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Resolve, To Prevent the Spread of Invasive Plants and Protect Maine's Lakes

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, it is essential that the efforts to prevent the spread of invasive plants in Maine's lakes proposed in this resolve be initiated before the start of the spring boating season; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1 Review of lakes within the State infested with aquatic invasive plant species. Resolved: That the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall collaborate to review all lakes individually in the State with known infestations of aquatic invasive plant species to determine:

1. The type, extent and location of each infestation and its proximity to boat access points;
2. The general uses of the body of water;
3. The extent of involvement by local courtesy boat inspectors and lake associations regarding the prevention and control of aquatic invasive plant species; and
4. The use of existing surface water management strategies.

The departments shall collaborate with lake associations and user groups to identify private boat ramps on lakes infested with aquatic invasive plant species. For purposes of this section, "boat access point" includes but is not limited to public boat ramps, carry-in sites, lake access provided by sporting camps and private boat ramps and access areas; and be it further

Sec. 2 Surface water extraction information and review. Resolved: That the Department of Environmental Protection shall collect data on the types and extent of surface water extraction and review surface water extraction activities to determine in each case if an informational letter to the extractor regarding the spread of aquatic invasive plant species is necessary to prevent the introduction or spread of an aquatic invasive plant species through the surface water extraction process; and be it further

Sec. 3 Educational and outreach efforts. Resolved: That the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall work cooperatively to increase the effectiveness of educational and outreach efforts regarding aquatic invasive plant species through methods that may include but are not limited to:

1. Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife radio broadcasts;
2. Placing signs about aquatic invasive plant species on Interstate 95;

3. Prominently publishing information about aquatic invasive plant species on the departments' publicly accessible websites;

4. E-mailing aquatic invasive plant species alerts to e-mail addresses contained in databases of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife; and

5. Improving communication with sporting and tourist camps and professional guides; and be it further

Sec. 4 Working group. Resolved: That the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall facilitate the continued work of an aquatic invasive plant species working group that includes the Maine Congress of Lake Associations, a statewide sporting group, bass fishing clubs and any other person or entity that the working group determines is necessary to conduct its work. The working group shall continue its work exploring initiatives related to aquatic invasive plant species and collaborate with the Interagency Task Force on Invasive Aquatic Plants and Nuisance Species established pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 12004D. The working group shall assign a chair, who is in charge of convening the meetings and keeping notes of discussions. The working group shall hold meetings before January 1, 2011 and may continue its work after that date as needed; and be it further

Sec. 5 Report. Resolved: That the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters, the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over natural resources matters and the Interagency Task Force on Invasive Aquatic Plants and Nuisance Species, established pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 12004D, by January 2, 2011 regarding matters contained in this resolve and on any new aquatic invasive plant species infestations identified; and be it further

Sec. 6 Funding. Resolved: That the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall meet the requirements of this resolve within existing resources but may accept outside funding to supplement those resources.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.