

## OFFICE OF FISCAL AND PROGRAM REVIEW

Date: March 1, 2012  
To: Members, Joint Standing Committee on Taxation  
From: Elizabeth Cooper, Legislative Analyst

### **LD 1653, "An Act To Make Fisheries and Wildlife Projects Eligible for Tax Increment Financing"**

**Summary:** This bill authorizes the use of tax increment financing for fisheries and wildlife projects approved by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Projects must be undertaken for the purpose of improving public access to fisheries and wildlife resources of the State for fishing, hunting, research or observation or for conservation or improvement of the fisheries and wildlife resources of the State.

#### **Public Hearing:**

##### Proponents

- Sponsor explained in his testimony that this bill provides clarification that municipalities can use TIF for fisheries and wildlife projects and includes technical corrections from the Revisor's office.
- Those testifying in favor of the bill include Sportman's Alliance of Maine, Maine Audubon, the Nature Conservancy and Maine Municipal Association. Additional written testimony was submitted by GrowSmart Maine.
- Testimony suggested the bill provides clear direction that the development of infrastructure projects that protect deer yards, develop fishing opportunities or other enhancement of wildlife habitat are permissible activities under the TIF law. There was testimony that noted that as the TIF law evolves specific activities continue to be added to a part of the law that already authorizes projects outside of the TIF.

Opposed - There was no testimony in opposition to LD 1653.

NFNA - There was no testimony "neither for nor against" LD 1653.

#### **Amendment Proposed:**

- An amendment proposed by Representative Weaver would add municipal projects approved by the Department of Marine Resources to the bill. (Attached.)