



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1661

H.P. 1102

House of Representatives, April 15, 2025

An Act to Establish a Comprehensive and Interagency Approach to Invasive Species Management

Reference to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative FROST of Belgrade.
Cosponsored by Senator BENNETT of Oxford and
Representatives: DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, FRIEDMANN of Bar Harbor,
GUERRETTE of Caribou, HASENFUS of Readfield, HEPLER of Woolwich, TERRY of
Gorham, Senator: BLACK of Franklin.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §12004-D, sub-§7** is enacted to read:

3 7.

4 Maine Invasive Species Advisory Council Legislative Per Diem 12 MRSA §12405

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6 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §12405** is enacted to read:

7 **§12405. Maine Invasive Species Advisory Council**

8 The Maine Invasive Species Advisory Council, referred to in this section as "the
9 council," is established to advise the Governor and Legislature on how to evaluate and
10 prioritize invasive species management objectives across all taxa.

11 **1. Council membership.** The council consists of the following 20 members:

12 A. The following 8 members from the Legislature and executive agencies:

13 (1) One member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate;

14 (2) One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the
15 House;

16 (3) The Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry or the
17 commissioner's designee;

18 (4) The Commissioner of Environmental Protection or the commissioner's
19 designee;

20 (5) The Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife or the commissioner's
21 designee;

22 (6) The Commissioner of Marine Resources or the commissioner's designee;

23 (7) The Commissioner of Transportation or the commissioner's designee; and

24 (8) The Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the commissioner's
25 designee; and

26 B. The following 12 members appointed by the Governor representing state interests
27 affected by invasive species across all taxa:

28 (1) One member representing fisheries;

29 (2) One member representing agriculture;

30 (3) One member representing municipal governments;

31 (4) One member representing forest industries;

32 (5) One member representing the federally recognized Indian tribes, nations and
33 bands in the State;

34 (6) One member representing soil and water conservation districts;

35 (7) One member representing the outdoor recreation industry;

36 (8) One member representing the nursery and landscaping industry;

- 1 (9) One member representing lake and river interests;
2 (10) One member representing the University of Maine's climate change institute
3 or successor organization; and
4 (11) Two members representing environmental nonprofit organizations or private
5 foundations focused on invasive species issues.

6 A legislative member appointed pursuant to paragraph A, subparagraph (1) or (2) serves
7 for the duration of the Legislature in which the legislative member was appointed. At the
8 end of a legislative member's term, the member continues to serve until a successor is
9 appointed. Legislative members are entitled to receive the legislative per diem, as defined
10 in Title 3, section 2, and reimbursement for travel and other necessary expenses for their
11 attendance at meetings of the council. Members appointed by the Governor pursuant to
12 paragraph B serve 4-year terms, except that, as determined by the Governor, of the initial
13 appointments, 6 appointments must be for 3 years and 6 appointments must be for 2 years.
14 A member appointed by the Governor serves until the member's successor is appointed. A
15 vacancy must be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term. If after 6 months the
16 Governor cannot fill a vacancy on the council in a position listed in paragraph B, the
17 Governor may appoint a member who does not meet the qualifications of paragraph B but
18 who has demonstrated experience or interest in the area of threats posed by invasive
19 species.

20 **2. Council chairs.** The Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and
21 the Commissioner of Environmental Protection or their designees serve as cochairs of the
22 council.

23 **3. Meetings.** The council shall meet at least quarterly and must be staffed by the
24 Comprehensive Invasive Species Management Office under section 12406.

25 **4. Consultation.** The council may consult with any organization, educational
26 institution or governmental agency, including, but not limited to, the United States
27 Department of Agriculture; the United States Department of Homeland Security; the
28 United States Department of the Interior, National Invasive Species Council; and the Maine
29 Climate Council under Title 38, section 577-A.

30 **5. Duties.** The council shall:

31 A. From time to time assess the nature, scope and magnitude of the environmental,
32 ecological, agricultural, economic, recreational and social impacts caused by invasive
33 species in the State;

34 B. From time to time identify actions taken by members of the council, state and local
35 governments and the public to prevent the introduction of invasive species; detect and
36 respond rapidly to and control populations of invasive species in a cost-effective and
37 environmentally sound manner; monitor invasive species populations accurately and
38 reliably; provide for restoration of native species and habitat conditions in ecosystems
39 that have been affected by invasive species; conduct research on invasive species and
40 develop technologies to prevent introduction of invasive species; provide for
41 environmentally sound control of invasive species; promote public education on
42 invasive species; and aid in the development of means to address invasive species;

43 C. Develop a comprehensive plan for invasive species management. The plan must
44 address all taxa of invasive species. The plan must, at a minimum, recommend

1 interagency responsibilities; describe coordination among different agencies and
2 organizations; recommend approaches to funding work related to invasive species;
3 address prevention, early detection and rapid response; identify opportunities for
4 control of invasive species and restoration of native species and habitat conditions in
5 ecosystems that have been affected by invasive species, including research needs; and
6 describe effective outreach and education. The plan must recommend responsibilities
7 for the different agencies and organizations, with the goal of reducing or eliminating,
8 when practicable, contradictory or conflicting policies or programs. The plan must
9 identify needs for additional staff positions within state agencies and recommend state
10 or federal laws, rules or regulations. The plan must place an emphasis on prevention,
11 early detection and rapid response. The plan must evaluate and incorporate, as
12 appropriate, the approved action plan for managing invasive aquatic plants and
13 nuisance species pursuant to Title 38, section 1872;

14 D. Provide input on funding priorities and grant applications regarding money made
15 available for the implementation of this section and grants for projects related to the
16 control and management of invasive species, education and outreach efforts and for
17 projects aimed at the early detection and prevention of invasive species;

18 E. Organize and convene a biennial invasive species summit to focus and maintain
19 attention on the State's comprehensive invasive species plan under paragraph C;

20 F. Encourage industries and trade organizations to develop and adopt voluntary codes
21 of conduct designed to reduce or eliminate the use and distribution of invasive species,
22 review these voluntary codes of conduct and officially recognize adopted codes of
23 conduct;

24 G. Support within available funds and encourage partnerships for regional invasive
25 species management efforts to address invasive species through the coordination,
26 recruitment and training of volunteers, education, early detection, rapid response,
27 eradication, research and planning;

28 H. Submit to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over
29 agriculture, conservation and forestry matters and environmental protection matters
30 and the Governor prior to January 1, 2027 a comprehensive plan for invasive species
31 management under paragraph C and updates to the plan every 2 years thereafter; and

32 I. Develop recommendations on statutory actions to prohibit, manage and control
33 invasive species.

34 **Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §12406** is enacted to read:

35 **§12406. Comprehensive Invasive Species Management Office**

36 The Comprehensive Invasive Species Management Office, referred to in this section
37 as "the office," is established within the Office of the Governor to coordinate interagency
38 collaboration to accomplish invasive species prevention, management, education and
39 outreach as prioritized and directed by the Maine Invasive Species Advisory Council under
40 section 12405.

41 The office must be staffed by a statewide coordinator who is directed by the Maine
42 Invasive Species Advisory Council and who is attached to the Office of the Governor for
43 administrative purposes.

SUMMARY

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This bill establishes the Maine Invasive Species Advisory Council and the Comprehensive Invasive Species Management Office to evaluate and prioritize invasive species management across all taxa and coordinate interagency collaboration to accomplish invasive species prevention, management, education and outreach.