

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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OFFICE OF
THE GOVERNOR

NO. 2014-001
DATE February 28, 2014

**AN ORDER ESTABLISHING THE GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON THE INVASIVE
EUROPEAN GREEN CRAB**

WHEREAS, the European green crab population has rapidly expanded in Maine's coastal waters in recent years; and

WHEREAS, the European green crab is a voracious predator known to be causing resource depletion of bivalve shellfish species such as the blue mussel and soft-shelled clam; and

WHEREAS, the European green crab has destroyed eelgrass and fringe marsh habitat throughout the coast; and

WHEREAS, the bivalve shellfish fishery is worth approximately \$25 million to the state economy; and

WHEREAS, the eelgrass and fringe marsh habitats are critically important to the health and productivity of Maine's marine resources; and

WHEREAS, the impacts of European green crab predation are unknown with regard to other commercially important marine species; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Paul R. LePage, Governor of the State of Maine, hereby order as follows:

1. The Governor's Task Force on the invasive European green crab is hereby established.
2. The membership of the task force shall consist of (12) twelve people, appointed by the Governor, including representatives of the following groups:
 - a. Department of Marine Resources (1);
 - b. Department of Environmental Protection (1);
 - c. Department of Economic and Community Development (1);
 - d. Towns with municipal shellfish ordinances (2);
 - e. Bivalve shellfish industry (2);
 - f. Other marine resource industry (2);
 - g. Researchers from disciplines such as ecology, marine biology or shellfish biology (2);
 - h. Researchers from disciplines such as economic or market development (1).

3. The Commissioner of Marine Resources shall designate a chair for the task force.

The Task Force shall:

- a. Review and consider the impacts of European green crabs on the commercial bivalve fisheries, shellfish aquaculture; intertidal and subtidal habitat, and other marine resources;
- b. Develop recommendations for short-term and long-term solutions in addressing the European green crab population explosion in coastal Maine waters including, but not limited to targeted depletion and directed fishery development;
- c. Determine the direct economic impacts of European green crab predation on the bivalve shellfish resources of Maine.
- d. Review and consider costs associated with proposed control strategies;
- e. Consider anything else necessary to successfully address the European green crab crisis in Maine waters.

1. The Task Force Chair shall:

- a. Identify the process, schedule and information to carry-out the Executive Order.
 1. The Task Force shall submit a written report with recommendations to the Governor no later than September 30, 2014, after which the Task Force shall dissolve.

The effective date of the Executive order is February 28, 2014.


Paul R. LePage, Governor