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An Act To Ensure a Reliable Funding Stream for the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

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

Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §10751, sub-§9 is enacted to read:

9. Donations. The commissioner may provide on a license or permit application a method for the applicant to donate funds for use by the department for a wildlife management district established by the department and identified by the applicant. Funds donated to the department under this subsection are nonrefundable and are in addition to any other fee.

Sec. 2. Funding sources. The Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall identify reliable, ongoing funding sources for the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to ensure its long-term financial stability. The commissioner shall work with the Public Utilities Commission and other entities as the commissioner determines necessary to secure a portion of the revenues deposited in the energy infrastructure benefit fund pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 122, subsection 6-A or any other revenue received by the Public Utilities Commission through fees or other consideration for energy projects to fund the operations of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. The commissioner shall report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters by January 15, 2013 on funding sources identified or secured pursuant to this section. The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters may report out a bill to the First Regular Session of the 126th Legislature relating to the commissioner's report.

SUMMARY

This bill authorizes the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to allow an applicant for a license or permit issued by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to make a donation to the department to be used for a wildlife management district identified by the applicant. It also directs the commissioner to seek long-term funding sources for the department and to work with the Public Utilities Commission and other entities to secure a portion of the fees paid for the use of state-owned land and assets within energy infrastructure corridors to help fund operations of the department. The commissioner must report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters by January 15, 2013 on funding sources identified or secured.