

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 325

H.P. 225

House of Representatives, February 3, 2025

An Act Related to the Disbursement of Revenue Generated from the Harvesting of River Herring

Received by the Clerk of the House on January 30, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Marine Resources pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative BRIDGEO of Augusta.
Cosponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot and
Representatives: CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham, DILL of Old Town, RIELLY of Westbrook.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §6131, sub-§8**, as amended by PL 2011, c. 598, §11, is further
3 amended to read:

4 **8. Migratory Fish Fund.** All fees received by the commissioner from river herring
5 leasing rights are allocated to the Migratory Fish Fund, as established. Expenditures from
6 the Migratory Fish Fund must be made:

7 A. To build fishways for river herring and other migratory fish;

8 B. For construction of other facilities for improving the environment of river herring
9 and other migratory fish;

10 C. For general propagation and conservation of river herring and other migratory fish;

11 D. For research to enhance the fishing industry based on river herring and other
12 migratory fish; ~~and~~

13 E. For management measures required to maintain or enhance river herring
14 populations or populations of other migratory fish; and

15 F. To municipalities where river herring harvesting rights have been granted and to
16 municipalities where known migration of river herring has occurred. Recipient
17 municipalities may donate funds for the purpose of supporting programs designed to
18 restore or protect the quality of the environment of river herring.

19 The Migratory Fish Fund does not lapse.

20 **Sec. 2. Study; equitable distribution of funds from Migratory Fish Fund.**

21 The Department of Marine Resources shall study how to equitably distribute funds from
22 the Migratory Fish Fund, under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 12, section 631,
23 subsection 8, to municipalities. By December 3, 2025, the department shall report its
24 findings, including any suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Marine
25 Resources. The committee may report out a bill based on the report to the Second Regular
26 Session of the 132nd Legislature.

27 **SUMMARY**

28 This bill specifies that funds from the Migratory Fish Fund must be distributed to
29 municipalities that have existing river herring harvesting rights as well as to municipalities
30 where there is a known river herring migration, at the discretion of the Commissioner of
31 Marine Resources. The bill also directs the Department of Marine Resources to study how
32 to equitably distribute funds from the Migratory Fish Fund to municipalities and to report
33 back to the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources. The committee is authorized
34 to report out a bill based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd
35 Legislature.