

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-TWO

—
H.P. 1359 - L.D. 1826

An Act To Require Reporting by the Interagency Task Force on Invasive Aquatic Plants and Nuisance Species Regarding Recommendations To Reduce the Threat of Further Infestations

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

Sec. 1. 38 MRSA §1871, first ¶, as amended by PL 2013, c. 300, §16, is further amended to read:

The Interagency Task Force on Invasive Aquatic Plants and Nuisance Species, as established by Title 5, section 12004-D, subsection 6 and referred to in this chapter as "the task force," is established to advise the department, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Department of Marine Resources and the Legislature on matters pertaining to research, control and eradication of invasive aquatic plants and nuisance species.

Sec. 2. 38 MRSA §1871, sub-§4, as amended by PL 2013, c. 300, §17, is further amended to read:

4. Duties. The task force ~~may make~~ shall develop findings and recommendations to the department, including any suggested legislation, on any of the following matters and, pursuant to subsection 4-A, submit a report that includes those findings and recommendations to the department, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Department of Marine Resources and the Legislature:

- A. The importation and transportation of invasive aquatic plants and nuisance species;
- B. Monitoring and educational programs aimed at the control of invasive aquatic plants and nuisance species;
- C. A comprehensive state invasive aquatic plants and nuisance species management plan that meets the requirements of the National Invasive Species Act of 1996, 16 United States Code, Section 4722;
- D. A statewide inventory of invasive aquatic plants and nuisance species;

E. Methods to improve cooperation of state, provincial, federal and nongovernmental agencies in the area of invasive aquatic plants and nuisance species prevention and control;

F. Recommendations on the feasibility of implementing lake protection assessment districts that allow residents and owners of land within 250 feet of inland waters to assess themselves to raise funds to assist in the prevention and control of invasive aquatic plants; and

G. Other recommendations as necessary to control the introduction of invasive aquatic plants and nuisance species in the State.

In developing findings and recommendations under this subsection, the task force shall convene a stakeholder group that includes, but is not limited to, task force members, state natural resources agency staff and other persons with relevant experience or expertise including representatives of local and regional lake associations and representatives of lake protection organizations.

Sec. 3. 38 MRSA §1871, sub-§4-A is enacted to read:

4-A. Report. On or before January 15, 2023, and biennially thereafter, the task force shall submit to the department, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Department of Marine Resources and the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over environment and natural resources matters, inland fisheries and wildlife matters and marine resources matters a report containing its findings and recommendations, including any suggested legislation, developed pursuant to subsection 4. After reviewing the report, each joint standing committee may report out legislation related to the report.

Sec. 4. Interagency Task Force on Invasive Aquatic Plants and Nuisance Species; report. The Interagency Task Force on Invasive Aquatic Plants and Nuisance Species established pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 12004-D, subsection 6 shall include in the report required by Title 38, section 1871, subsection 4-A and due January 15, 2023 additional findings and recommendations on:

1. Methods to expedite and improve the process for treating lakes infested with invasive aquatic plants with newly developed herbicide treatments or vegetation removal processes;

2. Methods to expedite and improve restrictions limiting the use of watercraft on areas of lakes infested with invasive aquatic plants;

3. The feasibility of requiring inspections of watercraft put into or taken out of lakes infested with invasive aquatic plants or lakes identified by the Department of Environmental Protection to be at risk of infestation; and

4. The permit requirements for recreational and sporting events held on lakes infested with invasive aquatic plants or lakes identified by the department to be at risk of infestation.