

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
130TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



Disposition of bills and summaries of all laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

July 2022

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**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

LD 700 An Act To Promote Economic Development and Outdoor Recreation through Investment in State Parks

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Public Law 2021, chapter 685 requires all revenue in excess of \$5,476,268 from user fees from state parks, historic sites and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway and other payments for certain services, after all other adjustments have been made, to accrue to a nonlapsing dedicated revenue account to be used for capital improvements at state parks and historic sites and provides that that accrument begins after 2025.

LD 736 An Act To Enhance the Ecological Reserve System

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Public Law 2021, chapter 516 provides that the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry may remove the designation of a parcel of land as an ecological reserve only in conjunction with the adoption of a management plan for a particular parcel of land, and the process for adoption of that management plan must provide for public review and comment on the plan.

It provides that when a proposed management plan includes the removal of a parcel of land of 10 acres or more as an ecological reserve, the director is required to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over public lands matters of the proposal prior to the bureau's updating the accompanying management plan for the parcel of land. It also specifies that the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over public lands matters may report out a bill relating to the subject matter of the report.

It adds the gathering of materials for cultural and traditional use by a member of a federally recognized Wabanaki Indian nation, tribe or band in this State to the list of allowed uses within an ecological reserve.

It authorizes the director to implement predetermined wildfire tactics to protect the integrity of the landscape and requires the director to use minimal impact suppression tactics to the extent possible.

It increases the limitation on total land acreage designated as ecological reserves from 15% of the total land acreage under the jurisdiction of the bureau or 100,000 acres, whichever is less, to 115,000 acres. It also increases from 6% to 8% the operable timberland acres on public reserved lands and non-reserved public lands that may be designated as ecological reserves. It clarifies the definition of "operable timberland" by specifying that it does not include inoperable lands.