

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

## 12 MRSA § 1891-B. Reporting

Public Law, Chapter 146 of the 123rd Legislature established reporting requirements for the Allagash Wilderness Waterway as follows:

The commissioner shall report on or before March 1st of each year to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over conservation matters regarding the state of the waterway, including its mission and goals, administration, education and interpretive programs, historic preservation efforts, visitor use and evaluation, ecological conditions and any natural character enhancements, general finances, income, expenditures and balance of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Permanent Endowment Fund, the department's annual budget request for the waterway operation in the coming fiscal year and current challenges and prospects for the waterway.

This document contains our report for 2012. We invite you to read about our progress and accomplishments.



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## Policy

The AWW Act of 1966 contains the following statutory policy language:

### §1871. Declaration of policy

Whereas the preservation, protection and development of the natural scenic beauty and the unique character of our waterways, wildlife habitats and wilderness recreation resources for this generation and all succeeding generations; the prevention of erosion, droughts, freshets and the filling up of waters; and the promotion of peace, health, morals and general welfare of the public are the concern of the people of this State, the Legislature declares it to be in the public interest, for the public benefit and for the good order of the people of this State to establish an area known as the Allagash Wilderness Waterway.

### Report from the AWW Advisory Council

Date: March 2013

To: Will Harris - BPL Director

From Frederick L. Denico - Chair AWW Advisory

The Allagash Wilderness Waterway Advisory Council met formally two times in 2012 in sessions that were open to the public and included opportunities for public comment (July 20 and December 14). The major work of the AWW Advisory Council in 2012 was its participation in the management planning process for the Waterway.

We would like to welcome the creation of a second ,nonprofit, private organization in addition to "The Lock Dam Preservation Association Ltd." existing nonprofit. Several past Council members participated in establishing this second private organization, "Allagash Wilderness Waterway Foundation fund", as another potential source of revenue for the State's AWW Permanent Endowment Fund and/or AWW projects put forth by the Division of Parks and Public Lands.

We also wish to acknowledge and thank the work and time spent by three outgoing members Don Hudson, Don Nicole and Anthony Hourihand . We now have and welcome three new Advisory members, Brent Hardy, Toby Pineo and David Allen.

We will meet quarterly this year ,March,June,September and December on Friday's and in alternate Ashland,Millinocket and Augusta locations.

### Allagash Wilderness Waterway Management Plan

2012 saw the completion and, in late December, adoption of the update to the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Management Plan. After two years of development and broad input from stakeholders, the new plan was signed on December 20 by Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry Commissioner Walter Whitcomb and Willard Harris, Director of the Division of Parks and Public Lands. Five-year periodic reviews will keep the plan up to date. The planning process involved extensive meetings with an advisory committee organized to represent diverse interests and to provide substantial feedback and input as the plan was developed through draft stages until completion. The advisory committee was separate from, though in several cases overlapping with, the advisory council which is a standing committee.

Work on the fifteen-year management plan also included public meetings and comment periods enabling the general public to share their ideas and concerns. Information, notices, and drafts were periodically posted online for public review. Without public involvement via both the advisory committee and the general public, the planning effort would have suffered. Great thanks are due to all who participated.

The waterway plan is broken into nine management policy sections with goals, objectives, and strategies under each section. Access to the Waterway was not as contentious an issue as in previous planning efforts, though two of the nineteen snowmobile access points did change. The plan focuses on enhancing the wilderness character of the Restricted Zone in a number of ways, including but not limited to removing the buildings at Telos Dam and further enhancing the wilderness character of the campsite experience. The addition of both a specific winter policy section (policy 2) and a policy section on public information and interpretation (policy 9) are noteworthy.

The plan can be downloaded in sections or in total by going to the Division's planning webpage, <http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/programs/planning/index.html>

### Forest Harvest notifications/applications:

In 2012 there were a total of 39 active forest harvest notifications (FONS) within the mile zone of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (AWW).

Twelve notifications were for harvests within a mapped visual area of the AWW. Six of the visual area applications proposed to exceed the standards because of dead or dying conditions in the harvest area. All visual area harvest applications were inspected prior to harvest activity by the AWW Superintendent, an experienced Division of Parks and Public Lands Forester, and appropriate landowner representative. All visual area harvest applications were approved with conditions to minimize the visual impact of the harvest area, associated skid trails and log landings.

Eight notifications were received for road construction within the mile zone that were not visible from the watercourse. These roads were all associated with timber harvests adjacent to the AWW.

There were no notifications for the application of herbicide.

No applications were received for construction within the ¼ mile new construction zone.

### Ecological Studies:

#### EPA Water Report

In 2009, the Allagash River was selected by the Environmental Protection Agency as one of 6 targeted reference river sites in New England for a National Rivers and Stream Assessment (NRSA). <http://water.epa.gov/type/rsl/monitoring/riverssurvey/index.cfm>

The one day sampling event showed low level of nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) in the water column compared to other sites sampled in Maine. As part of this survey three brook trout were collected and sampled from the Allagash River (ranging in length from 162-215 mm) and their fish tissue was homogenized and analyzed for total mercury. EPA guidance, allows for the conservative assumption that all mercury is present in fish tissue as methylmercury. The measured concentration (149 parts per billion) was well below the human health screening value used to interpret mercury concentrations in fillet tissue (300 parts per billion), which is EPA's tissue-based water quality criterion for methylmercury. This threshold represents the concentration that, if exceeded, can be harmful to human health.

**Martin Stream Report:** Martin Stream is believed to have been an important lake whitefish and trout spawning area historically, but has been altered significantly by the creation of Lock Dam and diversion of water to the Penobscot drainage. Until recent years, low water levels at Chamberlain Lake caused the stream to dry up during the winter. Currently, water level management in Chamberlain allows Martin Stream to flow year round, with the hopes of improving spawning and rearing habitat for fish in Big Eagle Lake. On November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012, IF&W fisheries staff visited Martin Stream to search for fish spawning activity and evaluate spawning habitat in the stream. No whitefish were observed and it did not appear that the stream was used by whitefish

this fall. However, it was evident that brook trout from Big Eagle Lake are using the stream to spawn. Six brook trout redds, or spawning nests, were observed a short distance downstream from Lock Dam. More importantly, three of these redds were very large in size, indicating that they were probably created by brook trout 18" or longer. These larger fish are an important component to the Big Eagle fishery, and it's critical that they are able to reproduce successfully. Unfortunately, the lake whitefish spawning habitat in Martin Stream appears to remain impaired. Gravel and cobble in the deeper areas of the stream where whitefish tend to spawn were covered in fine sediment and aquatic vegetation. A more natural streamflow pattern that would flush this fine sediment during high water and create areas of clean, porous gravel would greatly improve the potential for lake whitefish to spawn successfully in Martin Stream. IF&W biologists plan to continue monitoring the fish populations in Martin Stream and Big Eagle Lake over the next several years.

## AWW Budget

Current Maine law does not provide separate budgets for individual parks, regions, or the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. Instead, appropriations from the General Fund and other Revenue Sources are allocated internally by the Bureau to programs and geographic regions. In this planning effort, a separate allocation has been established for operating expenses within the AWW. This allocation does not consider Personal Services (salaries and benefits). In FY12 the allocated "all other" general fund budget was \$120,957.15. The allocation for the AWW Capital Improvement Account was \$50,000. The allotment shown below includes the work programs and adjustments made through financial orders.

Allotment Source	FY-12 Q1	FY-12 Q2	FY-12 Q3	FY-12 Q4	Total
General Fund (all other)	\$64,603.15	\$19,586.00	\$17,182.00	\$19,586.00	\$120,957.15
Dollar Account (capital repairs)	\$5,000.	\$20,000	0	\$10,000	\$35,000
Dollar Account (Repairs and Maint.)	\$5,000	\$10,000	0	0	\$15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$74,603.15</b>	<b>\$49,585.00</b>	<b>\$17,182.00</b>	<b>\$20,856.00</b>	<b>\$170,957.15</b>

### Revenue

The Division of Parks and Public Lands collects fees for AWW camping use, relying mostly on a contract with North Maine Woods, Inc. for fee collection services. Fiscal year reporting is (July 1-June 30).

Fiscal Year	Revenues from Fees
2008	75,014.81
2009	83,652.76
2010	\$104,875.81
2011	97,562.91
<b>2012*</b>	<b>\$130,222.95</b>

\* The figure includes two commercial sporting camps, and occasional state grant reimbursement.

From revenues received from camping fees, Maine law requires that a portion of that amount be set aside in a non-lapsing account to be used for capital improvements in the AWW. The table below shows the calculated revenue to this special account.

Fiscal Year	Revenue to AWW Account
2008	20,894.00
2009	53,683.00
2010*	\$103,103.50
2011	\$55,007.80
<b>2012</b>	<b>\$61,612.12</b>

\* The 2010 amount includes funds to correct for transfers that should have been made as a result of increased user fees for non-residents.

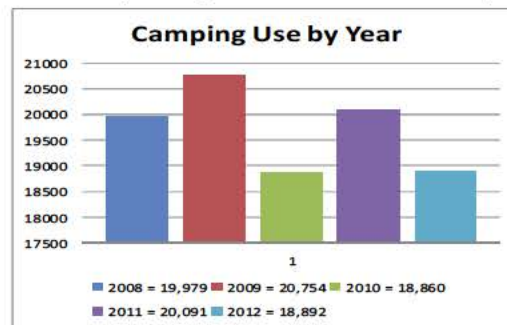
**AWW Endowment Fund:** \$193.00 is in the Allagash Wilderness Waterway endowment fund. This is an interest bearing trust account at the Department of Treasury

### Recreation

Total public use of the AWW decreased by approximately 5% in 2012. Day use decreased by 10%, camping use decreased by 8%, and sporting camp use continued its steady growth with an increase of 5%. The waterway had good water flows throughout most of the canoe season and the fishing was excellent, especially during the spring and fall. The modest downturn in use can most likely be attributed to the general poor economy.

Year	Parties	Persons	Camping nights	Sporting Camp Days	Day Use	Total Visitor Days
2008	1,140	4,469	19,979	2,223	648	22,850
2009	1,199	4,553	20,754	2,664	5,752	29,170
2010	1,145	4,267	18,860	3,507	6,297	28,664
2011	1,087	4,159	20,091	3,702	9,768	33,561
2012	1,105	4,286	18,892	4,031	8,750	31,673

Day use destinations were reported by visitors to NM Woods checkpoint attendants.



### Oversize Group Permits

In 2012 there were 8 permits issued.

Year	Exempt Organizations	Permits Issued
2010	4	6
2011	4	8
2012	4	8

	AWW Account (dedicated rev)	General Fund (gen operations)	Donations Account (dedicated rev)	Poland Spring Account (dedicated rev)	TOTAL
<b>Expenses - FY12</b>					
Salary and Benefits		394,413.38			394,413.38
Professional Services		1,011.76			1,011.76
Medical Supplies					0.00
Water tests		311.00			311.00
Gas (for equipment)		11,695.13		7,040.70	18,735.83
Lodging, Meals, Mileage		961.59			961.59
Telephone		406.69			406.69
Electric		192.47		28.67	221.14
Other utilities		68.53		12.13	80.66
Rent of Land					0.00
Rental of State Vehicle		40,451.65			40,451.65
Repair - Equipment		5,240.37		97.88	5,338.25
Repair - Boats		3,676.92		436.85	4,113.77
Repair - Roads and Grounds	2,795.53	835.25		240.00	3,870.78
Repair - Buildings	11,491.24	11,969.76			23,461.00
Repair - Misc.		1,239.25			1,239.25
Trash Removal		233.75			233.75
Snow plowing		233.33			233.33
General Operations	49.00	2,617.45		78.33	2,744.78
Non-Employee Settlement					0.00
Occupational Health/Rehab					0.00
Employee Training		19.17			19.17
Food		643.28			643.28
L.P. Gas		6,607.22		1,353.60	7,960.82
Fuel Oil		634.33		239.48	873.81
Firewood					0.00
Misc. Supplies & Minor Office Equip	1,400.00	11,397.85		428.18	13,226.03
Clothing		990.75			990.75
Pinter					0.00
Equipment (garage shop equip)		14,893.72		4,963.46	19,857.18
Grants to Public/Private Organiz.					0.00
Administrative Charges*	1,891.07	6.56		569.03	2,466.66
Material Purchases for Resale					0.00
CAP Equipment				-3,464.51	-3,464.51
CAP Buildings & Improvements	16,648.01				16,648.01
CAP Structures & Improvements	13,000.00				13,000.00
CAP Infrastructures & Improvements	5,379.85				5,379.85
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>52,654.70</b>	<b>510,751.16</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>12,023.80</b>	<b>575,429.66</b>
<b>CASH BALANCE IN AWW ACCT AS OF 7/01/12</b>		<b>107,527.09</b>			

\* Includes total of STA-CAP and DI-CAP on all expenditures and late fees.

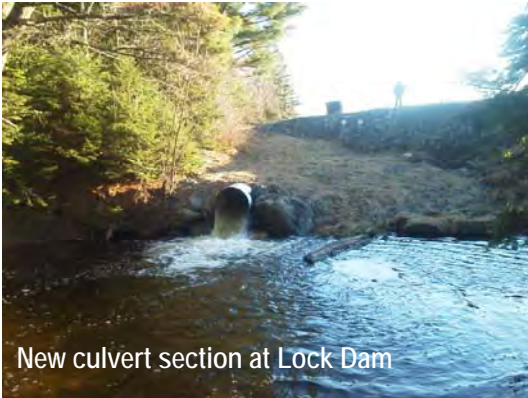
**Expenditures from the AWW Capital account included** Tramway trail improvements (reimbursed with RTP funds)  
Telos Dam gate replacement, Telos Dam leak repair, New solar energy systems at the two Chamberlain Bridge camps,  
New drilled well and pump at the Chamberlain Bridge Assistant Ranger camp, LURC permit fee for expansions at Nugent's Camps,  
Electrical upgrades at Churchill Dam and Chamberlain Bridge ,Improvements to the Bissonette Bridge Road

## Projects Accomplished by staff, volunteers, and contactors in 2012

Built and installed 10 picnic tables with tarp poles.  
 Built and installed 2 outhouses.  
 Restored a 25 foot section of the tramway as a static display.  
 Hauled all the old steel debris out from the Taylor Camp location.  
 Installed a new metal roof on the Round Pond camp (T13 R12).  
 Rebuilt and replaced one lifting mechanism and gate at Telos Dam (project complete).  
 Recorded elevations of the timber crib piers at Telos Dam and recorded for baseline data.  
 Replaced the last 30 feet of the outlet culvert at Lock Dam.  
 Spread 10 yards of gravel at Lock Dam campsite to mitigate impact by campers.



Restored 25 foot section of the tramway



New culvert section at Lock Dam

Built and installed 1000+ feet of bog bridge on the Indian Stream trail.  
 Built and installed 400 feet of bog bridge on the Round Pond fire tower trail.  
 The lessees at Nugent's Camps built a 14'x18' addition onto the manager's camp to serve as a meet and greet area and public shower. A roof was also added over the front deck of the building.  
 Rebuilt the last 1.5 miles of road to Bissonette Bridge (in cooperation with Landvest).  
 Installed a water bar and rip-rap/stone steps at Bissonette Bridge.  
 Replaced log steps at High Bank campsite on Churchill Lake.  
 Relocated the snowmobile trail at the Islands on Allagash Lake so that the trail bypasses the campsite.  
 Cleared, re-blazed, painted, and set corners on the Telos Dam lot on the east side of the waterway.  
 Cleared and re-blazed four miles of boundary line.

Removed the 12 volt water pump and installed a new 120 volt pump for the ranger station and public water system at Chamberlain Bridge.  
 Ripped off the asphalt siding and installed cedar shingles on the Lock Dam camp.  
 Built and erected a flag pole at Michaud Farm ranger station.  
 Continued with restoration work at the Taylor Camp; between Michaud Farm and Allagash Falls.  
 Installed automatic starters on the generators at Churchill Dam and Chamberlain Bridge.  
 Installed a new gravity feed water tank at the Eagle Lake ranger station.  
 Made the following renovations to the Umsaskis ranger station:  
 Jacked and leveled the camp  
 Installed a new window  
 Installed a new door  
 Installed new flooring in the living area and office

Cleared a lifeflight landing zone outside the restricted zone behind the Islands Campsite at Allagash Lake.  
 Installed a map of the view from the Allagash Mountain fire tower on the original map table in the fire tower cab.



Bog bridge on the Indian Stream Trail

## Education, Interpretation, and Historic Preservation

The AWW staff continues to support and promote the historical aspects of the Allagash Waterway by collecting, interpreting, and displaying artifacts found by themselves, as well as, park visitors.

Work has been progressing on the restoration of one of the former Henry Taylor Camps by volunteers Gary and Milford Pelletier, as well as, the AWW staff. Assistant Ranger Fern Thibodeau and Ranger Trevor O'Leary spent many hours on this project during the 2012 summer season. A major clean-up of the metal debris at this site was accomplished in 2012; it was sent away to be recycled.

A twenty-five foot section of the Tramway has been restored. This engineering marvel will be viewed by visitors as a static display depicting the way in which logs were transported from Eagle Lake to Chamberlain Lake in the early 1900's.

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail has donated interpretive panels which have been installed at two locations. One at Chamberlain Bridge Ranger Station and one in the kiosk at Churchill Dam. The panels include AWW maps, photos, and information about the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. The design of these panels was a collaborative effort of the NFCT staff and the AWW staff.

Ranger Chris Silsbee conducted a seminar for two groups of fourth graders in Mars Hill again this year. He talked about his work as a Ranger, the history of the AWW, and showed the students some of the tools that we use in our work. The students enjoyed a nice slide presentation as well.

Ranger Silsbee gave a power point orientation show at the Camp Kieve/Warvis preseason trip leader training in June.

Ranger Silsbee spent a week at the "Big E" exposition in Springfield Massachusetts last fall providing information about the waterway and Maine State Parks to potential visitors. He also represented the waterway at the Presque Isle Sportsman show last spring.

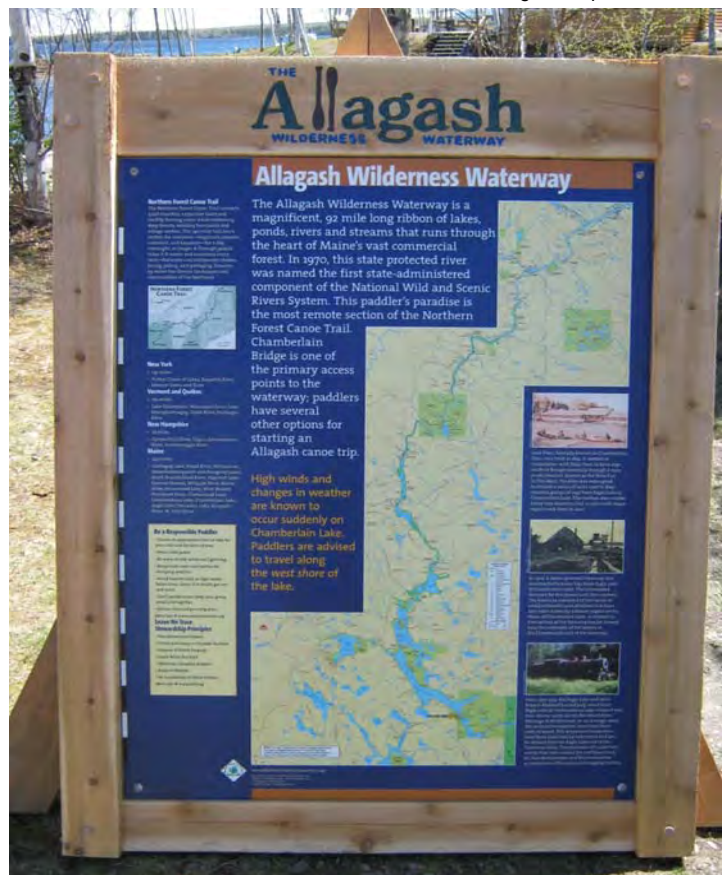
Ranger Patrick Emery installed a gauge on the bridge abutment at Allagash Stream. The gauge and accompanying chart will help staff determine the cubic feet per second flow in Allagash stream. The cfs reading will help us to inform visitors about the current travel conditions in the stream.

Superintendent Matthew LaRoche attended a weekend long Cabin Fever Reliever show in Brewer. While at the show he gave a presentation on how to prepare for an Allagash canoe trip.

Matt's columns in the Northwoods Sporting Journal and press releases about the waterway continue to be well received by the public. They have raised an awareness of the natural, historical, and cultural features of the waterway. Several new visitors have indicated that they read about the waterway in one of Matt's columns and that the article inspired their trip.

### Current Publications: *(free, unless otherwise noted)*

- **NORTHRUNNER** documentary film (\$15.00)
- Allagash Wilderness Waterway brochure (informational brochure)
- Rules and Regulations for Recreational Use of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway
- AWW Special Fees, Tips for Visitors, and more (informational brochure)
- Temporary Canoe Storage on the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (brochure and tag)
- The Allagash Wilderness Waterway Souvenir Store (brochure)
- AWW Color map (souvenir brochure) (\$2.00)





## Staff Training

**Staff training:** The entire field staff for the waterway was recertified in wilderness first aid and CPR in June. Basic and advanced chainsaw training was provided to most of the crew in July. The following employees received chainsaw training, \* denotes advanced chainsaw training:

- Matt LaRoche\*
- Kevin Brown\*
- Chris Silsbee\*
- Jay Young\*
- Patrick Emery\*
- Rachel Carter
- Erick Ahlquist\*
- Ed Palys\*
- Mark Deroche\*
- Fern Thibodeau



Regular training was completed on the job and at staff meetings during the year. That training included:

GPS training

Harvest operations within AWW

Historic preservation

AWW operations

## Incidents

There were 14 recorded incidents in 2012. The most serious incident was an ill-advised intentional "rump bump" over Allagash Falls. This Maine High Adventure trip leader suffered a fractured eye socket, fractured vertebrae, and cut on his face. Waterway staff responded to the following incidents during the year:

- 1 – Attempt to locate/lost
- 2 – Assist canoeists, Chase Rapids
- 6 – Accident/injury/evacuation
- 1 – Fishing violation
- 1 – Submerged snowmobile
- 1 – Public assistance
- 1 – Forest fire
- 1 – Partially submerged fish shack

## Volunteers

During 2012 we had 13 individuals and 11 groups donate 1075 hours to the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. This is almost twice as many volunteer hours as the waterway had in 2011.

The major project accomplished by volunteers was the clearing and grubbing of the tramway rail bed and the actual restoration of a 25 foot section of the tramway.

Volunteers helped waterway staff accomplish the following tasks during 2011:

- Gate replacement a Telos Dam
- Grounds maintenance
- Campsite maintenance
- Erosion control
- Portage service at Churchill
- Carpentry work
- Picnic table placement
- Tramway restoration
- Peeled tarp poles

## Superintendent's Report

The winter season started out with our winter campground registration at Chamberlain Bridge. We allotted 44 of the 48 available sites before January 1<sup>st</sup>. These winter visitors are mostly long-time users who enjoy ice fishing for native brook trout, togue, and whitefish.

We had an early spring with summer like temperatures during the last two weeks of March. This early spring essentially cut the ice fishing season short by two weeks. Nugent's camps were fully booked for the last two weeks of March. They had almost all of their reservations cancelled because of the early spring conditions. An early but normal spring runoff followed and we filled our reservoirs behind Telos and Churchill Dams.

The ice was out on all the headwater lakes by April 17<sup>th</sup>. We called our seasonal staff back a week earlier than normal because of the early ice out and subsequent use by fishing parties. The spring fishing was excellent for brook trout and togue. Nugent's Camps were very busy during May and June with fishing parties.

July was our busiest month for canoeists with camp groups hosting nonresident young people making up the majority of the use.

One of the major accomplishments of the year was the restoration of a 25-foot section of the tramway adjacent to the boilers at the Chamberlain end of the tramway. This project was entirely funded by donations of money and materials, and volunteers provided most of the labor.

We teamed-up with Northern Forest Canoe Trail interns and volunteers to construct 1000+ feet of bog bridge on the Indian Stream trail. This transformed a muddy environmentally sensitive eyesore into a walk-in-the-park at this Eagle Lake access point.

Rangers continue with the enhancement of the wilderness character of the waterway by removing unnecessary signs and replacing milled sign posts with natural cedar posts. Over 50 signs have been removed since 2009 with no complaints from our visitors.

We had 14 reportable incidents for the year, one being an ill-advised intentional "rump bump" over Allagash Falls. This Maine High Adventure trip leader suffered a fractured eye socket, fractured vertebrae, and cut on his face. He was released from employment with MHA after his discharge from the hospital in Fort Kent.

The planning process for the management plan for the AWW cumulated with the signing of the plan by Agriculture Conservation and Forestry Commissioner, Walter Whitcomb and Division Director, Willard Harris on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012. This document will guide management of the waterway over the next 15 years.



Respectfully submitted,  
**Matthew LaRoche**  
Superintendent  
Allagash Wilderness Waterway

### Allagash Wilderness Waterway Administration 2012

*Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry, : Walter Whitcomb, Commissioner  
Maine Division of Parks and Public Lands: Willard Harris, Director  
Thomas Morrison, Director of Operations  
Matthew LaRoche, AWW Superintendent*

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