

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1778

H. P. 1564

House of Representatives, May 16, 1977

Reported by Mrs. Post from Committee on Marine Resources, pursuant to H. P. 253 and printed under Joint Rules No. 17.

Filed by the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources under Joint Rule 17, pursuant to H. P. 253.

Presented by Mrs. Post of Owl's Head.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-SEVEN

AN ACT to Establish Regional Marine Resources Centers.

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

Sec. 1. 12 MRSA § 3507 is enacted to read:

§ 3507. Regional marine resources centers

The commissioner may establish up to 4 regional marine resources centers to serve the coastal areas of the State. The purpose of the centers shall be to provide the various services of the department directly to the fishing industry in a local office, and to improve communication between the industry and department. The centers may serve as the center for the activities of coastal wardens and marine extension agents assigned to the area. The centers may also issue any licenses authorized to be issued under chapters 415 and 417. The commissioner may lease or rent appropriate facilities for each center or enter into arrangements with state departments or agencies for the use of appropriate facilities. He may authorize the use of part of such facilities by other agencies of the State who are engaged in similar or complementary activities.

Sec. 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Marine Resources the sum of \$122,136 to carry out the purposes of this Act. The breakdown shall be as follows:

1977-78

1978-79

MARINE RESOURCES, DEPARTMENT OF

Marine Resources Centers
All Other

\$60,166

\$61,970

FISCAL NOTE

The appropriation in this bill is to be met by discontinuing the present appropriation, in an identical amount, to TRIGOM - The Research Institute of the Gulf of Maine. The present budget appropriation to TRIGOM is contained in the University of Maine - Educational and General Activities appropriation. As this appropriation has traditionally been allocated for services related to marine resources, it should continue to be used for this general purpose.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill is to establish 4 marine resources centers along the coast. One center will be located in each warden district. The centers will be a focus of communications between the fishing industry and the department, and will be the center for the operations of the department's warden service and extension service. The University of Maine has also expressed a willingness to use these centers as the base of operation for its sea-grant extension service. This will significantly increase coordination between these activities and improve the services to the fishermen. Licensing could also be accomplished through these local services.

The only funding required for these centers is the cost of leasing or renting appropriate space in each area. This funding is to be met by transferring the present state appropriation for TRIGOM to the department for this purpose. Additional funds for personnel expenditures and other expenses can be met by federal funds.