse to stop immediately upon request or signal of any Certified Municipal Shellfish Conservation Warden.

b. After the person has stopped, to fail to remain stopped until the said Warden has reached his immediate vicinity and makes known to the operator the reason for his request or signal.

c. To fail or refuse to stand by immediately for inspection on request of said Warden.

d. To throw or dump into any coastal waters or flats after having been requested or signaled to stop by a Certified Municipal Shellfish Conservation Warden any shellfish, or any pail, bag, hod or container before said Warden has inspected the same.

e. To attempt to elude, disobey, or assault any Certified Municipal Shellfish Conservation Warden.

Penalty for failure to stop. The first violation of this Ordinance shall result in a one (1) month suspension of the license. The second and subsequent violations of a failure to stop will result in a twelve (12) month suspension of the license.

11. **Harvesting Without a License.** It is unlawful to harvest clams without a license.

Penalty for harvesting without a license. Any person convicted of harvesting clams without any shellfish licenses shall be ineligible to apply for any municipal shellfish license for a period of ten (10) years from the date of conviction.

12. **Penalty.**

A person who violates this ordinance shall be punished as provided by 12 M.R.S.A. Section 6671. *(Note - Amended April 26, 1994)* A municipal license holder who aids and abets the harvest of shellfish in violation of this Ordinance shall be subject to the same penalties as the person he/she assisted. *(Note - Amended June 12, 2012, June 9, 2015)*

13. **Effective Date.**

This ordinance, which has been approved by the Commissioner of Marine Resources, shall become effective after its adoption by the municipality provided a certified copy of the ordinance is filed with Commissioner within twenty (20) days of its adoption.

14. **Separability.**

If any section, subsection, sentence or part of this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.

15. **Repeal.**

Any ordinance regulating the harvesting or conservation of shellfish in the town and any provisions of any other town ordinance which is inconsistent with this ordinance is hereby repealed.

Approved **November 5, 2024** by Town Meeting

Certification of Municipal Officers

John Blodgett, Chair

Michael Thayer, Vice Chair

Robert L. Butler

Abden S. Simmons

Rebecca Stephens