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An Act To Restore the White-tailed Deer Population and Improve Maine's Wildlife Economy and Heritage

CONCEPT DRAFT SUMMARY

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208.

This bill proposes to enact measures designed to restore the white-tailed deer population and improve the State's wildlife economy and heritage. These measures may include, but are not limited to:

1. Directing the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to notify the custodian of any state-owned property when a deer wintering area is identified on that property and requiring the custodian of the property to ensure that the property is managed with protection of the deer wintering area as the first priority;

2. Directing the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to review existing restrictions on the amount of wood ash that may be recycled into fertilizer and soil amendments in order to make it easier to obtain and use wood ash for deer food plots; and

3. Amending the laws governing the Land for Maine's Future program to:

A. Require that, in its evaluation of potential projects, the Land for Maine's Future Board give priority to the protection of deer wintering areas;

B. With respect to fee acquisitions that are purchased with Land for Maine's Future funds, require state agencies with whom the Land for Maine's Future Board partners to give deer wintering area management special priority; and

C. Require that the Department of Conservation and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife develop projects that protect deer wintering areas and submit those projects for funding to the Land for Maine's Future Board.