

132nd Legislature (2025)– Summary of Laws Enacted

1st Regular Session



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NOTE:

- This is not law as written and should only be used as guidance and to locate the actual law language.
- To read the chaptered law, right click on the PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER or RESOLVE #, scroll down and click on “open hyperlink”. Ctrl+F: allows a search for a key word.

Public Laws

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 27 – (LD 751) An Act to Amend the Hunting Laws Related to the Training of Dogs and Open Training Seasons

(Effective by Emergency: April 18, 2025)

This law continues a provision in law related to the training of dogs for bear hunting in portions of Washington and Hancock Counties that are situated south of Route 9 that was scheduled to be repealed May 1, 2025.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 41 – (LD 47) An Act to Provide an Exception to a Fishing Prohibition near the Crooked Brook Dam

(Effective by Emergency: April 25, 2025)

This law establishes an exception to the 150-foot fishing setback around the Crooked Brook Dam, which will allow fishing closer to the fishway but still prohibit fishing in or from the fishway for safety reasons. The area around the fishway was previously closed to fishing within 150 feet of the dam. This includes an emergency preamble.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 64 – (LD 6) An Act to Allow Persons to Label Their Wild Animal Traps with Their Online Identification Number Issued by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law allows a person to label their trap set for any wild animal using their trapping online licensing system identification number issued by the IFW instead of their full name and address.

Study/Report Back

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 116 – (LD 171) An Act to Enhance Protections Regarding Invasive Aquatic Plant and Animal Infestations in Inland Waters of the State

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law requires the Commissioner of Environmental Protection and the Commissioner of IFW to jointly review and recommend more stringent watercraft inspection protocols on inland waters of the State known to be infested with invasive aquatic plants and to review surface use restrictions and notification of those restrictions to members of the public.

It authorizes the Commissioner of IFW and the Commissioner of Environmental Protection to issue an order on a water body with a confirmed infestation of an invasive aquatic animal; current law only allows the commissioners to issue an order on a water body with a confirmed infestation of an invasive aquatic plant. It allows the commissioners to require that watercraft be launched only at locations identified in the order. Currently commissioners may only require removal of boats at specific locations. It also removes, in cases when a surface use restriction order requires inspections, the requirement that inspections be conducted by a state employee; instead inspections may be conducted by a state-trained inspector. These changes were recommended by the Interagency Task Force on Invasive Aquatic Plants and Nuisance Species in the task force's January 2025 report.

The law includes a report back to the Legislature required within Sec. 3 of the law:

Report. The Commissioner of Environmental Protection and the Commissioner of IFW shall submit a report detailing program activities to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction

over inland fisheries and wildlife matters by January 15th annually. The committee may report out a bill based on the report to any regular or special session of the Legislature.

Within Sec. 5. Of the law it includes unallocated language that requires a study of watercraft inspection protocols and surface use restrictions on inland waters of the State known to be infested with invasive aquatic plants; review of protocols and restrictions. The Commissioner of Environmental Protection and the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife jointly shall review watercraft inspection protocols and surface use restrictions on inland waters of the State known to be infested with invasive aquatic plants pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 38, section 1862, subsection 1 and make recommendations related to how these protocols and restrictions could be strengthened. The commissioners jointly shall also evaluate how information about restrictions is communicated to members of the public. **By January 1, 2026, the commissioners shall submit a report, including any suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife on their findings and recommendations with respect to watercraft inspection protocols and surface use restrictions on inland waters of the State known to be infested with invasive aquatic plants and how information on restrictions is communicated to members of the public.** The committee may report out legislation based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 126 – (LD 27) An Act to Amend and Simplify Certain Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Licensing and Permitting Laws

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

Sec. 1., Sec. 4. & Sec. 6. changes the requirements for a resident and the resident's immediate family to hunt, trap or fish without a license on land on which they are legally domiciled. It changes the acreage size for the land that they live on to be 10 or more contiguous acres in size, so this requirement is consistent between the activities. The law repeals the requirement that the land be used exclusively for agricultural purposes for the resident and the resident's immediate family to hunt, trap or fish on the land without a license. **Exception** to this law change is turkey hunting without a turkey permit on a person's own land will continue to require the hunter to own 25 or more contiguous acres in size, the land must be located within a WMD open to turkey hunting and designated for the season that they wish to hunt; that person must be permanently domiciled on that land; the land must be managed for the raising and selling of dairy, dairy products, or beef cattle; and the land must be open to hunting including hunting by permission. (These requirements can be found in IFW Rule Chapter 16)

Sec. 2. The law amends the definition of "family member" in the provision governing transfers of moose permits to family members to include stepgrandchildren, the transferor's sibling's child (more commonly known as a niece or nephew); the transferor's spouse's sibling's child (more commonly known as a niece or nephew by marriage); and the transferor's parent's sibling (more commonly known as an uncle or aunt), that sibling's spouse or domestic partner (more commonly known as a brother-in-law or sister-in-law). The law removes half-siblings and adopted children (an adopted child is considered a child) as eligible persons under this provision.

Sec. 3. The law also amends the provision governing the deferment of moose permits to the next moose hunting season when a member of the permit holder's household also holds a valid moose permit for that same hunting season to provide that spouses, domestic partners and siblings of the permit holder sharing the same legal address as the permit holder are considered members of the permit holder's household.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 132 – (LD 157) An Act to Amend Certain Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Laws

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law was the Department's "omnibus bill" and makes many changes to several areas of Title 12 fish and wildlife law.

Section 1 of the law repeals language.

Section 2 is the same language describing the Fish and Wildlife Management Education Fund, which is repealed but is simply being moved into a new section of Title 12. This also added language that clarifies that the funds may be used for educational programs for youth or families that promote participation in hunting, fishing, trapping or other outdoor recreational activities.

Section 3 provides clarity within the license suspension section of the law that a person convicted of discharging archery equipment within 100 yards of a residential dwelling without owner permission faces a mandatory license revocation just as a person would if they discharged a firearm within 100 yards of a dwelling. This information is clear within the prohibition section of 11209 but "archery equipment" was never added to the mandatory license revocation portion of this law when the archery equipment definition was changed last session.

Section 4 removes the word "written" from the laws governing the moose permit lottery application because the moose lottery applications are completed electronically only.

Section 5 provides that if a person submits satisfactory evidence of having previously held an adult license to trap in any other state, province or country, the person must also submit proof of having successfully completed a trapper education course comparable to the type described in law. This requires proof of a trapper education course when a person shows a NR trapping license as proof to buy a resident trapping license. The current law creates a loophole and allows people to trap without having taken the trapper education course.

Section 6 – 7 provides clarity related to the use of lead sinkers, bare lead jigs and painted lead jigs when used to fish in inland waters. The law was never intended to prohibit the use of lead sinkers, bare lead jigs and painted lead jigs on coastal waters, so this change makes it clear that the prohibition on use applies to inland waters only.

Additionally, it defines a "lead jig" as a hook with a lead weight molded to it, regardless of whether it is painted, coated, or covered by some other substance or by attached skirts and it does not include a fishing-related item, including, but not limited to, lead core line, spinnerbaits, buzzbaits, spoons, poppers, plugs, or flies. It also amends the definition of a lead sinker to clarify that it does not include artificial lures, ice-fishing sounders, weighted line, weighted flies or jig heads.

It combines the sections on the prohibition of sale and prohibition of the offer for sale of lead sinkers and jig heads to reduce redundant language. It removed any reference to painted vs. unpainted led jigs because the new definition includes led jigs regardless of whether they are painted or not. It removed the reference to the varying start dates for the prohibited acts because those dates are in the past.

Also, the weight and size of the jigs and sinkers apply to all actions and implements so those sections are now combined.

Sections 8 through 11 add 4 new wildlife management areas to the list of wildlife management areas.

1. Caribou Stream WMA – Washburn, Woodland – Aroostook County
2. Lexington WMA – Lexington TWP. – Somerset County
3. Macwahoc WMA - Upper Molunkus TWP and North Yarmouth Academy Grant (T1 R4 WELS) – Aroostook County
4. Rangeley WMA – Rangeley – Franklin County

Section 12 removes one wildlife management area (Bog Brook WMA) from that list.

Section 13 amends the taxidermy license expiration dates such that, beginning on January 1, 2026, a taxidermist license entitles a person to practice the art of taxidermy through the remainder of the

calendar year in which the license was issued plus 2 calendar years unless revoked sooner. With over 300 licenses and permits to manage and most all expiring on either December 31st or June 30th, having varying expiration dates creates administrative challenges and confusion for the license holder hence the change.

Section 14 changes the term "bathing area" to "swim area" in the laws prohibiting motorboat operation within a marked or buoyed area used for bathing. This was a request made from DACF navigational aid program because their navigational aid rules refer to "swim area" having to be marked within the water safety zone and what Title 12 refers to as a bathing area is really interpreted as a swim area. A more appropriate and consistent term of "swim area" was replaced by "bathing area". DACF also asked to replace the word, "motorboats" to "watercraft" in this section which prohibits all watercraft even paddle craft from entering a swim area now.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 148 - (LD 1042) An Act to Require a Person Operating a Watercraft for Recreational Purposes to Ensure All Children Under 13 Years of Age Wear United States Coast Guard Approved Personal Flotation Devices

(Effective: January 1, 2026)

This law prohibits a person from operating a watercraft unless all passenger children who are under 13 years of age and the boat operator, if also under 13 years of age, are wearing an appropriate U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device while the watercraft is underway and being used for recreational purposes unless they are below the deck or in an enclosed cabin. **This law has a specific effective date of January 1, 2026.**

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 204 – (LD 940) An Act to Increase the Maximum Cash Prize for the Long Lake Ice Fishing Derby

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

Current law states that the Commissioner of IFW must, by rule, fix the maximum total value of prizes that may be awarded at fishing derbies in the State, with the exception that for a derby on Sebago Lake in Cumberland County the maximum total value of prizes may not exceed \$100,000. This law adds the Long Lake Ice Fishing Derby held in northern Aroostook County to this exception so that 2 derbies in the State, the derby held on Sebago Lake and the Long Lake Ice Fishing Derby, may each have a maximum total value of prizes up to \$100,000. The derbies must be conducted in conjunction with the department's fisheries management objectives.

Report Back

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 205 – (LD 971) An Act to Amend the Law Regarding the Checking of Baitfish Traps

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This amends the law regarding checking of baitfish traps from November 1st to April 1st, by increasing the amount of time permitted between baitfish trap checks from 7 calendar days to 21 calendar days. The law includes unallocated language that **directs IFW to submit a report concerning this change to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over IFW matters by January 1, 2029** and authorizes the committee to report out a bill based on the report to the 134th Legislature in 2029.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 248 – (LD 1478) An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Baitfish Wholesaler's Licenses

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law amends the authorizations and restrictions applying to baitfish wholesaler's licenses. It removes the restriction that prohibits a license holder from taking or selling suckers, Genus Catostomus, greater than 10 inches in length between April 1st and September 30th of each year. It amends the hole marking requirements for baitfish wholesaler's licenses holders who attempt to take live baitfish for resale, using drop nets through the ice on inland waters. The license holder has been required to sufficiently mark the holes in the ice by using fluorescent biodegradable tape but this law allows them the option to mark the holes with evergreen boughs instead which aligns with language that already exists under smelt wholesaler marking of holes in the ice.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 267 – (LD 1623) An Act to Amend Certain Fish and Wildlife Laws Related to Landowner Representation Regarding Abandoned Property

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law allows a landowner's representative to act on behalf of a landowner regarding the placement of a ladder, an observation stand, a camera or electronic surveillance equipment on the landowner's property. It requires people operating ATVs, snowmobiles and airmobiles upon the land of another to stop and identify themselves upon the request of the landowner and this law allows the landowner's representative to act on behalf of that landowner in these situations.

It provides that a landowner's representative in addition to the landowner or lessee may limit in writing the use of a designated state-approved ATV trail as described within 12 MRSA §13157-A or allow use of an oversized ATV as described within 12 MRSA §13155, sub-§5-B on that landowner's or lessee's property.

It provides that if a landowner or landowner's representative finds an abandoned ladder, an observation stand, a camera or electronic surveillance equipment on the landowner's land in violation of law and the owner of the ladder, observation stand, camera or electronic surveillance equipment is unknown, the landowner or the landowner's representative may, take ownership of the abandoned ladder, observation stand, camera or electronic surveillance equipment. The landowner or the landowner's representative may remove, destroy, sell or possess the abandoned ladder, observation stand, camera or electronic surveillance equipment. For purposes of this section of law, "abandoned camera or electronic surveillance equipment" means a camera or electronic surveillance equipment left on property not owned by the person who owns the camera or electronic surveillance equipment without permission of the landowner or the landowner's representative.

Report Back

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 283 - (LD 1241) An Act to Establish the Make Change for Wildlife Program to Support the Maine Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law repeals the Wildlife Enthusiast's Conservation Appreciation, Recreation and Enjoyment, or "WE CARE," support program and establishes the Make Change for Wildlife program as a way to generate voluntary contributions from businesses that collect voluntary customer contributions at the point of sale to benefit the Maine Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund. It also explicitly states that businesses shall deposit contributions collected for the fund with the Treasurer of State and designate

those contributions for deposit in the fund. The Treasurer of State shall credit all contributions to the fund and all money generated pursuant to this subsection must be used only for the purposes described in the program fund.

Report: It also added a report back that **directs IFW to submit a report to the Committee on IFW, no later than January 1, 2026**, regarding the Make Change for Wildlife program established by the law. The report may include suggested legislation. The committee is authorized to report out a bill based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 289 - (LD 1430) An Act Regarding the Transfer of Moose Permits to Disabled Veterans

(Effective: January 1, 2026)

This law modifies the process after which a moose hunting permit is transferred to a disabled veteran by removing language that makes both the recipient and the person who transfers their moose hunting permit ineligible to obtain another permit until the 4th calendar year after the issuance of the last permit. Both the transferor and the recipient are able to apply the next calendar year but are still subject to the elimination of any accumulated points in the moose lottery.

This law has an effective date of January 1, 2026.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 343 - (LD 1548) An Act to Prevent the Introduction or Transfer of Invasive Fish Species in Inland Waters of the State

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law does the following:

- Increases the suspension and revocation of a fishing license from 5 years to 10 years for the following 3 offenses:
 - Failing to acquire a permit to import live freshwater fish or eggs except for live baitfish or smelts;
 - Stocking inland waters; and
 - Transporting live fish taken within the State.
- It reduces the mandatory suspension of a fishing license for the violation of illegal possession of live fish from 5 years to one year and establishes that the Commissioner of IFW must suspend a person's fishing license for at least one year if that person is convicted or adjudicated of illegal possession of live fish.
- It adds mandatory restitution for failing to acquire a permit to stock inland waters and failing to acquire a permit to introduce fish or fish eggs into a private pond, and the court must order an offender to pay IFW an amount equal to the cost of labor, equipment, chemicals and all other related expenses directly associated with mitigating or reclaiming waters affected as a result of a violation and direct the offender to provide the Commissioner of IFW proof of that payment.
- It establishes that the Commissioner of IFW may not adopt rules or issue permits governing any aspect of the commercial aquaculture of Atlantic salmon in land-based facilities.
- Current law requires a permit to transport live fish for breeding and advertising. This law eliminates the specific activities of breeding and advertising so the permit is required more generally for transport of live fish except for live baitfish and smelts taken within the State. It adds language to clarify that the requirement for a permit to transport live fish does not apply to Atlantic salmon used in commercial aquaculture.

- This law also creates a prohibition for disposal of live baitfish or smelts into inland waters, which is a civil violation.
- It also changes references to gametes and fish spawn to fish eggs.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 333 - (LD 95) **An Act to Amend and Simplify Certain Wildlife Laws**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

- This was the Department's wildlife related bill that amends various sections of Title 12 law. Last year, as part of a broader effort to align the use of crossbows with bow and arrows during archery seasons, the Department conducted rulemaking to move the "Special Regulations" for deer hunting within Title 12 §11402 into Rule Chapter 16 – Hunting, a section where there was other special hunt information. Portions of §11402 that needed to remain in law were placed in section §11401. This change was made to reduce possible conflict between statute and rule, provide flexibility to adjust the seasons by rule when necessary and clarify the distinctions between the expanded archery season and a special hunting season and correct any cross references with those terms.
- Additionally, the statutory framework for the expanded archery season was unclear therefore, this law establishes the expanded archery season as a distinct season from the other special seasons that the Department implements occasionally on offshore islands and in other unique circumstances. In multiple sections the term, "special season" was purposefully replaced with the term, "expanded archery season".
- It also creates a Freedom of Access Act public records exemption by making location data regarding species of special concern confidential in statute, just as location data regarding threatened and endangered species are. Currently, the Department must provide location data for these species upon request, creating a significant risk of illegal collection for some species. Allowing the Department to withhold records for these species, when doing so is important for their conservation, will help reduce the potential that they may need to be listed as threatened or endangered in the future.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 388 – (LD 210) **An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027**

This is a lengthy law that captures the Department's budget appropriations and allocations in several sections, the sections that are impactful to IFW are indicated with page numbers and "PART" of the law here.

Pages 150 – 171 provides distribution of funds for the Department.

Page 241 IFW is mentioned in this section of the law related to municipal planning assistance.

Page 247 Creates a Development Ready Advisory Committee that IFW will assign a staff person to. This Committee is established to develop and maintain best practices for municipalities in infrastructure, land use, housing, economic development, conservation and historic preservation policy. The committee shall provide coordination and subject matter expertise to municipalities to advance the likelihood of success across the community development life cycle. The committee shall develop best practices for community development intended to support several specific goals.

Page 317 PART Y describes transfer of funds.

Page 330-332 PART MMM describes IFW carrying account transfers.

Pages 331- 332 - PART NNN

Within 12 MRSA §11109 the following combination hunting and fishing license fees changed as follows:

- A resident combination hunting and fishing license went from \$43 up to \$48.
- A resident combination archery hunting and fishing license went from \$43 up to \$48.
- A nonresident combination hunting and fishing license went from \$150 up to \$169.
- A resident combination archery hunting and fishing license went from \$43 up to \$48.

Within 12 MRSA §11109-A, sub-§5 the following superpack license fees changed as follows:

- The fee for a super pack license went from \$207 up to \$212 for residents and from \$182 up to \$187 for a person holding 2 or more lifetime licenses.

Within 12 MRSA §12501, sub-§6, the following fishing license fees changed as follows:

- A resident fishing license went from \$25 up to \$30.
- A resident combination hunting and fishing license went from \$43 up to \$48.
- A resident combination archery hunting and fishing license went from \$43 up to \$48.
- A 3-day fishing license for a resident or nonresident, valid for the 72-hour period specified on the license, went from \$23 up to \$30.
- A nonresident 7-day fishing license, valid for 7 days from date indicated on license, went from \$43 up to \$62.
- A nonresident 15-day fishing license, valid for 15 days from date as indicated on the license, went from \$47 up to \$66.
- A nonresident season fishing license for persons 16 years of age or older went from \$64 up to \$83.
- A one-day fishing license for a resident or nonresident, valid for the 24-hour period as indicated on the license, went from \$11 up to \$18.

Report Back

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 378 - (LD 1763) An Act to Regulate Nonwater-dependent Floating Structures on Maine's Waters

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

The following is a general summary of what this law does:

- This law implements a prohibition on the placement or use of a nonwater-dependent floating structure in, on or over inland waters or coastal waters. As defined in the law, a "nonwater-dependent floating structure" is a waterborne structure that is supported wholly or partially by the structure's own buoyancy and that supports a nonwater-dependent use. "Nonwater-dependent uses" is defined as those uses that can function in a location other than the surface waters of the State and that do not require, for their primary purpose, location on submerged lands or direct access to inland waters or coastal waters. The prohibition includes limited exceptions for functionally water-dependent uses, swimming structures, water toys, ice fishing shacks and aquaculture facilities, authorized nonwater dependent floating structures, and preexisting nonwater-dependent floating structures with preexisting leases.
- The law includes allowance for existing structures to continue to be used through a lease program managed by the Submerged Lands Program under the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry along with detailed information regarding the application requirements, its process and the renewal process.
- The law also clarifies the regulation of houseboats and homemade watercraft under the laws regulating watercraft.

The following provides specific information following chronological sections of the law:

Sec. 1. Cross-references a definition of “nonwater-dependent floating structure” (being enacted by this law, in Title 38).

Sec. 2. Adds language to say that law enforcement has the authority to enforce the nonwater-dependent floating structures laws (being enacted by this law, in Title 38).

Sec. 3. – 8. These sections of the law establish new or cross-reference existing definitions. The list of definitions are going into Title 12, chapter 933 within general recreational vehicle provisions. The list of definitions include the following terms: Dock, Homemade Watercraft, Houseboat, Mooring, Navigation, and Vessel.

Sec. 9. Amends an existing definition of “Watercraft” by establishing that watercraft includes houseboats capable of being used as a means of transportation but does not include houseboats located and intended to be permanently docked in one location and not used as a means of transportation on water.

Sec. 10. Establishes that a homemade watercraft must obtain a hull identification number prior to applying for a certificate of number from the Commissioner of IFW.

Sec. 11. Amends an existing definition of “Watercraft” in Title 38 to refer to the definition within Title 12.

Sec. 12. This section establishes a new chapter within Title 38: Chapter 37 – Nonwater-dependent floating structures and establishes new or cross-references existing definitions which include: Abandoned nonwater-dependent floating structure, Coastal waters, Dock, Floating home, Functionally water-dependent uses, Houseboat, Inland waters, Internal waters, Mooring, Nonwater-dependent floating structure, Nonwater-dependent uses, and Watercraft. It establishes a prohibition on nonwater-dependent floating structures. It establishes limited exceptions, including an allowance for existing structures to continue to be used through a lease program. **The exceptions include:** Functionally water-dependent uses, Swimming structures, Water toys, Ice fishing shacks, Aquaculture facilities, Other Facilities and structures, Authorized nonwater dependent floating structures, Preexisting nonwater-dependent floating structures with preexisting leases.

Sec. 13. Report. IFW shall submit, no later than February 1, 2026, a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife with updated information on nonwater-dependent floating structures in the State and the implementation of this Act. The report may include recommendations for statutory changes. The committee may report out a bill based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 390 - (LD 1984) An Act to Correct Inconsistencies, Conflicts and Errors in the Laws of Maine

(Effective: June 20th, 2025)

This is the state's errors and omissions bill and impacts one section of IFW laws within:

Page 9 - Sec. A-29. 12 MRSA §13068-A, sub-§10, ¶A, is amended by repealing the first blocked paragraph and enacting the following in its place: As used in this paragraph, "motorboat" does not include an airboat as defined in subsection 10-A

Resolves/Report Backs

Resolve/Report Back

RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 32 - (LD 139) **Resolve, Directing the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to Study Establishing a Program for the Electronic Tagging of Deer**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

Sec. 1. Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to study establishing program for electronic tagging of deer. IFW shall study and establish a plan for the implementation of a program for the electronic tagging of harvested deer.

Report: The department shall submit a report, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on IFW **no later than January 14, 2026**. The report must include information on the projected costs, programming and staffing requirements of developing and implementing an electronic tagging program and how the department would recoup lost money, if applicable.

Consultation with Registration Agents: To the extent practicable, the department shall consult with local business owners in the study who contract as registered agents of the department for the tagging of deer to gauge how a transition to an electronic tagging program may impact these agents, especially in more rural areas of the State.

Biological Data Collection and Enforcement Impacts: The report must also include information related to anticipated effects on biological data collection and relevant compliance and enforcement issues.

Program Implementation: Finally, the report must outline a plan for program implementation, including suggested time frames, and a plan for how the department would raise awareness of an electronic tagging program across the State. The Joint Standing Committee on IFW may report out a bill based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

Resolve/Report Back

RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 35 – (LD 777) **Resolve, Directing the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to Study Lengthening the Muzzle-loading Season for Deer in Certain Wildlife Management Districts**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

Sec. 1. Study of muzzle-loading season for deer and expanding season in certain wildlife management districts. The IFW shall study lengthening the muzzle-loading season for deer beyond the 6-day season currently established in department rule in additional wildlife management districts (WMDs) in the State where winter conditions are less severe.

Sec. 2. Report. By January 1, 2026, IFW shall submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on IFW that includes an overview of the study findings pursuant to section 1 and any recommendations to identify additional WMDs where the length of the special muzzle-loading season on deer could be extended. The report must include a map identifying the muzzleloading season for deer in each WMD in the State and highlight on the map WMDs that are currently permitted by rule to have a longer season

than 6 days, WMDs that IFW determines could have an extended season and WMDs that IFW determines should continue to have a 6-day season. The committee may report out a bill related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

Resolve/Report Back

RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 37 – (LD 101) **Resolve, to Convene a Working Group to Examine the Classification of and Access to Public Records Maintained by Certain State Agencies**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

Sec. 1. Definitions. Resolved: That, as used in this resolve, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

1. "Department" means the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW).
2. "Right to Know Advisory Committee" means the Right to Know Advisory Committee (RTKAC) established under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 1, section 411.

Sec. 2. Working group established. IFW, in consultation with the (RTKAC), shall convene a working group to examine the classification and accessibility of public records maintained by the state agencies identified in section 3 and the associated fees that may be charged for those public records, referred to in this resolve as "the working group." The department shall provide administrative support to the working group as needed.

Sec. 3. Working group members. The working group consists of the following members:

1. One member from the department, appointed by the Commissioner of IFW, who serves as chair;
2. Two members from the (RTKAC) who are not Legislators, one of whom must be the member appointed to represent law enforcement interests pursuant to, Title 1, section 411, subsection 2, paragraph F, appointed by the chair of the (RTKAC);
3. One member from the office of the Secretary of State, appointed by the Secretary of State;
4. One member from the Department of Marine Resources, appointed by the Commissioner of Marine Resources; and
5. One member from the Department of Public Safety, appointed by the Commissioner of Public Safety. The chair of the working group may appoint additional members as determined necessary by a majority of the working group's members. The working group shall consult with a representative from the Office of the Attorney General, designated by the Attorney General, to assist the working group in its deliberations as needed.

Sec. 4. Selection of members. No later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve, the (RTKAC) and the state agencies identified in section 3 shall notify the department of the member or members selected for participation in the working group.

Sec. 5. Duties. The working group shall:

1. Determine the classification and accessibility of public records by:
 - A. Reviewing the current provisions of the Freedom of Access Act;
 - B. Determining which records in the possession of the state agencies identified in section 3 are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Access Act and which records are not; and
 - C. Identifying categories of information that the state agencies identified in section 3 should have the ability to designate as confidential and not subject to public disclosure;
2. Evaluate fees for public records requests by:
 - A. Examining and recommending appropriate fees for processing large-scale requests for public records; and

- B. Considering a reasonable cost structure that balances public access with administrative burdens; and
- 3. Consider additional areas for review by identifying any other issues related to public records management, retention and disclosure as appropriate.

Sec. 6. Report. No later than January 14, 2026, the working group shall submit a report that includes the working group's findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary; the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife; the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources; and the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. Each committee that receives a report may report out a bill related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

Resolve

RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 42 – (LD 758) **Resolve, to Conduct a Study to Update Flood Hazard Data in the Sandy River Watershed**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

Sec. 1. Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF), Maine Geological Survey to conduct Sandy River watershed geomorphic study.

Resolved: That, in coordination with the United States Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency the Department of Transportation; the Department of Environmental Protection; **the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife**; the Maine Office of Community Affairs; the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, Maine Emergency Management Agency; and other relevant state agencies, the DACF, Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning, Division of Geology, Natural Areas and Coastal Resources, Maine Geological Survey shall contract for a geomorphic study within the Sandy River watershed to update flood hazard data within the watershed. The study must include an assessment of river movement, erosion and sedimentation and the impacts of those factors on flood risk and river health. The study must also provide individuals who reside within the Sandy River watershed and individuals who reside within the watershed of similar river systems with information about flood risks and options to manage those risks. The DACF, in collaboration with relevant state agencies, shall seek funding to support the costs of the study.

Resolve/Report Back

RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 44 – (LD 1322) **Resolve, to Establish a Pilot Program to Enhance Youth Hunting Participation**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

Sec. 1. Youth participation in hunting pilot program. Resolved: That the IFW in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), Office of Tourism, shall establish through rulemaking a 2-year pilot program to run for calendar years 2026 and 2027 to increase youth participation in hunting. The program must include expanded youth hunting seasons and outreach initiatives.

Sec. 2. Program components. That the 2-year pilot program consists of the following components.

1. The department shall schedule the youth spring wild turkey hunting day pursuant to Title 12, section 11701, subsection 3 during a period with increased availability for youth hunters, such as a long weekend, or the department may establish a 2-day season on a Friday and Saturday.
2. The department shall establish a 2-day youth bear hunting season on a Friday and Saturday during a time when youth are more likely to be able to participate, such as late summer or early fall.

3. The department shall establish a day for youth hunting with dogs prior to the start of the regular season for hunting with dogs pursuant to Title 12, section 11251, subsection 1.
4. The pilot program must include a robust public relations and social media campaign aimed at increasing awareness of youth hunting opportunities and promoting responsible and safe hunting practices.
5. The pilot program must include collaboration with community organizations, schools and outdoor retailers to host informational and educational events.
6. The department must invite the participation of hunting organizations, local communities and conservation groups to ensure the pilot program meets community and environmental standards.

Sec. 3. Rules. The department, in collaboration with the DECD, Office of Tourism, shall adopt routine technical rules to implement the 2-year pilot program under section 1, including but not limited to setting specific dates for the pilot program and establishing participation guidelines and reporting requirements.

Sec. 4. Report. The department shall report by January 6, 2027 and by January 5, 2028 on the implementation of the 2-year pilot program under section 1 to the IFW Legislative Committee. The report must include:

1. Participation data and demographic trends;
2. Feedback from participants and stakeholders;
3. The pilot program's impact on youth engagement and conservation awareness; and
4. Recommendations for pilot program continuation, modification or termination.

Sec. 5. Legislation. Within the report submitted pursuant to section 4 in 2028, the department may include suggested legislation based on department findings during the 2-year pilot program under section 1. The IFW Legislative Committee may submit legislation based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 133rd Legislature.

Resolve/Report Back

RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 74 - (LD 866) **Resolve, Directing the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to Implement a Landowner Antlerless Deer Permit Gift Program**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

The resolve does the following:

Sec. 1. Program established. Resolved: IFW shall establish and implement a landowner antlerless deer permit gift program, which allows a person to purchase an antlerless deer permit for a landowner for \$12 as a gesture of appreciation for a landowner that allows hunting on the landowner's land.

Sec. 2. Report. No later than January 1, 2027, IFW shall submit a report to the joint standing committee over IFW matters that includes an overview of the program and any suggested recommendations for legislative changes. The report must also include a description of the ways the department has engaged with and shown appreciation for landowners that allow hunting on those landowners' properties and the outreach conducted by the department to encourage hunters to show appreciation to landowners that allow hunting on those landowners' properties. The committee may report out a bill related to the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

Resolve/Report Back

RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 82 - (LD 1308) **"Resolve, Directing the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to Establish a Working Group to Explore Opportunities to Maintain Public Access of Land**

(Effective by Emergency: June 17, 2025)

Sec. 1. Working group. Resolved: That the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, jointly referred to in this resolve as "the departments," shall convene a working group to examine issues related to public access to privately owned land in the State and opportunities to expand this access.

Sec. 2. Working group membership: This resolve is enacted by emergency and directs IFW and the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) to establish a working group that is broadly representative of landowner and land user interests to explore ways to maintain and expand public access to privately owned lands in the State. The Group must be geographically representative of the different regions of the State and consist of at least the following 12 members representing:

1. A statewide organization representing commercial forest landowners;
2. A statewide organization representing small woodland owners;
3. A organization managing recreational access to the North Maine Woods;
4. A conservation organization that manages land or conservation easements;
5. An agricultural organization;
6. A statewide organization representing Maine guides;
7. A tourism and outdoor recreation industry focused on hiking, wildlife watching, biking, paddling or other popular outdoor pursuits;
8. A statewide association representing hunters and anglers;
9. A statewide association representing recreational vehicle users;
10. The DACF, Bureau of Parks and Lands;
11. The IFW landowner relations program; and
12. The Department of Economic and Community Development.

Sec. 3. Working group chairs. The DACF, Conservation and Forestry or the commissioner's designee and the Commissioner of IFW or the commissioner's designee serve as cochairs of the working group under section 1 and shall make appointments to the working group as outlined in section 2. The cochairs shall serve as nonvoting members of the working group.

Sec. 4. Working group duties. The working group under section 1 shall:

1. Solicit and explore strategies to provide private landowners with financial incentives to maintain and expand recreational access to important corridors and destinations;
2. Solicit input from a broad range of individuals and businesses involved in outdoor and traditional recreational activities, landowners, outdoor recreation and public access policy experts and the general public to understand the history and value of and issues associated with the State's tradition of public access to public and private property;
3. Develop an assessment of the current and future status of public access to public and private property, with particular attention to current and future outdoor and traditional recreational activities;
4. Bring forth additional discussion points as agreed upon by the working group;
5. Recommend actions and policies that may be implemented to better support public access to public and private property in both municipalities and the unorganized territory; and
6. Evaluate enforcement of existing laws and rules on designated state trail systems.

Sec. 5. Working group staff assistance. The departments shall provide staffing to the working group under section 1 within existing resources and may seek staffing and financial support from other state agencies and private entities to accomplish the working group's work.

Sec. 6. Report. The departments shall report any findings and recommendations resulting from meetings of the working group under section 1 to the Joint Standing Committee on ACF and the Joint Standing Committee on IFW **by February 15, 2026**. Each of the committees may report out a bill based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

Resolve/Report Back

RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 100 - (LD 976) Resolve, to Establish a Working Group to Facilitate Public Access and Resilience Planning for Swan Island

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This resolve directs IFW to convene a working group to develop a comprehensive plan to enhance public access to Swan Island in Perkins Township. It outlines the working group duties and expected deliverables and to provide public notice for its meetings. The Commissioner must submit a Swan Island public access plan to the Committee and the Committee may report out a bill next session.

Sec. 1. Swan Island access and resilience working group convened.

Resolved: That the IFW, referred to in this resolve as "the department," shall convene a working group to develop a comprehensive plan to enhance public access to Swan Island in Perkins Township in Sagadahoc County. The working group must include, but is not limited to:

1. The Commissioner of IFW or the commissioner's designee;
2. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development or the commissioner's designee;
3. The Director of the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future or the director's designee;
4. The Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry or the commissioner's designee;
5. A municipal official from the Town of Richmond responsible for tax increment financing allocations; and
6. A representative from a local nonprofit organization with an interest in outdoor recreation access, conservation or community development related to Swan Island.

Sec. 2. Plan development; working group meetings. The working group convened pursuant to section 1 shall:

1. Identify barriers to public access to Swan Island and strategies for removing those barriers;
2. Evaluate accessible transportation options for the public, including operation and maintenance of a ferry or alternative public transportation systems that may be conducted through public-private partnerships;
3. Assess infrastructure needs, such as the creation and upkeep of docks, campgrounds, educational facilities and historic sites;
4. Recommend roles and responsibilities among state and municipal partners for operations, maintenance and land stewardship;
5. Explore funding sources, including, but not limited to, land and water conservation funds, tax increment financing allocations and public and private funds or resilience-related programs;
6. Develop a coordinated implementation timeline and cost estimates;

7. Identify any necessary changes to statute or rule; and
8. Produce a detailed Swan Island public access plan with supporting documentation and an implementation date on or before May 1, 2026.

The working group shall provide public notice for its meetings.

Sec. 3. Report. The department shall submit a report that includes the finalized Swan Island public access plan produced pursuant to section 2, along with any recommended legislation from the working group convened pursuant to section 1, to the Joint Standing Committee on IFW no later than January 1, 2026. The committee may submit a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature based on the report. This resolve may not be construed to prevent the department from initiating implementation of the public access plan prior to or following January 1, 2026.

Carryovers

Carryover

[LD 19 - An Act to Change the Definition of "Oversized ATV" in the Laws Governing the Registration of All-terrain Vehicles](#)

This bill proposed to increase the minimum weight of an oversized all-terrain vehicle from 2,000 to 2,500 pounds. The Committee killed [LD 341](#) - An Act to Amend the Definition of "Oversized ATV" to Increase the Minimum Weight Requirement. LD 341 also proposed to increase the minimum weight of an oversized all-terrain vehicle from 2,000 to 3,500 pounds. The Committee didn't have a formal request for IFW but wanted more time to think about the complexities. There was a lot of concern from landowners who expressed that they would shut their land down to ATV riders if the weight limit was increased. There was also a lot of support from landowners (some who owned oversized ATVs and some who didn't) that wanted to create trails for oversized ATVs. The Committee stated that some areas in law need clarification and there needs to be increased education and compliance from the dealers to inform a buyer before they purchase an oversized ATV. The Committee wanted more time during the off session to work on this. There was no formal direction to IFW just that continued discussion on this topic will occur and be brought back into the next session.

Carryover

[LD 76 - An Act to Allow Use of the Fish Hatchery Maintenance Fund to Compensate Hatchery Staff When Certain Operational Needs Require Overtime](#)

This bill proposed to expand the use of the fish hatchery maintenance fund to allow the funding of overtime personnel services costs when overtime for fish stocking and other hatchery related work is operationally required.

This was carried over in the event [LD 77](#) in case it died, which it did, so the Committee can use this bill next session as a vehicle to put language in that would allow funds from the hatcheries maintenance fund to be used for hatcheries work and overtime. This language was also placed in the budget bill in case this portion of the budget didn't pass IFW would have another way to move this language forward next session.

Carryover

[LD 276 - An Act Regarding Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#)

This is a concept draft.

Carryover

[LD 441 - An Act to Amend the Way Money Deposited with the Treasurer of State to the Maine Deer Management Fund May Be Invested](#)

The original bill was a concept draft that was amended to establish that money deposited with the Treasurer of State to the credit of the Maine Deer Management Fund may be invested as provided by law and the income/interest from these investments must be credited to the fund.

Carryover

[LD 820 – RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish the Right to Hunt and Fish](#)

This resolution proposes to amend the Constitution of Maine to provide that the right of the people to hunt, fish and harvest game and fish, including by the use of traditional methods, may not be infringed, subject to reasonable laws and rules to promote wildlife conservation and management and to preserve the future of hunting and fishing. It also provides that public hunting and fishing are the preferred means of managing and controlling wildlife.

Carryover

[LD 1343 - An Act to Protect the Right to Harvest Wildlife](#)

This bill proposes to define the verb "harvest" for the marine resources laws and the inland fisheries and wildlife laws. The bill provides that the people of this State have the right to harvest wildlife by hunting, fishing or trapping, subject to applicable laws, rules and regulations.

Carryover

[LD 1737 - An Act to Ensure the Future of Maine's Sporting Camp Heritage](#)

This bill proposes to establish a separate license for a commercial sporting camp that is different than the existing license for a recreational camp or sporting camp. The bill defines "commercial sporting camp." Under the provisions of the bill, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) may not require a commercial sporting camp located in an area without a municipal water supply to install sprinkler systems or to make upgrades or improvements to existing plumbing systems or septic systems as long as those plumbing and septic systems are operational. The department may not require an applicant for a license to demonstrate compliance with any other state laws except for compliance with the licensing requirements. The bill provides that a commercial sporting camp must qualify to serve meals and may not be prohibited from serving or catering meals to the general public if the camp meets the requirements of a Class A restaurant. The bill also makes a commercial sporting camp eligible for a separate moose permit drawing. This is being carried over to have more time to deliberate on the many suggested amendments that were received. This is most impactful to DHHS but has some impact to IFW.

Carryover

[LD 1054 - An Act to Authorize the Penobscot Nation to Use Wild Game Harvested on the Penobscot Indian Territory at Food Venues Located Within the Penobscot Indian Territory](#)

This bill proposes to create an exception to the prohibitions against the purchase, sale or offer for sale of certain wild animals and wild birds. A member of the Penobscot Nation who is a resident of the State and who has lawfully killed or trapped and registered a bear, deer, moose or wild turkey or lawfully killed or trapped a wild bird within the Penobscot Indian territory may use, sell or offer for sale or aid in buying, selling or offering for sale bear, deer, moose, wild turkey and wild birds at an eating establishment, lodging place, mobile eating place or recreational camp or sporting camp that is located within the Penobscot Indian territory.

Laws of Interest

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 2 – (LD 609) An Act Making Certain Appropriations and Allocations and Changing Certain Provisions of Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government
(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

Funding portions of this law that impact Inland Fisheries and Wildlife can be found on pages 248-268.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 3 – (LD 275) An Act to Make Supplemental Allocations from the Highway Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

(Effective by Emergency: March 21, 2025)

This law is the supplemental highway fund budget for 2025.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 9 – (LD 274) An Act Making Unified Allocations from the Highway Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026, and June 30, 2027

(Effective by Emergency: March 21, 2025)

This law proposes to make unified allocations for the expenditures of State Government from the Highway Fund and other funds and change certain provisions of the law necessary to the proper operations of State Government for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027, as submitted by the Governor.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 29 – (LD 40) An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the Commercial Large Game Shooting Area License Transfer Process

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law provides the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry with the final authority on approving a transfer of a commercial large game shooting area license and requires that the proposed new licensee must meet the requirements for licensure as outlined in the statute.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 31 – (LD 72) An Act to Designate the Spring Peeper as the Official State Amphibian

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law designates the spring peeper as the official state amphibian.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 32 – (LD 73) An Act to Designate the Wood Turtle as the Official State Reptile *(Effective: September 24th, 2025)*

This law designates the wood turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*) as the official state reptile.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 33 – (LD 1) - An Act to Increase Storm Preparedness for Maine's Communities, Homes and Infrastructure

(Effective by Emergency: April 22, 2025)

This law creates the Home Resiliency Program within the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation (DPFR), Bureau of Insurance to provide grants to homeowners for the purpose of performing home resiliency projects designed to make a home more resistant to damage from severe weather events. It also establishes the State Resilience Office within the Maine Office of Community Affairs.

LAW OF INTEREST

PRIVATE & SPECIAL LAW 2025 CHAPTER 9 - (LD 531) An Act to Establish the Toddy Pond Watershed Management District

(Effective by Emergency: June 18, 2025)

Subject to approval by the voters at referendum conducted by at least one member of the Town of Orland, the Town of Penobscot, the Town of Blue Hill and the Town of Surry, this law establishes the Toddy Pond Watershed Management District for the purposes of acquiring ownership of, owning, maintaining and operating the dam on Toddy Pond and engaging in other related activities. The costs of operations of the Toddy Pond Watershed Management District are to be funded as follows: 50% of the costs by municipal contribution from the Town of Orland, the Town of Penobscot, the Town of Blue Hill and the Town of Surry, if approved by the voters of those towns; and the remainder of the costs by assessments made on the owners of waterfront property abutting Toddy Pond as determined based on the shoreline frontage of each property owner.

LAW OF INTEREST

PRIVATE & SPECIAL LAW 2025 CHAPTER 10 - (LD 529) An Act to Establish the Alamoosook Lake Watershed Management District

(Effective by Emergency: June 18, 2025)

Subject to approval by the voters of the Town of Orland at referendum, this law establishes the Alamoosook Lake Watershed Management District for the purposes of acquiring ownership of, owning, maintaining and operating the dam on Alamoosook Lake and engaging in other related activities. The costs of operations of the Alamoosook Lake Watershed Management District are to be funded as follows: 50% of the costs by municipal contribution from the Town of Orland, if approved by its voters; and the remainder of the costs by assessments on the owners of waterfront property abutting Alamoosook Lake as determined based on the shoreline frontage of each waterfront property owner.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 65 – (LD 130) An Act to Establish the PFAS Response Program and to Modify the Fund To Address PFAS Contamination

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law requires the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to establish the PFAS Response Program for the purpose of abating, cleaning up and mitigating threats and hazards posed by PFAS that affect agricultural producers in the State and the food supply; providing support to affected commercial farms; supporting critical PFAS research; and allowing for the department to strategically and effectively respond to PFAS concerns and issues as they arise. The program includes establishing

maximum PFAS levels in farm products in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention and, when maximum levels are being exceeded, prohibiting commercial sale of the products affected. The program may provide testing support and technical and financial assistance to PFAS-impacted producers while establishing baseline criteria for producers to adhere to for the receipt of such assistance. The program may also undertake research efforts via department staff, state agency partners or contracted 3rd parties that inform on-farm management recommendations or regulatory decisions. The Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources within the department must administer the program. The department may adopt routine technical rules and shall report annually to the Legislature about the program's activities. The law modifies the Fund To Address PFAS Contamination by authorizing the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to sell, grant, lease, transfer or otherwise convey any real or personal property acquired under its existing authority to buy and sell agricultural land found to be contaminated by PFAS, and to deposit the proceeds of such transactions into the Fund To Address PFAS Contamination.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 84 – (LD 895) **An Act to Support Immersive Outdoor Education by Establishing the Outdoor School for All Maine Students Program**

(Effective by Emergency, May 23, 2025)

This law establishes the Outdoor School for All Maine Students Program to provide immersive outdoor education to serve students enrolled in grade 4 to grade 8 in the State. It also establishes the Outdoor School for All Maine Students Program Fund within the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service. It requires an outdoor education program provider to comply with the requirements of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 12, chapter 927 regarding licensed guides, youth camp trip leaders or educational trip leaders, as appropriate.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 111 – (LD 1828)

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

- This law was put forth by the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary to implement statutory changes recommended by the Right to Know Advisory Committee after reviewing certain existing public records exceptions in Titles 25, 26, 27, 30-A and 32.
- Sections 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 of the law amend language in statute to better conform with drafting standards.
- Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the law amend public records exceptions related to applicants for county and municipal jobs to clarify that personal contact information of applicants is confidential.
- Section 8 of the law amends the existing public records exception to clarify that information included in Board of Nursing consent agreements or other written settlements that identifies or could reasonably lead to identification of a patient is confidential.
- Section 9 of the law amends the existing public records exception to clarify that email addresses of applicants to or licensees of the Board of Licensure in Medicine are confidential, and that the personal residence address and telephone number of the applicant or licensee are not confidential if this information is provided as the public contact.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 122 – (LD 228) **An Act to Allow Coastal Seawalls to Be Raised by up to 2 Feet in Order to Accommodate Predicted Sea Level Rise**

(Effective by Emergency, May 29, 2025)

This law amends the Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA) to authorize the Department of Environmental Protection to approve a permit for a one-time increase by up to 2 feet in the height of a seawall or similar structure in a coastal sand dune system, as long as certain specified conditions are met. It provides a similar allowance for a height increase of up to 2 feet where a seawall has been destroyed or threatened and is replaced after emergency action. It also makes additional clarifications to the provision of the NPRA regarding coastal sand dune system restoration projects with respect to existing seawalls.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 128 – (LD 65) **An Act to Update the Definition of "Coastal Wetlands" Under the Natural Resources Protection Act and the Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Laws**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This amends the Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA) law by reorganizing the definition of "coastal wetlands" in the NRPA and makes corresponding changes to the definition of "coastal wetlands" in the mandatory shoreland zoning laws.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 141 – (LD 528) **An Act to Provide Limited Immunity to Maine Human Rights Commission Mediators**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law amends the Maine Human Rights Act to provide limited immunity to Maine Human Rights Commission mediators while acting as mediators for the commission's 3rd party neutral mediation program.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 175 – (LD 1827) **An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Right to Know Advisory Committee Concerning Public Records Requests**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This changes the law to permit a body or agency or official to deny a series of requests for inspection or copying of a public record on the basis that the series of requests is unduly burdensome or oppressive. The law is amended to provide that a body, agency or official may file an action in the Superior Court for an order of protection from a request or series of requests for inspection or copying that is unduly burdensome or oppressive within 60 days of the date on which the body, agency or official notifies the requester that a series of public records requests is unduly burdensome or oppressive.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 176 – (LD 121) **An Act to Amend the Maine Litter Control Act**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law amends the Maine Litter Control Act by adding brush and yard debris to the definition of "litter." It excludes slash as defined by the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 12, section 9331 that is generated by or on behalf of a public utility from the definition of "brush and yard debris" in the laws

governing litter. It amends the Maine Litter Control Act to require an intentional state of mind to be found liable for littering.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 186 – (LD 1797) **An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Right to Know Advisory Committee Concerning Denials of Public Records Requests**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law implements statutory changes recommended by the Right to Know Advisory Committee. This law requires that a written notice of a denial of a request for inspection or copying of a public record includes a citation to the statutory authority used as the basis for the denial.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 219 – (LD 1607) **An Act to Require Law Enforcement Agencies to Adopt Written Policies Regarding Compliance with Certain Constitutional Obligations Related to Disclosure of Evidence**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law requires that, by January 1, 2026, law enforcement agencies adopt written policies regarding procedures to deal with assisting a prosecuting agency in complying with the prosecuting agency's constitutional obligations under *Brady v. Maryland* (1963) and *Giglio v. United States* (1972) and regarding the requirement to comply with mandatory disclosures to the Maine Criminal Justice Academy.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 226 – (LD 62) **An Act to Support Municipal and County Actions on Dam Ownership and to Make Other Changes to the Laws Regulating Release from Dam Ownership**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

It amends the process for Department of Environmental Protection proceedings for release of dam ownership by changing the information that must be submitted by the dam owner and changing the time frames for certain required processes under the laws regulating those proceedings, including in the consultation process required under those proceedings the Department of Marine Resources to provide for an assessment of the value to marine resources associated with the dam or its removal. The amendment also makes other specified changes to the laws regulating release from dam ownership.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 245 – (LD 1179) **An Act Regarding Safety from Fire for Recreational Vehicles**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law directs the Commissioner of Public Safety to adopt rules governing the safety to life from fire in or around recreational vehicles as defined in National Fire Protection Association standard 1192 and stipulates that a violation of a rule adopted pursuant to the requirement is a strict liability crime as defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 17-A, section 34, subsection 4-A.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 256 – (LD 1953) **An Act to Ensure Public Access to Conservation Land by Providing Protections from Liability to Landowners**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law provides additional protection from liability for a landowner or other grantor who grants, and a holder or grantee who accepts, an easement or other legal instrument that includes or makes an express grant of perpetual public access over premises is for the public to pursue one or more, recreational or harvesting activities.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 309 – (LD 124) **An Act to Protect the Right to Food**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

- It amends the law governing edible landscaping throughout Capitol Park in Augusta to allow collaboration with local, state or regional entities in developing and maintaining edible landscaping.
- It provides that strategies to end hunger in the State by 2030 must include protecting the right to food as declared in the Constitution of Maine, Article I, Section 25.
- It amends the Maine Food Sovereignty Act.
- It establishes the Maine Vegetable Garden Protection Act.
- It requires the Maine Farms for the Future Program review panel, to the extent practicable, to give priority to applications from applicants who have a history of generational poverty or land dispossession in the United States or from applicants who are veterans.
- It allows the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands to lease land and parcels of land in parks and historic sites, nonreserved public land and public reserved land for purposes of cultivating edible crops, hay or pasturage for livestock and allows the bureau to give priority consideration in establishing those leases to individuals with a history of generational poverty or land dispossession in the United States or to individuals who are veterans.
- It clarifies that a plantation has the same powers and duties and is subject to the same restrictions as a municipality with respect to ordinances regarding traditional foodways and direct producer-to-consumer transactions under the Maine Food Sovereignty Act.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 329 – (LD 138) **An Act Regarding the Permitting of Projects Affecting Public-use Airports Under the Natural Resources Protection Act and the Site Location of Development Laws**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law amends the Natural Resources Protection Act and the site location of development laws to provide that the Department of Environmental Protection may not include in any permit issued pursuant to either article any conditions that, as determined by the department, would decrease safety within the air operations area at a public-use airport. "Public-use airport" is defined to have the same meaning as in 49 United States Code, Section 47102(22), "airport security program" means a security program approved by the United States Transportation Services Administration under 49 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1542.101 and "air operations area" is defined to have the same meaning as in 14 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 153.3, except as otherwise specified for a public-use airport that does not have an airport security program.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 338 – (LD 497) An Act Regarding the Regulation of Significant Vernal Pools Under the Natural Resources Protection Act

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

- This law amends parts of the Natural Resources Protection Act regarding significant wildlife habitat to require the following provisions in the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) rules regulating significant vernal pools.
- It requires that the rules include definitions for "critical terrestrial habitat," "significant vernal pool habitat" and "significant vernal pool protection zone." "Significant vernal pool protection zone" must be defined to mean that portion of the critical terrestrial habitat within 100 feet of the spring or fall high-water mark of a significant vernal pool depression. With respect to habitat management standards for significant vernal pool habitat, the rule must require no disturbance within the significant vernal pool depression and the significant vernal pool protection zone to the greatest extent practicable.
- It provides that, where the critical terrestrial habitat for a significant vernal pool is bisected by one or more property boundaries, the critical terrestrial habitat located on a property that does not contain the vernal pool depression must be afforded the same habitat protections under the rule as the critical terrestrial habitat located on the property that contains the vernal pool depression. This also repeals a provision of law providing that a landowner proposing to cause an impact on the buffer area defined for a significant vernal pool habitat is not subject to regulation pursuant to the rule if the significant vernal pool habitat depression is not on property owned or controlled by that landowner.
- It provides that, when a vernal pool habitat has not previously been determined to be significant and the DEP or the IFW makes a determination concerning whether the vernal pool habitat is significant, the rule must provide that either department may determine that the vernal pool habitat is not significant if the vernal pool is located in northern Maine and dries out after filling and before July 15th or the vernal pool is located in southern Maine and dries out after filling and before July 1st.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 384 – (LD 1778) An Act to Update Provisions of the Maine Administrative Procedure Act

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

- It clarifies provisions relating to rule-making public hearings when rule adoptions are authorized by a board or commission consisting of 3 or more members.
- It revises and reorganizes the current provisions regarding rule basis statements, comments on proposed rules and agency responses to those comments, consistency of the text of proposed rules with the text of rules revised during the rule-making process and maintenance by agencies of rule files for each rule that is adopted.
- It adjusts provisions relating to rule-making notices and the public availability of proposed rules to ensure that the time frames stated in those notices and rules are consistent with each other and other provisions of the Maine Administrative Procedure Act.
- It updates the provision that lists the information that must be included in rule-making proposal public notices to ensure consistency with current practices.
- It updates the provision pertaining to agencies' obligation to make copies of proposed rules available to the public.

- It repeals the provision regarding fees that agencies may charge to provide notices of rule-making proposals and copies of proposed rules, as such information is now readily available online at no cost.
- It updates the provision that requires the Secretary of State to arrange for weekly newspaper publication of agency rule-making proposal notices and requires online posting of the notices.
- It requires agencies to post their proposed rules on their publicly accessible websites, as well as to post their adopted rules on those websites or provide a link to their rules that are posted on a website maintained by the Secretary of State.
- It updates and clarifies the provision that requires the Secretary of State to post agency rule-making notices regarding adoption online.
- It requires the Secretary of State to post online a brief explanation of the rule-making process, including an explanation of how a public hearing on a proposed rule may be requested if such a hearing has not been scheduled.
- It revises the provision regarding agencies' filing of adopted rules.
 - Account for technological updates, including the availability of rules and rule-making information and notifications online;
 - Account for the fact that the Secretary of State does not compile and publish a formal code or registry of state agency rules;
 - Relocate and revise the provision regarding the incorporation of materials by reference by agencies into their rules;
 - Update and clarify the provision regarding certification of adopted rules by the Secretary of State; and
 - Strengthen the provision that authorizes minor errors in rules to be corrected by the Secretary of State without agency rulemaking having to occur.
- It revises current provisions concerning annual reports that are provided by the Secretary of State to the Governor and to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over state and local government matters.
- It removes the provision that requires agencies to include a fiscal impact note at the end of each rule, as such information is now collected in other documents that accompany proposed and adopted rule filings with the Secretary of State.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 393 – (LD 1751) **An Act to Improve the Growth Management Program**

Laws (*Effective: September 24th, 2025*)

This law makes changes to the laws governing municipal growth management programs by updating terminology and growth management program elements and procedures and requiring needs assessment, addressing local goals and a future land use plan as part of the comprehensive plan. The law also clarifies the required components of future land use plans.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 447 – (LD 172) **An Act to Require the Maine State Police to Create a Statewide List of Missing Persons and Study Improvements for Investigating Missing Persons Cases**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law requires the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of State Police to establish and maintain a publicly accessible website that lists all open missing persons cases in the State. The website must be updated, at a minimum, once every month to include any new missing person's information. It also directs the bureau to convene a working group to review best practices for investigating missing persons

cases, determining the feasibility of implementing those best practices in the Maine Criminal Justice Academy's curriculum, reviewing the effectiveness of the Silver Alert Program and identifying ways to improve the program. The bureau is required to submit a report by December 3, 2025 to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, which may submit legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

LAW OF INTEREST

PUBLIC LAW 2025 CHAPTER 481 – (LD 1529) An Act to Enhance the Protection of High-value Natural Resources Statewide

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

This law does the following:

- It provides that the Maine Land Use Planning Commission may not finalize a comprehensive land use plan under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 12, section 685-C, subsection 1 or portion of a plan without: submitting a draft copy of the plan to each regional planning commission and other appropriate planning or state resource agencies; submitting a draft copy of the plan to the Director of the Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF); and consider all comments and recommendations submitted.
- It changes the date that the Director of the Bureau of Forestry within the DACF is required to include information regarding late-successional forests and old-growth forests in the director's report on the state of the State's forests from January 1, 2026 to January 1, 2031.
- It directs the Maine Land Use Planning Commission, as part of the next update to the comprehensive land use plan, to consider the effectiveness of its lake management program and whether changing circumstances and new trends warrant an update to the program.
- Subject to the availability of funds, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, referred to in this section as "the department," may develop a comprehensive report on statewide strategies to enhance the conservation of late-successional forests and old-growth forests, including the management of transitioning late-successional forests. In developing the strategies, the department may incorporate ecological values, carbon sequestration methods and economic considerations from a broad range of perspectives to include forest landowners, forest industry representatives, logging contractors, conservation interests and local economies. By November 4, 2026, the department may submit the report, including any recommendations, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agriculture, conservation and forestry matters, which may report out legislation related to the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027. In completing the report under this section, the department may solicit and use resources from other state agencies and outside sources.

Resolves of Interest

Resolve of Interest

[RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 19](#) – (LD 750) **Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 27: Standards for Timber Harvesting and Timber Harvesting Related Activities Within Unorganized and Deorganized Areas of the State, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Forestry**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

Sec. 1. Adoption. Resolved: That final adoption of portions of *Chapter 27: Standards for Timber Harvesting and Timber Harvesting Related Activities Within Unorganized and Deorganized Areas of the State*, a provisionally adopted major substantive rule of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Forestry that has been submitted to the Legislature for review pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A, is authorized as long as the effective date of the rule is January 1, 2026.

Resolve of Interest

[RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 47](#) – (LD 356) **Resolve, Directing the Board of Pesticides Control to Prohibit the Use of Rodenticides in Outdoor Residential Settings**

(Effective: September 24th, 2025)

That the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF), Board of Pesticides Control shall prohibit the use of rodenticides, including rodenticidal baits, in outdoor residential settings. A certified applicator as defined under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 1471-C, subsection 4 is exempt from the prohibition under this section. The board shall submit a report with an update on the prohibition under this section to the Joint Standing Committee on DACF no later than January 15, 2026. The joint standing committee may submit a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature relating to the subject matter of the report.

Resolve of Interest

[RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 55](#) – (LD 1724) **Resolve, Authorizing the Baxter State Park Authority to Convey Certain Land in Cumberland County**

(Effective by Emergency: June 9, 2025)

This resolve authorizes the Baxter State Park Authority to convey the State's interest in the Austin Cary Lot in the Town of Harpswell subject to certain restrictions.

Resolve of Interest

[RESOLVE 2025 CHAPTER 58](#) – (LD 269) **Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 375: No Adverse Environmental Effect Standards of the Site Location of Development Act, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Environmental Protection**

(Effective by Emergency: June 10, 2025)

This resolve authorizes final adoption of Chapter 375: No Adverse Environmental Effect Standards of the Site Location of Development Act, a major substantive rule of the Department of Environmental Protection that was submitted for legislative review, only if certain specified changes are made to that rule prior to final adoption.