

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 1393

S.P. 560

In Senate, March 28, 2023

**Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Examine Programs and
Policies Regarding Natural Resources and Environmental
Protection**

Reference to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator RENY of Lincoln.

1 **Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved:** That the Commission to Examine
2 Programs and Policies Regarding Natural Resources and Environmental Protection,
3 referred to in this resolve as "the commission," is established to develop updated, united
4 and holistic natural resources programs and functions throughout State Government.

5 **Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved:** That the commission consists of
6 the following members:

- 7 1. The Commissioner of Environmental Protection or the commissioner's designee;
- 8 2. The Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry or the commissioner's
9 designee;
- 10 3. The Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife or the commissioner's designee;
- 11 4. The Commissioner of Marine Resources or the commissioner's designee; and
- 12 5. The Director of the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability
13 or the director's designee.

14 **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the chair of the commission and an assistant chair
15 of the commission are appointed by the Governor.

16 **Sec. 4. Convening of commission. Resolved:** That the chair shall call and
17 convene the first meeting of the commission no later than 30 days following the effective
18 date of this resolve.

19 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall review natural resources
20 programs and functions throughout State Government, including the natural resources
21 agencies' interactions with federal agencies, municipalities, counties and nongovernmental
22 organizations. For the purposes of this resolve, "the natural resources agencies" includes
23 the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation
24 and Forestry, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of
25 Marine Resources. The commission shall:

- 26 1. Identify redundancies, inefficiencies and lack of potential internal and external
27 coordination among the natural resources agencies;
- 28 2. Examine methods and issue recommendations to bring all natural resources and
29 environmental protection functions of the natural resources agencies in line with statewide
30 priorities, streamline overall operations and identify overlooked, unsupported and
31 emerging priorities. Such examinations may include examining the nature of how the
32 natural resources agencies evaluate land and water conservation priorities, the methods for
33 establishing new state parks, the ways forests are managed and how climate change and
34 emerging methods for protecting forest ecosystems are managed; and
- 35 3. Receive and consider public comment related to the commission's duties.

36 **Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the members in section 2 shall provide
37 necessary staff services to the commission. At a minimum, each member identified in
38 section 2 shall designate a staff member from that member's agency or office to provide
39 staff support to the commission.

40 **Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That, no later than November 6, 2024, the commission
41 shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested

1 legislation, for presentation to the Governor and the First Regular Session of the 132nd
2 Legislature in 2025.

3 **SUMMARY**

4 This resolve establishes the Commission to Examine Programs and Policies Regarding
5 Natural Resources and Environmental Protection to review natural resources programs and
6 functions throughout State Government, including the natural resources agencies'
7 interactions with federal agencies, municipalities, counties and nongovernmental
8 organizations. The natural resources agencies include the Department of Environmental
9 Protection, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the Department of
10 Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Marine Resources. Members of the
11 commission include the commissioners of the natural resources agencies and the Director
12 of the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability.