

Model Bait Regulations FAQs

What is new with this rule?

This rule is designed to limit the spread of invasive species from the use of bait. It limits species that may be used as bait and also addresses how invasives can be unintentionally introduced via bait containers. It considers pathogens as invasives that can be regulated.

Why does my state need Model Bait Regulations when we already address invasive species?

Invasive species laws and regulations in most states do not address bait users. In some cases, the rule that bans the release of non-native species exempts the use of bait. Also, state restrictions on bait do not address contamination from the containers, with the exception of Texas. Furthermore, limitations on the use of bait are designed to conserve the species used as bait, rather than to protect natural resources at large. Finally, in general, natural resource agencies do not have authority to control pathogens.

Will this burden recreational fishers?

This will change the way live bait is used, so it will affect recreational fishers. They will not be allowed to carry bait from one waterbody to another without replacing the water at the time of leaving the waterbody. If invasive species are present in a body of water, they are not allowed to remove anything other than game fish. They will be required to keep a receipt for bait purchased while they still have the bait in their possession. It proposes a \$2 fee increase for fishing licenses to be used for invasive species education and eradication. Overall, it is believed that this will benefit recreational fishers, however, by improving fishing spots.

Will this burden state natural resource officials?

This will change some practices of state resource officials. It should make some aspects easier for natural resource officials by allowing lists of invasive species, including those allowed to be used as bait, to be maintained without undergoing regulatory or statutory review. States that wanted to could expand their role by testing imported bait for pathogens. It does add to the role of natural resource officials by requiring public notice of contaminated waterbodies. States will need to maintain a list of waterbodies containing invasives (or recently treated), and that list, and a map of those waterbodies, needs to be available online and regularly updated.

How will this affect native species that are imported to a state?

The rule authorizes agencies to check species used as bait, even when native, to see whether they carry an invasive pathogen. American eels, and native shrimps imported from overseas, have been found to contain pathogens that could harm domestic species. Inspections are not required, however. Additionally, the rule indirectly affects imports by stopping states from exporting bait without a permit.

