

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
IN OPPOSITION TO L.D. 964**

**“An Act to Change the Definitions of "Sunrise" and "Sunset" in the Inland
Fisheries and Wildlife Laws to Better Allow for Variations in Timing Across the
State”**

Presented by Representative SIMMONS of Waldoboro.

DATE OF HEARING: March 24, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Tim Peabody, Deputy Commissioner at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in opposition to L.D. 964 An Act to Change the Definitions of "Sunrise" and "Sunset" in the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Laws to Better Allow for Variations in Timing Across the State.

This bill amends the inland fisheries and wildlife law to change the entity within the United States Naval Observatory that the State relies upon to determine the times for sunrise and sunset from the Nautical Almanac Office to the Astronomical Applications Department and removes references to Bangor, Maine and replaces it with “given location in the state”.

Currently the law allows hunting from a ½ hour before sunrise until a ½ hour after sunset statewide for most species in Maine based on the sunrise/sunset time of Bangor, Maine.

For some background on the issue, the use of Bangor as a base time for sunrise/sunset for establishing legal hunting start and end times has been in place since 2003. Prior to that the base sunrise/sunset time for hunting was Augusta, Maine. The change was made in 2003 when the law was changed to allow hunting to end statewide at ½ hour after sunset, thus repealing the “twilight hunting law”. The change to Bangor sunrise/sunset provided more of a balance between start and end times from Kittery to Calais, for example:

- Sunrise in Calais 3/24/25 ...6:24 a.m. (*adjusted for daylight savings time*)
- Sunrise in Kittery 3/24/25...6:39 a.m. (*adjusted for daylight savings time*)
- Sunrise in Bangor 3/24/25...6:30 a.m. (*adjusted for daylight savings time*)

The Department provides a 1-page chart for hunters to access in both print and online and will be easily accessible to users who download the app (available in a few weeks) online with exact times calculated to the ½ hour before sunrise and ½ after sunset (*adjusted for daylight savings*) which applies no matter where you are hunting in the state. Please see the chart for 2024-2025 provided below.

Our department feels this is a user friendly, consistent and more easily enforceable way to provide the times in which a hunter in Maine can legally hunt.

If a hunter were to use the United States Naval Observatory Astronomical Applications Department (*the same site that the law currently references*) they would need to log in to this site, scroll through the page, first typing in the correct year, then select the type of table needed (sunrise-sunset chart), then provide the location and time zone. Once you have the chart you would have to make an adjustment for daylight savings, which the website does not prompt you to do, then subtract 30 minutes to know the exact time of ½ hour before sunrise and add 30 minutes to calculate the exact time for the ½ hour after sunset. This seems onerous and would likely lead to more frequent questions and violations. For the Department to maintain a chart for every individual town in the state like the one we currently provide, staff resources would have to be added.

In closing our concern is while this method of determining the legal hunting times may add or shorten a few minutes at either end of a person's hunt, it makes it more complex for the hunter and our agency to find and follow the legal hunting times.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.

LEGAL HUNTING HOURS 33

This time chart is NOT the sunrise and sunset time table and has already been adjusted to display the actual legal hunting hours.
Note: This table is not to be used for migratory birds, see page 40. Blank spaces indicate Sundays when hunting is not legal.

2024-25 LEGAL HUNTING HOURS												
DAY	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
01		6:04 - 6:45	6:44 - 5:53		6:43 - 4:35	6:24 - 5:14	5:42 - 5:53	5:45 - 7:33	4:54 - 8:11		4:23 - 8:55	4:51 - 8:31
02	5:29 - 7:39	6:05 - 6:43	6:45 - 5:51	6:24 - 4:25	6:43 - 4:36			5:43 - 7:34	4:53 - 8:12	4:22 - 8:45	4:24 - 8:55	4:52 - 8:30
03	5:30 - 7:37	6:06 - 6:41		6:25 - 4:25	6:43 - 4:37	6:22 - 5:17	5:39 - 5:56	5:42 - 7:36	4:52 - 8:13	4:21 - 8:46	4:24 - 8:54	
04	5:32 - 7:35	6:07 - 6:39	5:48 - 4:49	6:26 - 4:25	6:43 - 4:38	6:20 - 5:18	5:37 - 5:57	5:40 - 7:37		4:21 - 8:47	4:25 - 8:54	4:55 - 8:27
05	5:33 - 7:34	6:09 - 6:37	5:49 - 4:47	6:27 - 4:24		6:19 - 5:20	5:35 - 5:58	5:38 - 7:38	4:49 - 8:16	4:20 - 8:47	4:26 - 8:54	4:56 - 8:26
06	5:34 - 7:32		5:51 - 4:46	6:28 - 4:24	6:42 - 4:40	6:18 - 5:21	5:33 - 6:00		4:47 - 8:17	4:20 - 8:48		4:57 - 8:24
07	5:35 - 7:30	6:11 - 6:34	5:52 - 4:45	6:29 - 4:24	6:42 - 4:41	6:17 - 5:23	5:32 - 6:01	5:34 - 7:41	4:46 - 8:18	4:20 - 8:49	4:27 - 8:53	4:58 - 8:23
08		6:12 - 6:32	5:53 - 4:44		6:42 - 4:42	6:15 - 5:24	5:30 - 6:02	5:33 - 7:42	4:45 - 8:19		4:28 - 8:52	4:59 - 8:21
09	5:37 - 7:26	6:14 - 6:30	5:55 - 4:43	6:31 - 4:24	6:42 - 4:43			5:31 - 7:43	4:43 - 8:20	4:19 - 8:50	4:29 - 8:52	5:01 - 8:20
10	5:39 - 7:24	6:15 - 6:28		6:32 - 4:24	6:41 - 4:45	6:13 - 5:27	6:26 - 7:05	5:29 - 7:44	4:42 - 8:22	4:19 - 8:51	4:29 - 8:51	
11	5:40 - 7:22	6:16 - 6:26	5:58 - 4:40	6:33 - 4:24	6:41 - 4:46	6:11 - 5:28	6:24 - 7:06	5:27 - 7:46		4:19 - 8:51	4:30 - 8:51	5:03 - 8:17
12	5:41 - 7:21	6:17 - 6:25	5:59 - 4:39	6:34 - 4:24		6:10 - 5:30	6:23 - 7:08	5:25 - 7:47	4:40 - 8:24	4:19 - 8:52	4:31 - 8:50	5:04 - 8:15
13	5:42 - 7:19		6:00 - 4:38	6:35 - 4:24	6:40 - 4:48	6:08 - 5:31	6:21 - 7:09		4:39 - 8:25	4:18 - 8:53		5:05 - 8:14
14	5:43 - 7:17	6:20 - 6:21	6:02 - 4:37	6:35 - 4:25	6:40 - 4:49	6:07 - 5:32	6:19 - 7:10	5:22 - 7:49	4:37 - 8:26	4:19 - 8:53	4:33 - 8:49	5:06 - 8:12
15		6:21 - 6:19	6:03 - 4:36		6:39 - 4:51	6:05 - 5:34	6:17 - 7:12	5:20 - 7:51	4:36 - 8:27		4:34 - 8:48	5:08 - 8:11
16	5:46 - 7:13	6:23 - 6:18	6:04 - 4:35	6:37 - 4:25	6:38 - 4:52			5:18 - 7:52	4:35 - 8:28	4:18 - 8:53	4:35 - 8:47	5:09 - 8:09
17	5:47 - 7:11	6:24 - 6:16		6:38 - 4:25	6:38 - 4:53	6:02 - 5:37	6:13 - 7:14	5:17 - 7:53	4:34 - 8:30	4:19 - 8:53	4:36 - 8:47	
18	5:48 - 7:09	6:25 - 6:14	6:07 - 4:33	6:38 - 4:26	6:37 - 4:55	6:01 - 5:38	6:11 - 7:15	5:15 - 7:54		4:19 - 8:54	4:37 - 8:46	5:11 - 8:06
19	5:49 - 7:07	6:27 - 6:13	6:08 - 4:33	6:39 - 4:26		5:59 - 5:39	6:10 - 7:17	5:13 - 7:56	4:32 - 8:32	4:19 - 8:54	4:37 - 8:45	5:12 - 8:04
20	5:50 - 7:05		6:10 - 4:32	6:39 - 4:27	6:36 - 4:57	5:57 - 5:41	6:08 - 7:18		4:31 - 8:33	4:19 - 8:55		5:14 - 8:02
21	5:52 - 7:03	6:29 - 6:09	6:11 - 4:31	6:40 - 4:27	6:35 - 4:59	5:56 - 5:42	6:06 - 7:19	5:10 - 7:58	4:30 - 8:34	4:19 - 8:55	4:39 - 8:43	5:15 - 8:01
22		6:30 - 6:08	6:12 - 4:30		6:34 - 5:00	5:54 - 5:44	6:04 - 7:20	5:08 - 8:00	4:29 - 8:35		4:41 - 8:42	5:16 - 7:59
23	5:54 - 7:00	6:32 - 6:06	6:13 - 4:30	6:41 - 4:28	6:33 - 5:01			5:07 - 8:01	4:28 - 8:36	4:20 - 8:55	4:42 - 8:41	5:17 - 7:57
24	5:55 - 6:58	6:33 - 6:05		6:41 - 4:29	6:32 - 5:03	5:51 - 5:46	6:00 - 7:23	5:05 - 8:02	4:28 - 8:37	4:20 - 8:55	4:43 - 8:40	
25	5:56 - 6:56	6:34 - 6:03	6:16 - 4:28	6:42 - 4:30	6:31 - 5:04	5:49 - 5:48	5:58 - 7:24	5:04 - 8:03		4:20 - 8:55	4:44 - 8:39	5:19 - 7:54
26	5:58 - 6:54	6:36 - 6:02	6:17 - 4:28	6:42 - 4:30		5:47 - 5:49	5:56 - 7:26	5:02 - 8:04	4:26 - 8:39	4:21 - 8:55	4:45 - 8:38	5:21 - 7:52
27	5:59 - 6:52		6:18 - 4:27	6:42 - 4:31	6:30 - 5:07	5:46 - 5:50	5:55 - 7:27		4:25 - 8:40	4:21 - 8:55		5:22 - 7:50
28	6:00 - 6:50	6:38 - 5:59	6:20 - 4:27	6:42 - 4:32	6:28 - 5:08	5:44 - 5:52	5:53 - 7:28	4:59 - 8:07	4:25 - 8:41	4:22 - 8:55	4:47 - 8:36	5:23 - 7:49
29		6:40 - 5:57	6:21 - 4:26		6:27 - 5:10		5:51 - 7:29	4:57 - 8:08	4:24 - 8:42		4:48 - 8:35	5:24 - 7:47
30	6:03 - 6:47	6:41 - 5:56	6:22 - 4:26	6:43 - 4:33	6:26 - 5:11			4:56 - 8:09	4:23 - 8:43	4:23 - 8:55	4:49 - 8:33	5:25 - 7:45
31		6:43 - 5:54		6:43 - 4:34	6:25 - 5:13		5:47 - 7:32		4:23 - 8:43		4:50 - 8:32	

*Legal hunting hours are based on sunrise/sunset in Bangor, Maine (Eastern Standard Time) and are to be used statewide.
Exceptions: Raccoon, Coyote, and Migratory Bird hunting (see separate legal hunting hours for these species).

Webpage

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Location: 000 00, 00 00

AUGUSTA MAINE
Rise and Set for the Sun for 2025

Astronomical Applications Dept.
U. S. Naval Observatory
Washington, DC 20392-5420

	Jan.		Feb.		Mar.		Apr.		May		June		July		Aug.		Sept.		Oct.		Nov.		Dec.															
Day	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine	Rise	Fine														
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03	0601	1080	0610	1087	0609	1083	0600	1080	0553	1080	0555	1082	0601	1080	0603	1081	0600	1080	0603	1081	0556	1080	0556	1080	0604	1080	0607	1080	0604	1080	0607	1080	0607	1080	0607	1080	0607	1080
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