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Seboomook Unit Management Plan



**Maine Department of Conservation
Bureau of Parks and Lands**



March 2007

ADOPTION CITATION

In accordance with the provisions of 12 M.R.S.A, Chapter 202-B and consistent with the Bureau of Parks and Lands Planning Policy and Integrated Resource Policy for Public Reserved and Nonreserved Lands, State Parks, and State Historic Sites (revised December 18, 2000), this management plan for the Seboomook Unit is hereby adopted.

RECOMMENDED: Willard Harris DATE: February 21, 2007

Willard Harris
Director
Bureau of Parks and Lands

APPROVED: Patrick K. McGowan DATE: 3/5/07

Patrick K. McGowan
Commissioner
Department of Conservation

ADOPTED DATE: 3/5/07 REVISION DATE: _____

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- H. Natural Resource Inventory of the Bureau of Parks and Lands Seboomook Unit
(under separate cover)
- I. Timber Harvest Plan (under separate cover, to be added when a detailed harvest plan
is developed for the Unit)

Acknowledgements

The Seboomook Unit Management Plan was prepared through a collaborative effort involving contributions from the following Bureau of Parks and Lands staff:

Kathy Eickenberg – *Seboomook Unit Management Plan Coordinator*
Cindy Bastey – *Chief Planner, Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Peter Smith – *Regional Manager, Public Reserved Lands Western Region*
Matt LaRoche – *Manager, Penobscot River Corridor*
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Joe Wiley – *IF&W Wildlife Biologist assigned to the Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Scott Ramsay – *Supervisor, Off-Road Vehicle Program of the Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Tom Desjardin – *Historic Sites Specialist*
George Powell – *Boating Facilities Director, Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Gena Denis – *Geographic Information System Coordinator*

In addition, much of the material in the Plan related to natural resources, especially Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Natural Communities, Wetlands, Ecological Processes, and Rare Plant and Animal Species was provided by the Maine Natural Areas Program, whose staff conducted a natural resource inventory for the Bureau and provided a detailed report, written by Brooke Wilkerson, which is included in this Plan (under separate cover) as Appendix H – Natural Resource Inventory of the Bureau of Parks and Lands Seboomook Unit.

Information about archaeological and historic resources information was also provided by Art Spiess at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, and Jim Clark of the consulting firm TRC in Ellsworth, who conducted archaeological investigations on the Unit on behalf of Great Northern Paper and the Land for Maine’s Future program during the acquisition phase.

The Bureau also acknowledges the helpful participation of the Seboomook Unit Management Plan Advisory Committee (listed in Appendix A), and the many members of the public who participated in the ten public meetings held during the preparation of this Plan.

I. Introduction

About This Document

This document constitutes a ten-year Management Plan (the Plan) for the Reserved Land properties collectively known as the “Seboomook Unit” managed by the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (the Bureau). The Plan includes background information about the planning process and the regional context of the Plan, but the core of the Plan is a description of the character and resources in the Unit, a Vision for the future of the Unit, and management allocations and recommendations. Appendices provide a summary of issues raised during the planning process, as well as written comments submitted by members of the public and other state agencies during various phases of the plan’s development, and the Bureau’s response to those written comments.

One objective of the Plan is to provide a balanced spectrum of opportunities across the Unit, and in keeping with the opportunities and resources available in the broader surrounding Moosehead Region. In developing the management recommendations for each parcel, the Bureau has been mindful of this broader perspective.

The Seboomook Unit Management Plan is a commitment to the public that the Seboomook Unit lands will be managed in accordance with the Bureau’s mission and goals, and within prescribed mandates. Revisions to the Plan commitments will occur only after providing opportunities for public comment. The Management Plan will also serve as guidance to the Bureau staff. It will provide clear management objectives within the Plan area, while providing a degree of flexibility in achieving these objectives. It will not, however, be a plan of operations.

An important aspect of the management of public lands is monitoring commitments made in the plans, and evaluating the outcomes of management activities relative to overall objectives. The management plans describe monitoring and evaluation procedures for recreational use, wildlife management, management of Ecological Reserves, and timber management.

The Seboomook Unit Management Plan will be effective for a 10-year period. After that time, a review and update of the information and management objectives will be conducted. The Bureau recognizes that some resources and management issues will undergo change over time, and several of the stated objectives will require longer than the 10-year Plan period to achieve.

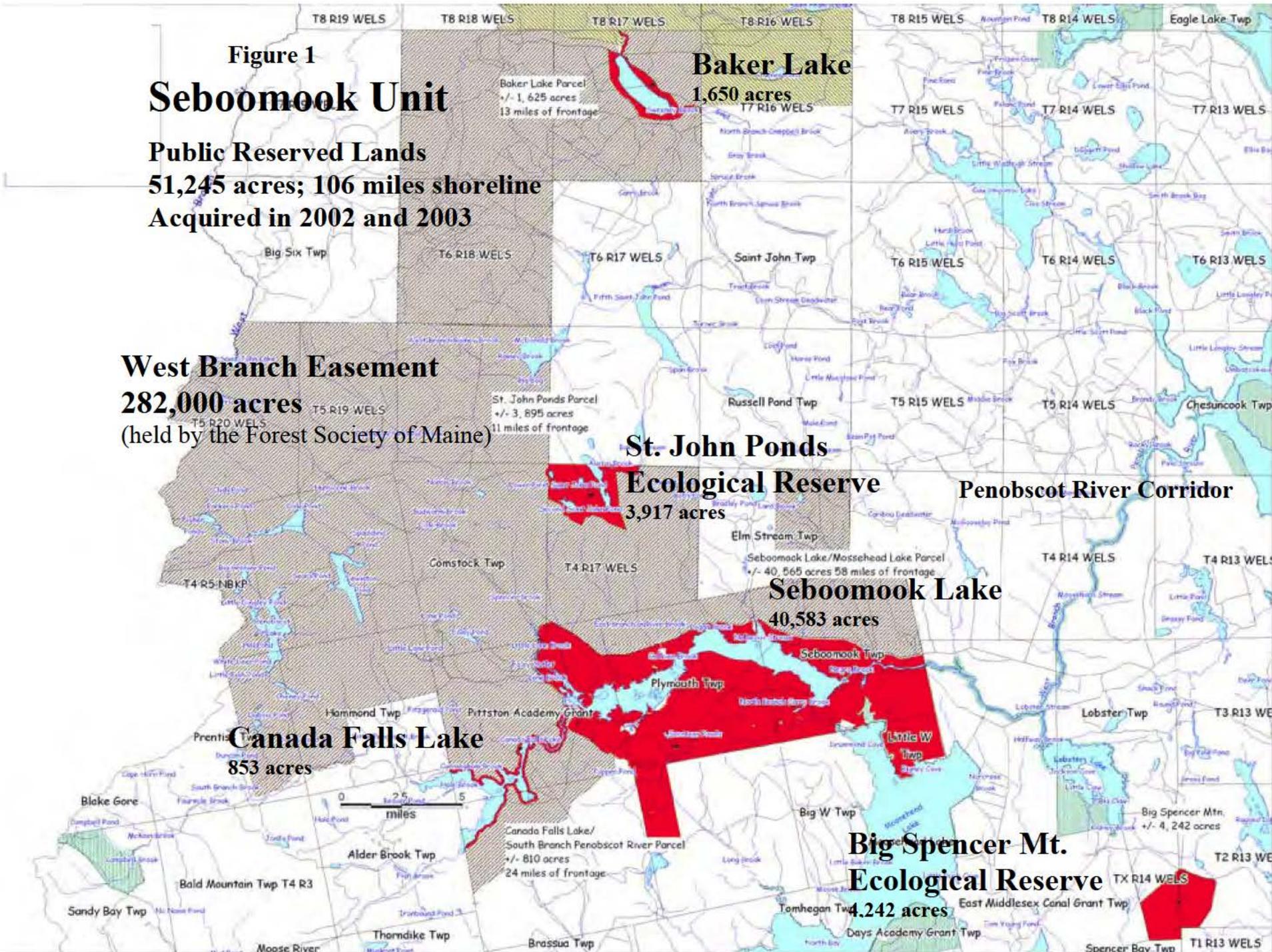
What is the Seboomook Unit?

The Seboomook Unit is comprised of four distinct parcels (Figure 1).

- (1) **Seboomook and Canada Falls:** This is the largest parcel, and includes 41,436 acres, located north and west of Moosehead Lake in Pittston Academy Grant, Soldiertown Township, Plymouth Township, Seboomook Township, and Little W Township. It includes 40,583 acres surrounding Seboomook Lake and extending south to the north end of Moosehead Lake, with 58 miles of water frontage; and 853 acres in a 24-mile shoreland strip adjacent to Canada Falls Lake and the South Branch of the Penobscot River, which flows out of Canada Falls Lake and drains into Seboomook Lake.
- (2) **St. John Ponds:** North of the Seboomook Parcel lies the St. John Headwater Ponds Parcel, a 3,917 acre block surrounding a series of small ponds at the top of the St. John River watershed, located in T4R17 WELS. It includes lands surrounding Upper First St. John Pond, Lower First St. John Pond; Robinson Pond; and the southern half of Third St. John Pond. This parcel was acquired with the condition that it be managed as an Ecological Reserve.
- (3) **Baker Lake:** Further North, in T7R17 WELS, it includes 1,650-acre shoreline buffer around Baker Lake, also within the St. John River drainage.
- (4) **Big Spencer Mountain:** To the south and east of Seboomook Lake is the Big Spencer Mountain Parcel, 4,242 acres acquired, like the St. John Ponds Parcel, with the stipulation that it be managed as an Ecological Reserve.

These lands offer a wide-ranging spectrum of high quality resources and recreational opportunities, including

- some of the best whitewater boating in the state (with predictable whitewater boating flow releases on the South Branch and boatable minimum flows on the West Branch);
- outstanding native brook trout lake fishing on Canada Falls Lake;
- big river salmon and trout fishing on the West Branch of the Penobscot;
- an increasingly popular muskellunge fishery at Baker Lake;
- one of the region's most prominent mountains, Big Spencer Mountain;
- varied wildlife viewing, hunting and trapping opportunities (two active eagles nests, loons, moose, deer, bear, and more);
- 14 primitive camping areas, with a total of over 50 campsites; and
- two businesses (in-holdings in the Unit): Historic Pittston Farm, once the hub of Great Northern's logging operations in the West Branch District, now a sporting camp; and Seboomook Wilderness Campground at the north end of Moosehead Lake, on the east end of the Seboomook Parcel, accessed through the Unit via the South Seboomook Road.



II. The Planning Process

Statutory and Policy Guidance

Multiple use management plans are statutorily required for Public Reserved Lands pursuant to Title 12 MRSA § 1847 (2), and must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the *Integrated Resource Policy* revised and adopted in December 2000 by the Bureau. These laws and policies direct the Bureau to identify and protect important natural, ecological, and historic attributes; enhance important fisheries and wildlife habitat; provide opportunities for and variety of quality outdoor recreation experiences; and provide a sustained yield of forest products by utilizing forest management techniques and silvicultural practices that enhance the forest environment.

Public Participation and the Planning Process

Overall, the development of Management Plans includes a series of steps, each involving interdisciplinary review, as well as extensive efforts to solicit and consider public comment, in order to achieve a Plan that integrates the various perspectives and needs while protecting and conserving the resources of the Unit. In total ten public meetings were held on the plan, including three Advisory Committee meetings. The final public meeting on the proposed plan was held October 3, 2006. This was followed by a 30-day public comment period.

Resource Assessments: The first phase of the planning process includes a thorough study of the resources and opportunities available on the Seboomook Unit. Beginning in the summer of 2004, Bureau staff undertook an intensive review the natural and geological, historic and cultural, fisheries and wildlife, recreation, and timber and renewable resources. Much of this information was obtained by conducting formal inventories of specific resource areas (Natural Resource Inventory, Cultural Resource Inventory, etc.). Resource professionals from within the agency provided information on wildlife, recreation, and timber resources. Mapping and GIS-related information was also obtained as part of this phase. Staff also participated in a number of all-day reconnaissance field trips to the Unit. The first was to inventory and characterize the land-based resources and recreational features (primarily camping sites and roads); the second was to view and experience the water-related opportunities on Canada Falls Lake, the South Branch, Seboomook Lake, and the West Branch from Seboomook Dam to Roll Dam campsite; the third involved an aerial reconnaissance (helicopter) with Maine Natural Areas Program staff focusing on the significant natural areas at Seboomook Lake, Canada Falls, St. John Ponds, and Baker Lake; and the fourth involved a snowmobile tour of the snowmobile trails system on the Unit and its connection to the surrounding trails, particularly the “Moosehead Loop.”

Issue Identification/Discussion through Public Meetings: Another component of the planning process involved conducting a variety of forums to determine and discuss management issues needing to be addressed by the Plan. These forums included

- a Public Scoping Session held in Greenville on August 31, 2004 to hear from various members of the public regarding the management concerns they had for the Unit properties;

- two “focus meetings” to hear from members of the public about concerns related to appropriate types of access to Unit, and access fees, including the future relationship of the Unit to the North Maine Woods system, held on October 12, 2004; and April 13, 2006;
- a focus meeting held on March 23, 2005 to hear concerns and issues regarding appropriate recreational uses for the Unit; and
- two special meetings with a work group established specifically to address public access and gate fee issues, including the future relationship of the Unit with the North Maine Woods system, held December 6, 2004, September 19, 2005.

Advisory Committee Formation and Review of Preliminary Inventory and Assessment: In May 2005 the Bureau documented the resources and management issues identified as described above into a Preliminary Plan or Pre-Plan. At the same time a Public Advisory Committee was formed to review and discuss the Pre-Plan document on a more formal basis, and to provide input on the overall process for developing the Plan. Members of this Committee were selected on the basis of their resource expertise, and for their regional and local knowledge in areas important to the management of the Unit. A meeting to review the Preliminary Plan was held June 8, 2005.

Advisory Committee Review of the Bureau’s “Vision and Management Recommendations” : On September 27, 2005 the Bureau met with the Advisory Committee to review its proposed Vision and Management Recommendations for the Unit. This included review of proposed “resource allocations,” or areas designated for a specific type of management such as remote recreation, wildlife management, timber management, etc. Bureau planning and regional staffs are responsible for developing and proposing these allocations, which define the type and intensity of management to be applied for all of the lands within the Plan area (a more descriptive explanation of the allocation system may be found in the Bureau’s *Integrated Resource Policy*). A follow-up Advisory Committee meeting was held on May 11, 2006 to review revisions resulting from the comments received on the proposed vision and management recommendations.

Public Meeting on Final Draft Plan: Comments from the Advisory Committee on the Draft Vision and Management Recommendations, along with any comments from other members of the public and various resource professionals, were considered in developing the final draft of the Plan. This Plan was presented and explained at a public meeting on October 3, 2006 so that members of the public would have an opportunity to express any comments and concerns about the Plan. This was followed by a written comment period through November 3, 2006.

Commissioner’s Review of the Proposed Plan, and Plan Adoption: Comments received on the Final Draft Plan were then considered in preparing a Management Plan for review by the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands. Upon his recommendation, the Plan was then reviewed and approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Conservation.

For a record of information presented and comments received at the public meetings held during the development of this Plan, see the Bureau’s website:

<http://www.state.me.us/doc/parks/programs/planning/seboomook/index.html>

III. The Planning Context

Acquisition History

The Seboomook Unit was acquired in December 2003 as part of a larger land conservation effort known as the “West Branch Project.” The West Branch Project resulted in state acquisition of the Seboomook Unit including approximately 51,580 acres of land, and acquisition of a conservation easement held by the Forest Society of Maine on another 282,000 acres surrounding the state lands (Figure 1). By the terms of the easement, the surrounding lands will be managed for timber using sustainable forestry practices, while providing traditional public access (vehicular access on designated roads and pedestrian use throughout), protecting environmentally sensitive areas, and prohibiting future development.

Many agencies and organizations participated in the campaign to acquire these lands, with the Forest Society of Maine playing a key role along with the Bureau. Major funding was provided by the USDA Forest Legacy Program, together with funds from the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, the Land for Maine’s Future Program, The Nature Conservancy, the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, the National Park Service’s Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Forest Society of Maine, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and many other organizations and individual donors.

The Seboomook Unit lands were acquired subject to a number of acquisition agreements, which affect or condition how the Bureau may manage these lands. These agreements include:

1. Big Spencer Mountain and St. John Ponds Parcel: to be designated as Ecological Reserves.
2. Baker Lake Parcel: to be managed for remote recreation.
3. Seboomook, Canada Falls, Baker Lake and Moosehead Lake shorelines: subject to loon protection measures.

Relation to North Maine Woods System

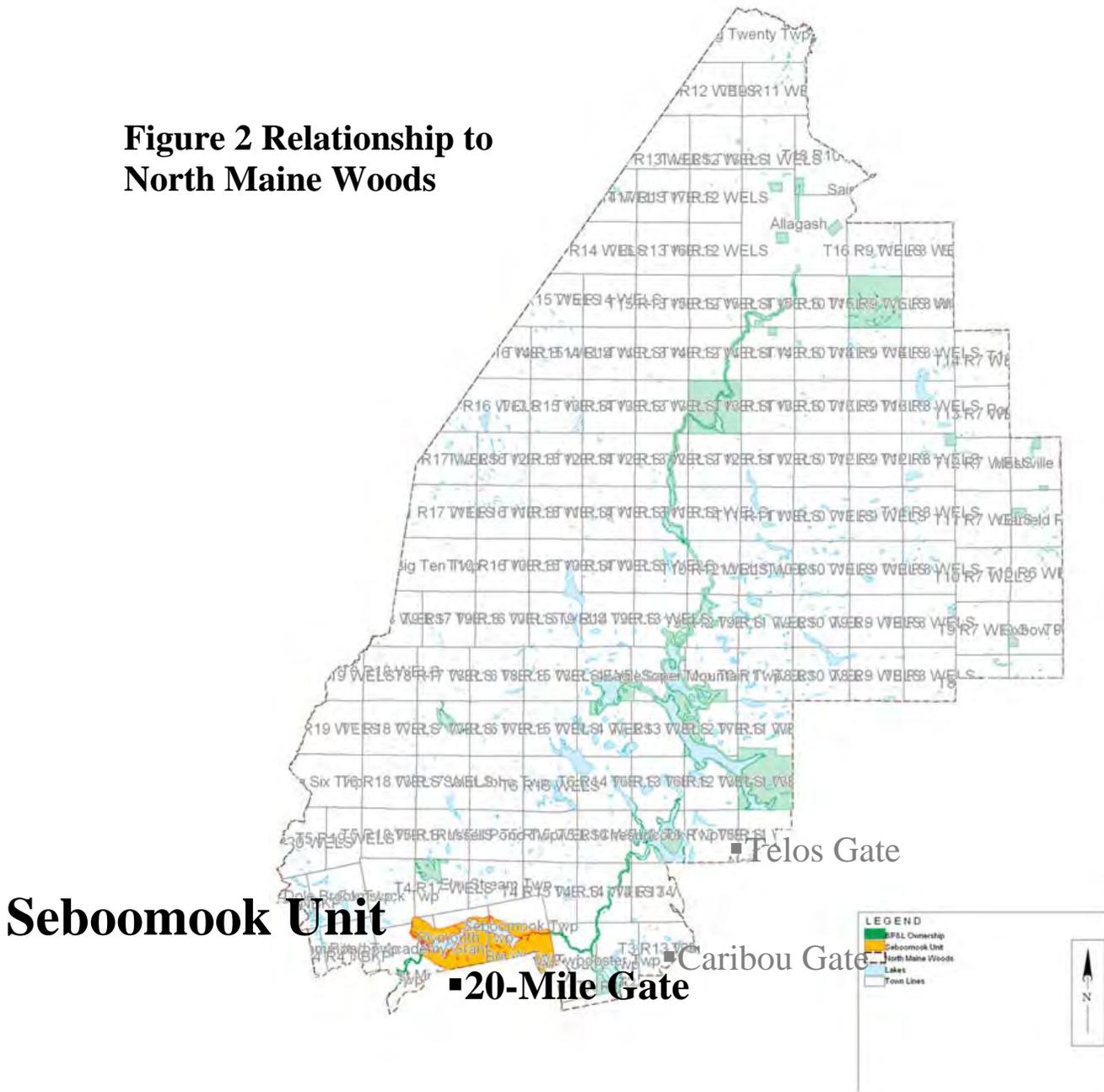
The Seboomook Unit lands lie in the northern forested half of the state where, since the 1800’s, development has been sparse and the land has been largely owned by private timber companies. While the large timber management owners traditionally allowed public recreational use of their lands for hunting, fishing, trapping, and other backcountry uses, the opening of the lands with a network of roads in the 1960’s following elimination of river log drives lead to the formation of the North Maine Woods (NMW) recreation management system. The NMW organization operates a coordinated system of gates and charges day use and camping fees for recreational use of these private, largely working forest lands. Participating landowners include a number of private timber and land management companies as well as the State of Maine, and The Nature Conservancy.

The North Maine Woods 20-Mile gate, located at the entrance to the Seboomook Unit, is not part of the Seboomook Unit, but is located on lands owned by Merriweather, LLC and managed by

Wagner Forest Management Company. Since 1999, this gate has been used to control non-winter vehicular access to the North Maine Woods system in this region. Prior to that, the gate was operated by Great Northern Paper Company, the long-time previous owners of the extensive West Branch region.

The Seboomook Unit is currently part of the NMW recreation management system. It is located at the periphery of the system (Figure 2), and abuts the 282,000-acre conservation easement that extinguishes development rights and provides the public with both vehicular and pedestrian access rights, that is also within the North Maine Woods system.

Figure 2 Relationship to North Maine Woods



Parks and Lands Overlap

The lands acquired as part of the Seboomook parcel overlap the Penobscot River Corridor (PRC), which begins 400 feet below Seboomook Dam. The Bureau now has management control of the lands adjacent to two additional river sections tying into the PRC water trail – The North Branch and the South Branch of the Penobscot River. The water recreation opportunities on the Seboomook and Canada Falls parcels are logical extensions of the opportunities available in the Upper PRC. Since the PRC is part of the State Parks system, and the rest of the Unit is part of the Public Reserved Lands system, the Seboomook Unit incorporates the Bureau’s two management models. Parks are generally smaller parcels that have relatively intensive recreation use, charge user fees, and have an active recreation management presence; while Public Reserved Lands are generally larger tracts managed for multiple uses including timber and wildlife management, with more dispersed recreation use, and generally no recreation use fees. Given the types of recreation activities expected to occur on some parcels within the Seboomook Unit, the management of the Seboomook Unit reflects a blend of these two models.

Public-Private Partnerships

The resources of the Seboomook Unit historically have been managed as private lands with strong public partnerships. Under state ownership, these partnerships are continuing and growing.

- The Unit is located at the gateway to the North Maine Woods system that manages public recreational use of these private forest lands. This area occupies an important niche in the long tradition of public use of Maine’s extensive, privately held, undeveloped, back-country north woods for hunting, wildlife viewing, fishing, and boating. The acquisition of the Seboomook Unit coincided with the acquisition of permanent public vehicular and pedestrian access rights to 282,000 acres of privately held working forests surrounding the Unit.
- The Seboomook Unit includes two waterbodies that have been historically managed for the benefit of the downstream woods industries – first to store and transport logs by holding and releasing water; and later to store water for downstream hydropower generation. Under Great Northern’s ownership, another tradition of cooperation was developed, with agreements related to fisheries flows and easements for public recreation use along the Penobscot River (including in West Branch in the Seboomook area). Although Great Northern sold the lands surrounding Seboomook and Canada Falls Lakes, it retained ownership of the islands, a 10-foot strip above the high water mark around these lakes, lands around the dams, and three parcels with informal boat access sites. Today Great Lakes Hydro America, LLC owns these lands, and has already partnered with the Bureau in the improvement of whitewater boating access facilities on the South Branch and West Branch. In addition, a conservation easement, to be held by the Bureau, is being developed for the Seboomook islands and the 10-foot shoreline strip.

- Within the Unit are two private business in-holdings –Historic Pittston Farm and Seboomook Wilderness Campground. Both have expressed interest in working with the Bureau on provision of services that are mutually beneficial. Pittston Farm is already working with whitewater boaters to provide shuttle services, and is also planning to develop horse trails on its 44-acre property to serve its clients and is interested in pursuing opportunities for additional trails on the Seboomook Unit lands. Seboomook Wilderness Campground has traditionally provided supplies and services to area recreationists at its campground store.

New Water-Based Recreational Opportunities

On December 22, 2004 Great Lakes Hydropower LLC, owner of dams at Canada Falls Lake and Seboomook Lake, received a new license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for operation of these dams for storage purposes to supplement storage at the downstream Ripogenus hydroelectric project. The water management program provided for Seboomook and Canada Falls lakes in the new license is a significant improvement over past management, which was characterized by near complete drawdown of the lakes over winter, and variable drawdowns during the open water season. Under the new license:

- Lake water levels will be held more stable and will enhance fisheries and wildlife values and provide significant new or enhanced recreational opportunities for flatwater boating and camping on the lakes,
- Higher minimum summer flows and scheduled whitewater boating releases on the South Branch and the West Branch of the Penobscot River will increase opportunities for use of these rivers for both technical and beginning-intermediate whitewater boating, while enhancing fisheries habitat.
- Fall flow augmentation in the North Branch as well as the West Branch will provide increased big river fall fishing opportunities for landlocked salmon and wild trout.



South Branch of the Penobscot River – BP&L photo

Remote but Accessible Location

The Seboomook Unit is far enough from populated areas, interstate highways, and utilities to be considered “remote,” yet it is accessible by car. In this sense, the term “semi-remote” is appropriate for this Unit. It is located more than 75 miles from an interstate, and 20 miles from a paved road, yet it can easily be visited on a day-use basis by residents and visitors staying in the nearby “gateway” communities of Greenville (population 1,419) and Jackman (population 1,057), which lie within 35 miles of the Unit.

Public Recreation Resources in the Broader Region:

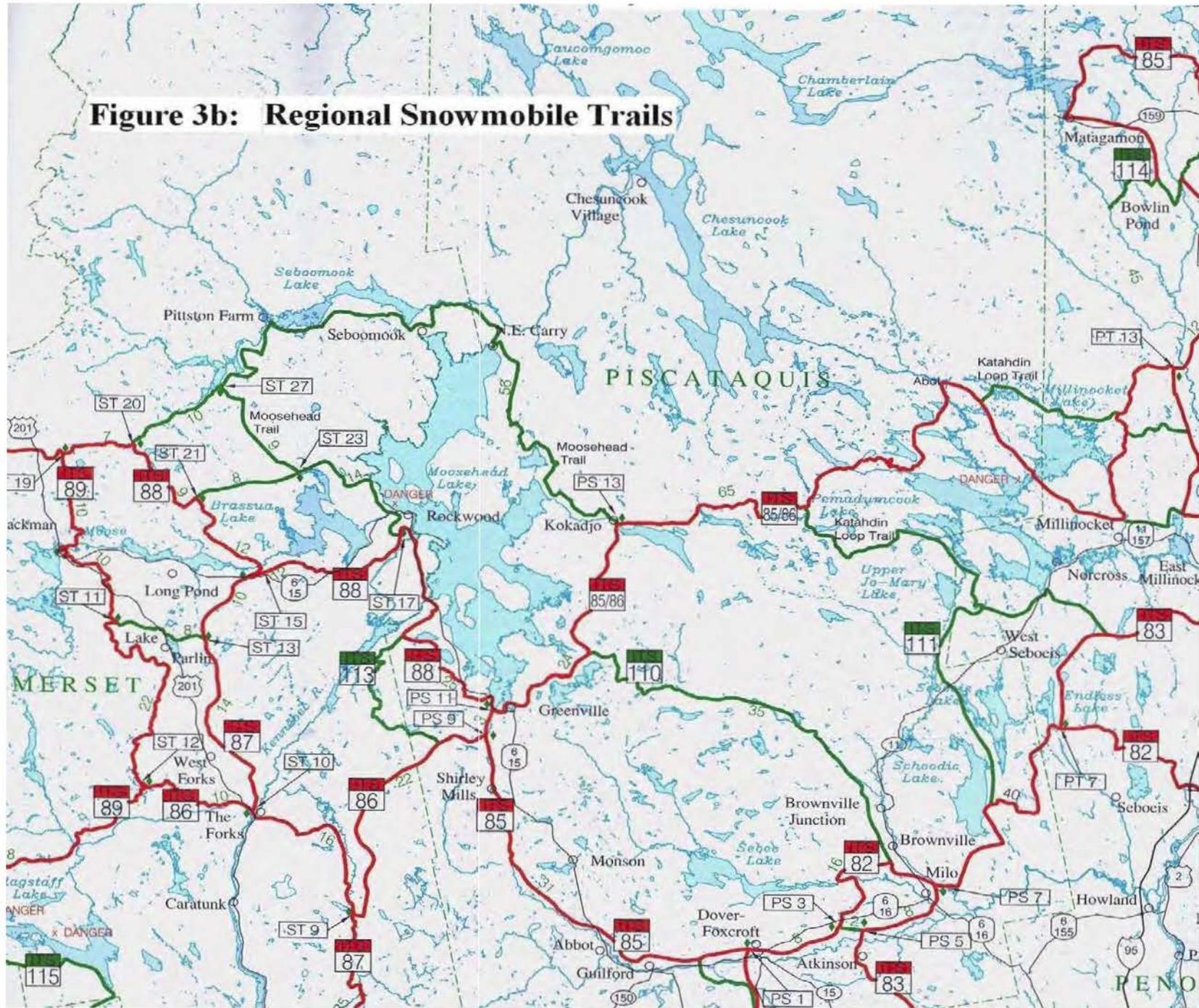
The following lists the impressive array of public and quasi-public recreational resources found in the broader region (see Figures 3a, 3b and 3c):

- The start of the Penobscot River Corridor, down to Ripogenus Gorge
- The start of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (State Park)
- The start of the Moose River Bow Trip
- The Kennebec Gorge whitewater boating area
- The start of the Upper St. John River trip (Maine’s best known unregulated, undeveloped big river extended canoe trip; the longest free-flowing river segment in the eastern U.S.)
- Baxter State Park
- Six other Public Reserved Lands including
 - Days Academy Grant and Sugar Island on Moosehead Lake,
 - Little Moose Unit just outside of Greenville,
 - Gero Island in Chesuncook Lake,
 - the Telos Unit in T6R11 WELS,
 - the Chamberlain Lake Unit
 - the Nahmakanta Unit in Rainbow Township, T1R12 WELS, and T1R11 WELS
- Lily Bay State Park on Moosehead Lake
- The Debsconeag Lakes Wilderness Area (The Nature Conservancy)
- Katahdin Ironworks State Historic Site and surrounding Appalachian Mountain Club acquired Lands
- Portions of the “100-mile Wilderness” section of the Appalachian Trail- Whitecap Mountain to Baxter Park
- Hundreds of miles of snowmobile trails between Jackman and Millinocket, including the popular Moosehead Loop trail passing through the Seboomook Unit (Figure 3b)
- A growing network of ATV trails, especially west of Moosehead Lake (Figure 3c)

Within a 50-mile radius, the following additional public recreational resources are available:

- The Lower Penobscot River Corridor (Ripogenus dam to the Debsconeags)
- Peaks-Kenny State Park (Sebec Lake)
- Sebois Reserved Lands Unit (Sebois Lake)
- Holeb Reserved Lands (around Holeb and Attean Ponds)
- Bigelow Preserve (Flagstaff lake) and Dead River Public Reserved Lands
- The Dead River canoe/whitewater boating trip
- The Appalachian Trail from Caratunk to Baxter State Park

Figure 3b: Regional Snowmobile Trails



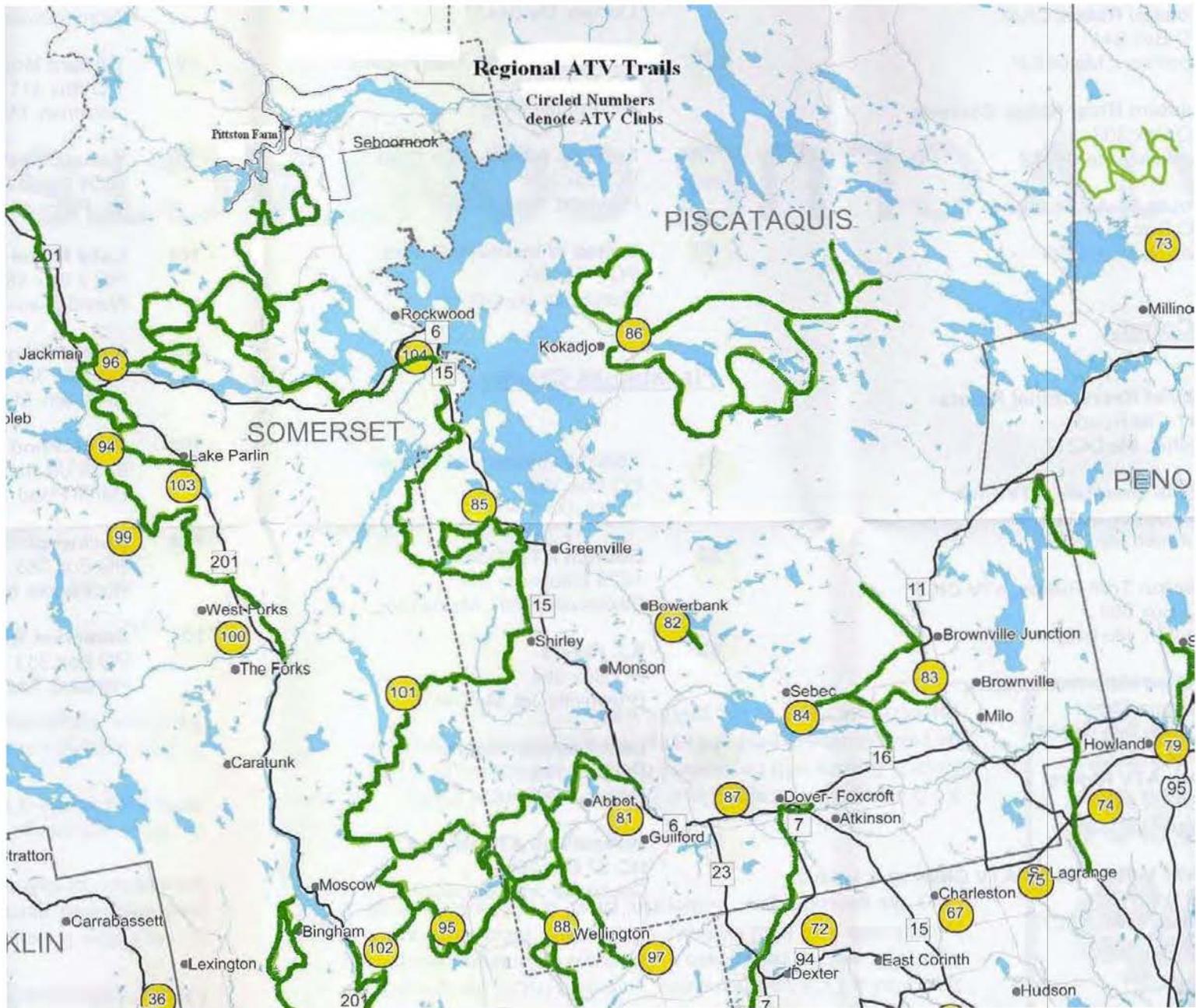


Figure 3c: Regional ATV Trails

The Tables below include a more thorough listing of these and other public recreation resources in this region.

**PUBLIC RESERVED AND NONRESERVED LANDS
within a 50-mile radius of the Seboomook Unit**

PISCATAQUIS COUNTY					
CTY	TOWN	NAME	FEE AC	CE AC	TOT AC
PIS	Beaver Cove	Beaver Cove	778	0	778
PIS	TXR14, T2R13, Northeast Carry	Big Spencer	4,348	0	4,348
PIS	Bowdoin College Grant	Bowdoin College Grant E	960	0	960
PIS	Soper Mtn, Eagle Lake Twp, T7R12, T7R13, T7R14, T9R13	Chamberlain Unit	8,127	0	8,127
PIS	Chesuncook Twp	Chesuncook	4,055	0	4,055
PIS	Days Academy Grant	Days Academy Grant	7,309	550	7,859
PIS	Frenchtown Twp	First Roach Pond	0	525	525
PIS	Frenchtown Twp	Frenchtown	23	0	23
PIS	Big Moose Twp, Little Moose Twp	Little Moose	13,552	0	13,552
PIS	Spencer Bay Twp, Lily Bay Twp	Moosehead Lake	1,650	0	1,650
PIS	T1R11, T1R12, Rainbow Twp	Nahmakanta	44,006	0	44,006
PIS	T08 R14 WELS	Otter Pond	1,423	0	1,423
PIS	T4R9, Lake View Plt	Seboeis	10,981	0	10,981
PIS	Days Academy Grant	Sugar Island	4,208	0	4,208
PIS	T6R11, T6R12, T7R11	Telos	22,969	0	22,969
					125,464

SOMERSET COUNTY					
CTY	TOWN	NAME	FEE AC	CE AC	TOT AC
SOM	Bald Mountain Twp T2	Bald Mountain Twp	1,793	0	1,793
SOM	Dead River Twp, Bigelow Twp	Bigelow Preserve	15,140	0	15,140
SOM	Caratunk	Caratunk E, N, S	1,330	0	1,330
SOM	Flagstaff Twp, Dead River Twp, T3R4 BKP WKR	Dead River Peninsula	8,390	0	8,390
SOM	Dennistown Plt	Dennistown Plt	1,000	0	1,000
SOM	HAMMOND TWP	Hammond	960	0	960
SOM	Bradstreet Twp, Holeb Twp, Attean Twp, T5R7 BKP WKR	Holeb	20,144	11	20,155
SOM	Johnson Mountain	Johnson Mtn	960	0	960
SOM	MOOSE RIVER	Moose River S	282	0	282
SOM	Little W Twp, Sapling Twp, Seboomook Twp	Moosehead Lake – “Seboomook Unit”	771	0	771
SOM	Pittston Acad Cg, Little W Twp, Comstock Twp, W Middlesex Canal Gr, Soldiertown Twp, Seboomook Twp, Plymouth Twp, T7R7, T4R17 WELS	West Branch – “Seboomook Unit”	46,841	0	46,841
SOM	Moxie Gore	Moxie Gore	360	0	360
SOM	Pierce Pond Twp	Pierce Pond	0	1,315	1,315

SOM	Rockwood Strip	Rockwood Strip E Doyle, W	283	0	283
SOM	Sandwich Acad Grant	Sandwich Acad Grant	480	0	480
SOM	Sandy Bay Twp	Sandy Bay	2,712	0	2,712
SOM	Taunton & Raynham Acad Grant	Taunton & Raynham Acad Grant	674	0	674
SOM	The Forks Plt	The Forks Plt N, S	1,011	0	1,011
SOM	Upper Enchanted Twp	Upper Enchanted Twp	320	0	320
SOM	West Forks Plt	West Forks Plt Central, NE, NW, SW	1,285	0	1,285
					106,062

STATE PARKS AND HISTORIC SITE LANDS
within a 50-mile radius of the Seboomook Unit

**PISCATAQUIS COUNTY AND
SOMERSET COUNTIES**

CTY	TOWN	NAME	FEE AC	CE AC	TOT AC
PIS	T5R11, T6R11, T6R12, T7R11, T7R12, T7R13, T7R14, T8R14, T9R12, T9R13, T10R12, T10R13 WELS; Soper Mtn, Eagle Lake Twp	Allagash Wilderness Waterway	15,801	0	15,801
PIS	T1R10, T1R11, T2R10 WELS, Rainbow Twp	Appalachian Trail	0	7,653	7,653
PIS	Elliotsville	Elliotsville Parcel	1,276	0	1,276
PIS	Days Academy Grant	Farm Island	980	0	980
PIS	Katahdin Iron Works Twp	Katahdin Iron Works State Historic Site	5	0	5
PIS	Brownville, KIW Twp, Williamsburg Twp	Katahdin Iron Works RR Trail	43	0	43
PIS	Beaver Cove	Lily Bay State Park	933	0	933
PIS	Lobster Twp	Lobster Lake	2,300	0	2,300
PIS/SOM	T1R9, T1R10, T2R9, T2R10, T3R11, T3R12, T4R12, T4R13, T4R14, T5R14, T6R13 WELS; Chesuncook Twp, E Middlesex Canal Gr, Lobster Twp, NE Carry, Rainbow Twp, Seboomook TWP	Penobscot River Corridor	0	4,936	4,936
SOM	Dead River Twp	Bigelow Preserve	8,472	0	8,472
SOM	West Forks Plt	Moxie Falls	217	0	217
SOM	Seboomook Twp	Penobscot River Corridor (within the Seboomook Unit)	212	0	212
					42,828

New Regional Recreation Opportunities – Public/Private Initiatives

In the greater region broadly defined as within a 50-mile radius from the Seboomook Dam, there are both public and private initiatives to either develop additional recreational resources, or secure additional public recreational lands. These efforts are likely to increase recreational opportunities in the region, and to attract more use to the region.

“100 Mile Wilderness” Initiative - In December of 2003 Governor Baldacci laid out components of the “Maine Woods Legacy” initiative that would strengthen “the connection between economic health and conservation in the Maine Woods.” Part of that initiative included efforts focused on the “100 Mile Wilderness” section of the Appalachian Trail, in which local residents, businesses, economic development groups and conservation groups such as the Eastern Maine Development Corporation, the Maine Appalachian Trail community and the Sierra Club would work together to explore new opportunities throughout this region that would “enhance economic development, recreational access and land protection.” The effort has been supported by an economic study conducted by the University of Maine, Department of Resource Economics and Policy and the Eastern Maine Development Corporation.

Western Mountains Foundation Proposed Hut to Hut Multi-Use Trail - This proposal would establish a 180-mile trail corridor from Bethel to Brassua Lake, with the first phase centered on the northern end of the proposed system. It would be a four-season trail, for hiking, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing, and would include some water-based recreation opportunities. The proposal is still in its developmental stages.

Piscataquis Tourism Task Force: This Task Force was established to develop a tourism development implementation plan for Piscataquis County. It is composed of representatives of the following organizations: UM Cooperative Extension, Maine Highlands Corporation, Southern Piscataquis Chamber of Commerce, Moosehead Lake Region Chamber of Commerce, Town of Brownville, Town of Dover-Foxcroft, Town of Greenville, Piscataquis County government, and the PCEDC-Cultural Heritage Ecotourism Committee. In 2003-2004 this Task Force participated in the development of a survey of attitudes about nature-based and cultural-heritage tourism in Piscataquis County, conducted by researchers from the University of Maine in 2004. A total of 402 residents and 207 businesses responded to the survey. A report on the survey entitled *Nature-Based and Cultural-Heritage Tourism in Piscataquis County – Survey Analysis* is available online at http://www.umaine.edu/mcsc/Research/EcoDev_menu.htm

The following excerpts some of the findings:

- In general, respondents felt more favorably toward increases in non-motorized activities than motorized ones.
- Over half of respondents would like to see increases in current levels of camping and hiking (59.2%), cross-country skiing (53.3%), and kayaking and canoeing (50.4%). Of over 370 respondents, only 3 indicated that they would like to see less of those activities.
- Almost half of respondents (49.3%) want snowmobiling to remain at its current level, while 25.6% wanted it to increase, and 15.7% wanted it to decrease.

- ATV-riding is the only activity that a plurality of respondents (39.3%) would like to see decrease in coming years. Only 18.0% want ATV-riding to increase, and 30.5% prefer it to remain at the current level.

Maine Nature Tourism Initiative: In September 2004 the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) commissioned a study to assess Maine’s opportunities in nature-based tourism. A nationally-known experiential tourism development consulting firm, FERMATA, Inc. worked with state agency representatives, members of various state level organizations, and stakeholders in three rural pilot areas, one of which was the Maine Highlands region, an area that includes the Seboomook Unit. FERMATA, Inc. identified sites of interest for tourism itineraries – identified routes for tourist guides. Big Spencer Mountain and Pittston Farm were among those sites of interest. This information was collected in collaboration with the Piscataquis Tourism Task Force. One of the recommendations for carrying this work forward was to “strengthen the appeal of the local region as a recreational destination with a rich cultural and natural history.”

Growing Landowner/ATV Club Trail Network: The Bureau of Parks and Lands, Off Road Vehicle Program supports the formation of local ATV clubs to work with private landowners to develop and steward ATV trails. This program has gained momentum as ATV use has increased during the past 5 years (see next section). In 2004, the Maine legislature passed a law that made it illegal to operate an ATV on another person’s land without the permission of the landowner (12 M.R.S.A Section 13157-A Operation of ATVs). Many landowners quickly saw the benefits of working with clubs rather than individuals in working out agreements that allowed continued use of existing trails and development of new trails on their lands. The result has been a proliferation of clubs and club sponsored trails, aided by funds dedicated to ATV trails primarily from ATV registrations (over 90% of the funds available) and a portion of the gasoline tax revenues (less than 10% of the funds). In 2006 there were 10 ATV clubs within a 50-mile radius of the Seboomook Unit (136 clubs statewide). Within the Greater Moosehead region, seven clubs received trail grants in 2006 to help construct 311 miles of trails; and 3 municipalities have received grants for another 358 miles of trails. This illustrates how fast opportunities for this sport are growing, in response to an ever-increasing demand.



New ATV/Snowmobile Bridge over the Moose River in Rockwood (BP&L Photo)

Trends in Recreation Use in the State and Region

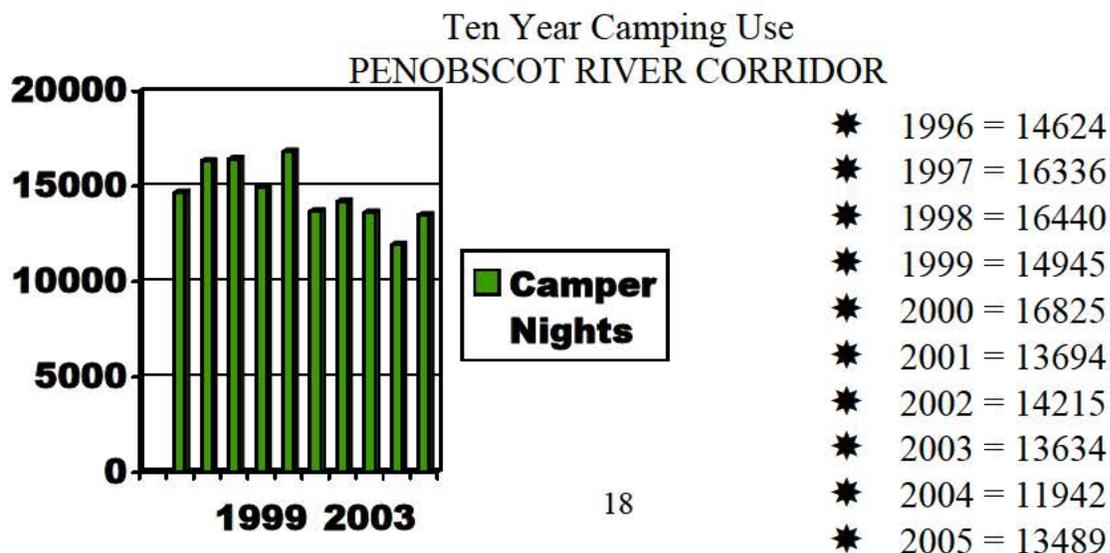
North Maine Woods System: Recreation use of the North Maine Woods system has shown a declining trend since the mid-1990's. In 1999 the West Branch region, including the Seboomook Unit lands, was added to the NMW system, and use jumped from 181,814 visitor-days to 297,266 visitor-days, but use has since declined steadily to 231,914 visitor days in 2005. Use through the 20-Mile gate, at the entrance to the Seboomook Unit, was 42,227 visitor-days in 2005, following a steady decline from 59,218 in 2000. All of the above figures are for spring through fall use; there are no data for winter recreational use in the NMW system.

State Parks: Day use to Maine State Parks increased from 1.75 day use visits in 1993 to 2.32 million visits in 2001, and declined thereafter. In 2006 estimated day use was 1.75 million visits. Camper nights at state park campgrounds followed a similar trend, increasing from 208,000 nights in 1993 to 253,000 in 2002, and then declining. Use in 2006 was 229,000 camper-nights. A decline in economic conditions after 2001 likely contributed to the decline in use that followed an eight-year increasing trend.

Penobscot River Corridor: Use of the Penobscot River Corridor (primarily rafting in the Lower West Branch Penobscot and canoe trips in the Upper West Branch) has fluctuated depending on weather and economic conditions. During strong economic conditions, from 1996 to 2000 camper-nights fluctuated roughly between 14,500 and 16,500; since 2001 it has fluctuated between 12,000 and 14,500 (see below).

Snowmobile Registrations: In contrast, snowmobiling has increased as reflected in snowmobile registrations. The Maine Snowmobile Association reports registrations of 80,833 in 2001-2002 winter season, and over 100,000 in the 2004-2005 season. Registrations were down to 75,096 in the 2005-2006 season due to an abnormally warm winter with little snow.

All-Terrain Vehicle Registrations: Bureau records (kept by fiscal year beginning in July) show that ATV registrations are rising, from 45,337 in FY 2001 to 62,478 in FY 2006. ATVs are not allowed in the North Maine Woods system, but there is interest in a Moosehead Loop trail similar to the existing snowmobile trail around Moosehead Lake, which passes through the Seboomook parcel. In addition, clubs on the west side of Moosehead, connecting from Jackman to Rockwood and Greenville, are interested in a destination/stopover trail to Pittston Farm.



Summary of Planning Implications

1. The Seboomook Unit is located in a **semi-remote region**, at the edge of the vast North Maine Woods system. The 20-Mile gate, located at the entrance to the Unit, is the “gateway” to the western region of the North Maine Woods, including, notably, the start of the St. John River canoe trip and Penobscot River Corridor.
2. The Seboomook Unit has a **unique set of recreation values** that combine backcountry recreational opportunities, and the availability of a range of accommodations on the Unit or at private establishments within the Unit. The Seboomook Unit includes significant wildlife habitat, a prized wild trout and land-locked salmon fishery, remote headwaters ponds, unusual whitewater boating opportunities, and an opportunity to snowmobile in the North Maine Woods, where groomed trails are rare. Further, the Unit surrounds a historic farm that once was the center of operations for Great Northern Paper Company, and was an important area for prehistoric populations. Visitors may choose from a number of primitive campsites at the Unit, nearly all of which are located on lakes or rivers, may stay at either of the two commercial establishments embedded in the Unit which provide tent, cabin or RV options- Historic Pittston Farm on Seboomook Lake, or Seboomook Wilderness Campground on Moosehead Lake.
3. The Seboomook Unit, with its many high value recreational opportunities, its accessibility, and its proximity to the draw of Moosehead Lake and possible new recreational developments in the surrounding areas (such as Plum Creek’s Moosehead Lake Region Concept Plan), is **likely to become a major recreation destination**.
4. There are many **opportunities for development of public-private partnerships** on this Unit, including partnerships with North Maine Woods, Pittston Farm and Seboomook Campground, and Great Lakes Hydro America, LLC.
5. The configuration of public uses and the intersection of the Penobscot River Corridor (Park) with this Public Reserved Lands Unit offer an opportunity for the Bureau to develop a **new blended “Parks” and “Lands” management model** for this Unit.

IV. Character and Resources of the Seboomook Unit

Overview

Semi-Remote Character: The Seboomook Unit lies at the edge of Maine's northern forest area, a largely undeveloped region that occupies the northern half of the state and is part of a northern forest region stretching from the Adirondacks in New York to the Canadian maritime provinces. This area forms what some call the largest undeveloped landscape east of the Mississippi. A substantial portion of the area is owned by large private timber management holdings, and has been actively managed for timber since the 1800's. Since the late 1960's when use of the region's waterways for log runs ended, the north Maine woods, including the Seboomook Region, has been laced with a network of logging roads. The Unit is accessible by vehicle over a gravel road, with the nearest paved road twenty miles distant.

Hydrology: Lands in the Seboomook Unit include parts of the headwaters to three of Maine's major waterways: the Penobscot, St. John, and Kennebec Rivers. The units encompass several headwaters lakes and ponds in the St. John drainage, including Baker Lake, Upper First St. John Pond, Lower First St. John Pond, Second St. John Pond, and Robinson Pond. It also includes significant ownership around two lakes in the headwaters region of the Penobscot River drainage - Seboomook Lake and Canada Falls Lake. Finally, the Unit includes a significant length of the north shore of Moosehead Lake, the headwaters for the Kennebec River.



Seboomook Lake (BP&L photo)

It is interesting to note that Moosehead Lake, formed after the glacier receded about 11,000 years ago, originally drained into the Penobscot River drainage through an outlet at the north end of the lake, now an extensive bog/wetland complex. About 8,700 years ago the land rose in that area, as the land rebounded from the weight of the glacier, and the drainage pattern shifted to the current outlet of the lake, the East Outlet, which drains to the Kennebec River (Spiess, 2004).

While the headwaters of the St. John River are completely uncontrolled, both the Penobscot and Kennebec River headwater lakes are controlled by dams operated for storage for downstream hydroelectric facilities (at the Ripogenus Dam in the case of the Penobscot River and at Indian Pond on the Kennebec River). These headwater storage projects have been recently relicensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission with the Moosehead Project [FERC No. 2671] license order dated November 25, 1997, effective for 39 years and the West Branch Storage Project [FERC No. 2634] license dated December 24, 2004, effective for 50 years.

Natural Communities and Ecology: Encompassed within the 51,245 acres of the Seboomook Unit are many of the important ecological features of the Seboomook area, including lakes and associated large wetlands, montane krummholz communities, spruce-fir and northern hardwood forests, and a number of rare plant and animal species. The chart below summarizes some of the key acreage information for the unit.

Seboomook Unit by Parcel	Total Acreage	Forested Wetland (ac)	Open Wetland (ac)	Open Water Acreage	Wading Bird Habitat (ac)	Deer Wintering Areas (ac)
Baker Lake	1,650	172	263	1,252	428	0
Big Spencer	4,242	15	26	0	30	0
Seboomook/ Canada Falls	41,436	1,769	1,318	6,838/	1,767	3,220
St. John Ponds	3,917	199	333	497	600	0
Total	51,245	2,155	1,940	8,791	2,825	3,220

Source: Maine Natural Areas Program, Natural Resource Inventory (Wilkerson, 2005)



Seboomook Lake (BP&L photo)

Forest Resources: Common forest types in the region include spruce-fir forests and northern hardwood forests. The spruce-fir forests tend to occur on broad wet flats and often fit the natural community description for a Spruce – Fir – Cinnamon Fern Forest. Spruce-fir forests also occur on low hills in the region and tend to form the matrix forest in the region. Hardwood forests are often embedded in the spruce-fir matrix. Drier sites often support beech, while moister areas host sugar maple and yellow birch.



Aerial photo over the West Branch, looking towards Moosehead Lake, showing areas of recent harvests. BP&L Photo

The Seboomook parcel is 97 percent wooded with 21 percent softwood, 30 percent hardwood, and the remainder in mixed wood. The Canada Falls parcel is dominated by softwoods, predominantly spruce (70 percent).

The vast majority of Big Spencer Mountain is forested with tolerant hardwoods, with nearly 25% of its 4,242 acres in ledge or sub-alpine fir. The St. John Ponds parcel has a high percentage of sugar maple. Baker Lake is about half softwoods, and half hardwoods.

In addition to harvesting by commercial timber interests, natural disturbances in the area have helped shape the forest. In hardwood communities, the dominant natural disturbance tends to occur as small gaps from ice, windthrow, or natural tree mortality. Small-scale fires, most often caused by lightning strikes, are another common disturbance in the northern forest. Fires on parts of the Seboomook unit in the last century produced even-aged stands of aspen (*Populus spp.*), a fast-growing species that often quickly regenerates after a fire. Fire can be a significant influence in spruce-fir flats, often producing even-aged, single story stands. The twisted, stunted trees on top of Big Spencer Mountain result from exposure to high winds, ice, and cold temperatures.



South Branch of the Penobscot River – Jim Clark; TRC photo

The following summarizes the average timber volumes on the Seboomook parcel as compared to other BP&L lands and lands statewide and in Somerset County. Relative to the Seboomook parcel, timber volumes on the Canada Falls parcel are slightly higher, and Big Spencer Mountain, which includes a mature northern hardwood stand, is significantly higher; while the St. John Ponds and Baker Lake parcels are significantly lower.

<i>Standing Timber Volumes per Acre</i>	
BP&L**	
All actively managed lands 1999	20.9
Seboomook Parcel 2001*	15.6
Statewide 1995 USDA data**	14.5
Somerset County 1995 USDA data	13.8
* BP&L estimate based on Wagner data.	
**"Statewide" is limited to the seven northerly "regions" used for the USDA Forest Service inventory, omitting the Capitol and Casco Bay regions.	

Historic and Cultural Resources: The rich history of the Seboomook Unit dates back to the earliest use of the area by Native Americans, more than 10,000 years ago. In addition, we know that the Penobscot Indian Nation has continuously used this area, which is part of their historic homeland - the Penobscot River drainage - for thousands of years (Clark et. al., 1998). It is likely this area was used seasonally, due to the harsh climate, and as a travel corridor in connection with trade of the highly valued rhyolite deposits in the Kineo formation. Evidence of its use is generally thought to be associated with campsites located along the rivers and streams used as travel corridors and fishing areas. These areas have been heavily scoured by logging drives, or inundated by dams, so that whatever remains is likely a small portion of what was once a rich physical record of this early pre-historical period. Nevertheless, archaeological investigations in the area have found some significant artifact sites, and most shoreline areas are designated as sensitive areas requiring archaeological study prior to development for campsites or other recreational facilities.

The area has had a long history of use by logging interests. Starting in the mid-1800s the legislature to begin granting charters to various groups of individuals to build dams in northern Maine in recognition of the importance of the logging industry to the Maine economy. At the turn of the century, Great Northern Paper established its Millinocket mill and began acquiring rights to the many small dams on the waterways of the Penobscot River. Pittston Farm was established sometime between 1850 and 1879, and was purchased by Great Northern Paper Company in 1906, when it became the center of its operations in the western Penobscot region.



Seboomook and Canada Falls Parcels

Character of the Land Base: The 41,436 acre Seboomook Lake – Canada Falls parcel is by far the largest BP&L unit in the region, including a large block the surrounds Seboomook Lake (40,583 acres) and a shoreline strip on the eastern and northern shorelines of Canada Falls Lake and along the South Branch of the Penobscot River (853 acres) that varies in width generally between 250 and 500 feet (Figure 5). This is a landscape of gentle hills – with a maximum elevation rise of 590 feet from the lakes. There are two LURC-designated remote ponds on the Seboomook parcel – Socatean Ponds #1 and #2 (vehicular road access must be blocked within ½ mile of these ponds; snowmobile access is allowed). Both Canada Falls Lake and Seboomook Lake are largely undeveloped, with only four private camp lots on Canada Falls Lake and seven private camp lots on Seboomook Lake. The lakes are scenic with high recreation value, and lodging and camping is available along the lakeshore. The surrounding uplands have been harvested heavily over the preceding decades.

The block of land between the two main arms of the Canada Falls Lake is Passamaquoddy Tribal Trust land (land held in Trust for the Passamaquoddy Tribe by the U. S. Department of Interior). Merriweather, LLC owns the lands beyond the state-owned lands in the Seboomook and Canada Falls parcel, subject to a conservation and public access easement negotiated as part of the West Branch Conservation Project.

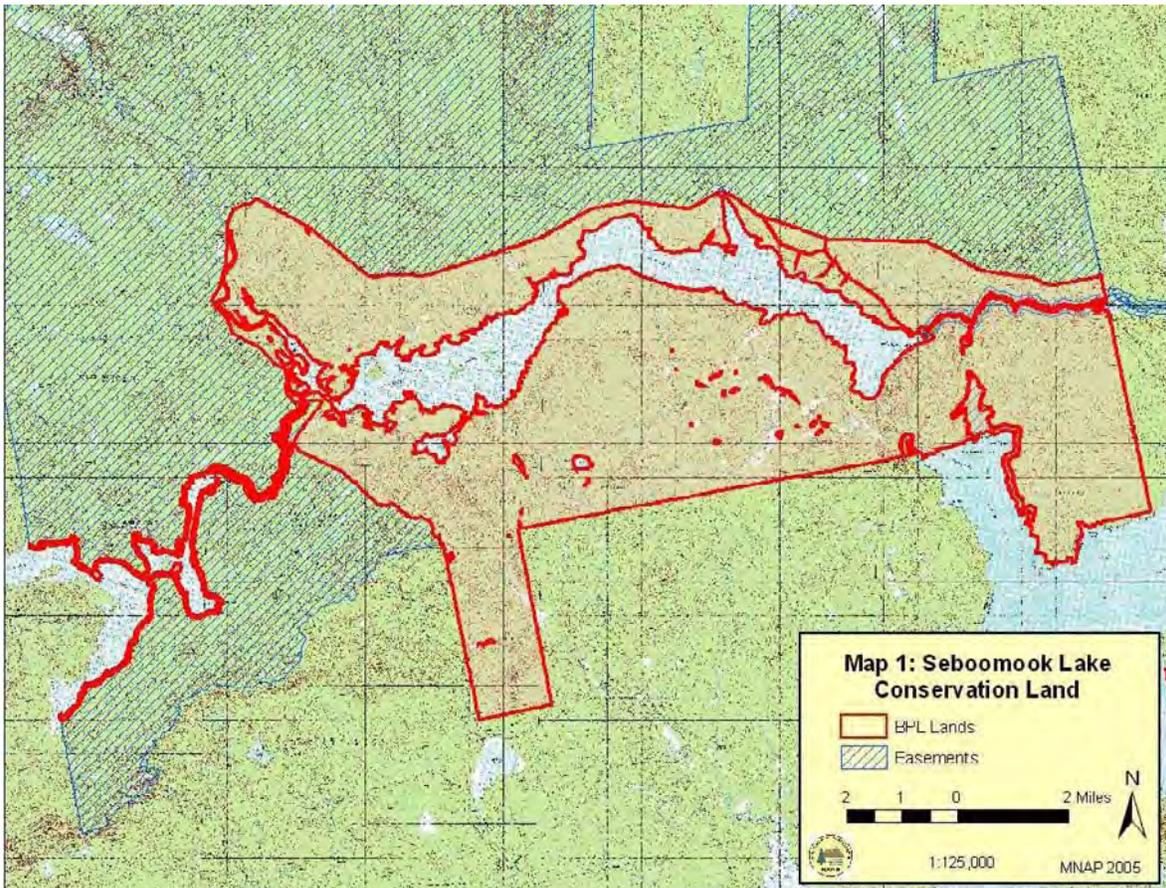


Figure 5: Seboomook-Canada Falls Parcel



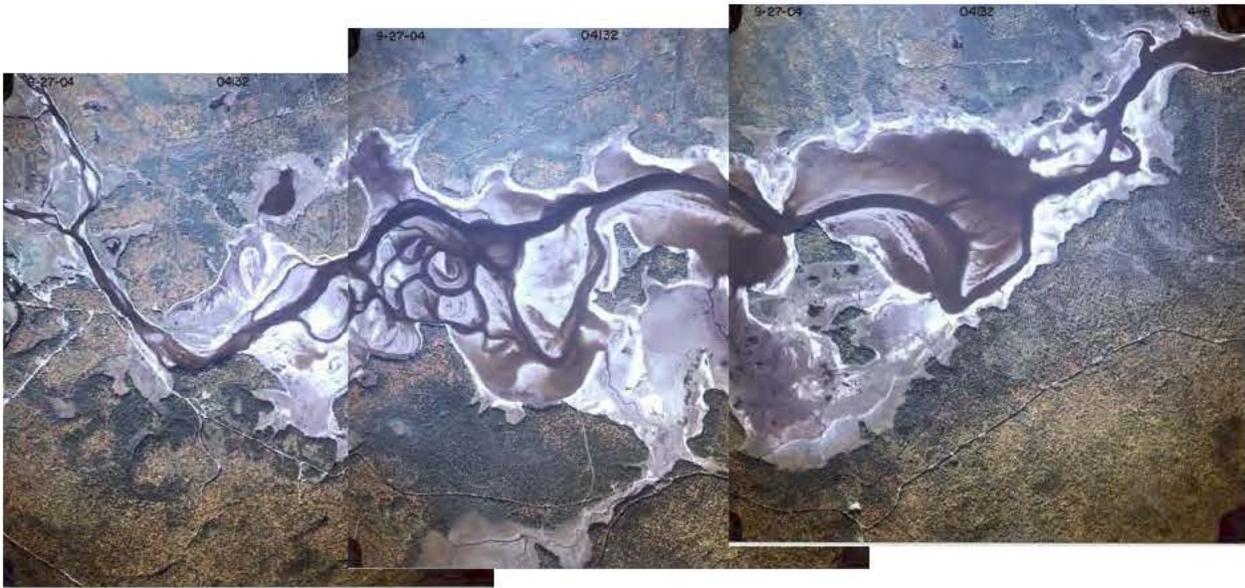
Pittston Farm on Seboomook Lake at the confluence of the North and South Branches – MNAP photo

Natural Resources:

Geology and Soils: The Seboomook and Canada Falls Lake parcel is underlain with distinctly layered, mildly metamorphosed sedimentary rocks along with a small amount of volcanic rocks. The vast majority of this glacial till was deposited during the last glaciation. Soils in the Seboomook unit range from poorly drained to somewhat excessively drained. In most cases the soils have their origins in dense glacial till, but some soils – especially on the western half of the lake – are derived from glaciofluvial deposits such as outwash plains, deltas, and eskers.

Hydrology and Water Quality: Seboomook Lake is a totally artificial lake, created as an impoundment on the West Branch of the Penobscot River for log driving purposes. The existing Seboomook dam, at the east end of Seboomook Lake, was constructed in 1936, replacing a series of four earlier timber dams. At full pond the lake surface area is 6,838 acres and the storage capacity is approximately 5.1 billion cubic feet. The drainage area, including Canada Falls Lake, is 526 square miles. Present operation is store and release, and the lake is normally drawn down by December each winter to provide safe storage for any winter runoff and spring snow melt.

Seboomook Lake West Bay Fall- 2004



Seboomook Lake is 12 miles long, and a constriction in the middle of the lake divides it into two distinct basins. Maximum depth is 20 feet for the western (upper) basin and 52 feet for the eastern (lower) basin. The upper basin is shallow with numerous islands and coves. Most of the major tributaries to the lake are located in the upper basin. When the lake is drawn down more than about 10 feet, the upper basin becomes riverine with braided channels.

The deeper and larger lower basin maintains a large pool area even at maximum drawdown. There are only a few small islands in the lower basin, though many areas have gravel and boulder substrates. The southern shore also contains a long ledge outcropping. Seboomook Lake. Secchi disc visibility extends to a depth of 7.9 to 11.2 feet (2.4 to 3.42 meters).

Canada Falls Lake, like Seboomook, is a riverine impoundment, with finger-like arms. From the dam at Canada Falls Lake, the lake follows what is essentially a widened river channel before branching into arms that follow the South Branch and two old tributaries – Bog Brook and Alder Brook. Huge masses of driki armor the heads of each of the arms and this is also true for much of the southern shoreline where driki extends more than 164 feet (50 m) out from the modern shoreline in some places. Some erosion occurs along the north shore of the lake where the banks are steeper. Navigation at low water is challenging due to the degree of channel meandering. The terrain in the upland is level to gradually sloping into the upland.

The existing dam was constructed in 1921, downstream from a previous dam. The dam had major repairs and improvements completed in 1982. The lake has a surface area of 2,521 acres. At full pond, Canada Falls Lake's elevation is 1,238 feet. Maximum depth is 26 feet, and average depth is 10 feet. Secchi disc visibility extends to a depth of 4.2 to 7.4 feet (1.27 to 2.25 meters).

The Canada Falls dam, Seboomook dam, and Moosehead Lake dams are controlled in accordance with licenses issued by the Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC). The following is a summary of the water management provisions of these licenses:

- According to the Moosehead license (issued in 1997 and effective for 39 years), water levels on Moosehead Lake may be drawn down by a maximum of 4.5 feet.
- The new license for the West Branch Storage Project (issued in December of 2004, effective 50 years) includes new provisions on the timing and extent of lake drawdowns, minimum flows for the rivers below the dams, and provision of recreational (whitewater) boating flows and affects Seboomook Lake, Canada Falls Lake, the South Branch of the Penobscot River, the North Branch of the Penobscot River, and the West Branch of the Penobscot River. Full implementation of the new water management regime, specifically winter drawdown limits, is pending a final safety analysis and approval by FERC.

Lake water management will avoid or minimize the impact on aquatic life by limiting the magnitude and duration of the drawdowns and by controlling the timing of the drawdowns.

- Canada Falls Lake will be managed for a near-natural lake level regime. Maximum drawdown for the lake, effective upon completion of an engineering safety assessment, will be 3.5 feet compared to 26 feet in the past, which will provide maximum habitat in the Canada Falls reservoir for the native brook trout fishery, and will result in more robust emergent and aquatic bed wetlands, and associated wildlife.
- Maximum drawdown at Seboomook Lake under the new license, effective upon completion of an engineering safety assessment, will be 17 feet compared to typically 33 feet in the past, and will not occur until winter. Drawdown will occur gradually beginning in mid-summer, and accelerated in the fall to meet fishery management goals (see below). While this will continue to dewater the upper basin during the late fall until early spring, in the lower basin there will be a significant increase in water retained for overwintering brook trout habitat.
- Both lakes will be managed for relatively stable levels during the waterfowl and loon nesting season (May 15 through July 15), followed by a gradual drawdown to the winter gate settings, which will enhance wetland development and fall shore feeding opportunities for migrating birds.

South and West Branch River flow regulation under the new license will provide fishery and recreational boating flow enhancements in the South Branch and West Branch from July 15 to the winter gate setting, with particular emphasis on maintaining high quality spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and brook trout in the West Branch, and recreational boating flows on the South Branch.

- Minimum flows below Seboomook dam will increase from 150 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 500 cfs to support fisheries and minimum recreational boating flows.
- Flows below Seboomook dam will be increased to typically between 750 and 1,250 cfs between September 1 and October 14 for fish attraction (attracting salmon from Chesuncook Lake into the West Branch for fall spawning), angling, and recreational boating.



South Branch of the Penobscot River – photo courtesy of Jim Clark at TRC

- There will be one whitewater boating flow release of 1500 cfs below Seboomook dam on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend.
- Minimum flows below Canada Falls dam will increase from 50 cfs to 75 cfs to support aquatic habitat.
- Scheduled whitewater boating releases on the South Branch ranging from 500 to 900 cfs will take place every Saturday beginning in July and lasting through September 15.

North Branch River flow augmentation: Still pending final approval by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is a fall flow release from Long and Dole Ponds into the North Branch of the Penobscot River (about 100 cfs flow augmentation throughout September) to provide another fall big river salmon fishery, which is rare in this area.

Wetlands: The Seboomook and Canada Falls Lake parcel contains 1,769 acres of forested wetlands and 1,318 acres of open wetlands, not including areas that are exposed during low lake levels (Map 3). This includes a significant amount of wading bird habitat. The largest wetland complex is Carry Bog, in the southeast part of the unit. This wetland was once the original outlet of Moosehead Lake, when it drained into the West Branch of the Penobscot River.

Ecological Processes: As with other areas in the region, spruce budworm has played a prominent role in forest disturbance on the Seboomook parcel. By preferentially selecting balsam fir as its host, spruce budworm effectively decreased the amount and quality of fir on the unit.

Beavers are the dominant influence in many of the palustrine wetlands in the unit, such as Carry Bog. Beavers build dams to give them safe access to the hardwoods they prefer to eat. When active, beaver ponds flood adjoining uplands, enlarging wetlands and creating new areas for wetland species to colonize. Once the hardwoods within a safe distance of the pond are gone, beavers often abandon their dam and build a new dam in a different location. These abandoned

ponds typically slowly fill with sediment and transition from marshy wetlands back to uplands. By creating and abandoning impoundments along the stream course, beavers create a mosaic of habitats for other plant and wildlife species.

The hydroelectric storage dams on the unit cause large winter drawdowns – up to 17 feet in the case of Seboomook dam. Observations on other large, impounded lakes indicate that vegetation dynamics in dammed lakes are vastly different than in relatively undisturbed lakes (Don Cameron, MNAP). Fluctuating water levels can also be disruptive to animals; this is discussed further in the Fisheries and Wildlife section.

Rare Plant and Animal Species: A number of rare plant species are known from the Seboomook unit. These include water starwort (*Callitriche heterophyla*), Orono sedge (*Carex oronensis*), swamp-fly honeysuckle (*Lonicera oblongifolia*), Wiegand’s sedge (*Carex wiegandii*), and northern fir-moss (*Huperzia selago*).

Two bald eagle nesting sites are known from the unit. Both nests were used actively in 2004 by breeding pairs that successfully produced young.

Creepers, a small mussel species of special concern, are found in two locations in the unit. This small mussel is found only in streams and rivers in Maine, though in other areas it has been reported living in lakes.

Extra-striped snaketail and broadtailed shadowdragon, dragonflies designated as special concern species, are found along the outflow of Seboomook Lake.

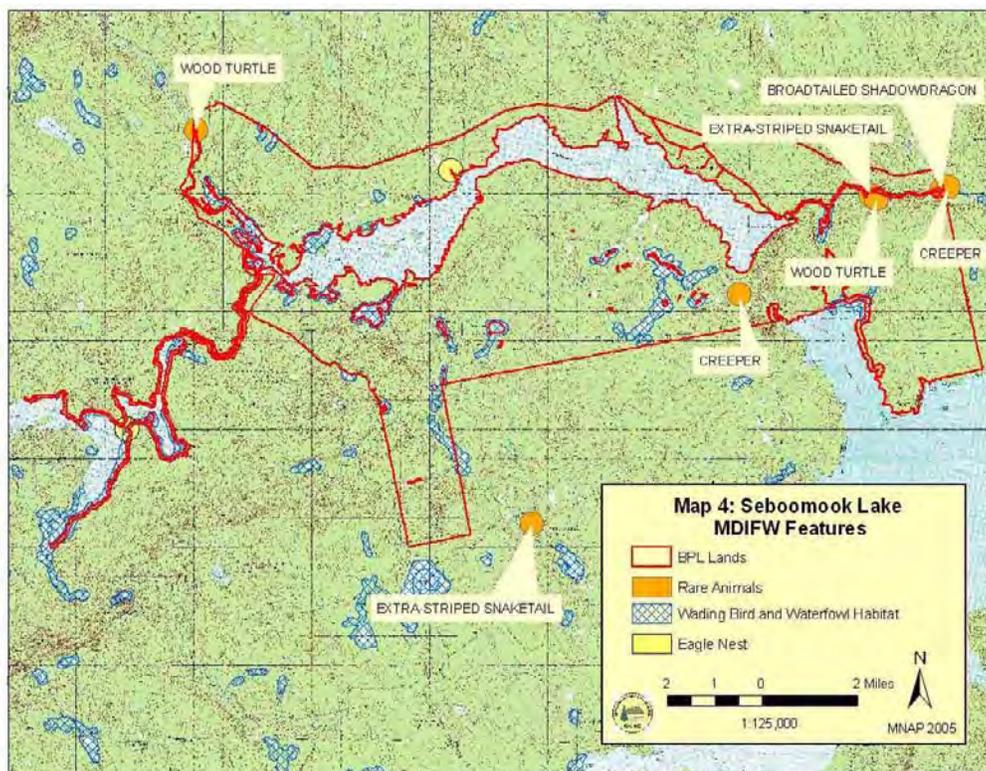


Figure 6: Rare Plant and Animal Species

Wood turtles, considered of special concern, have been found on the Seboomook unit. Wood turtles are declining throughout their range, with Maine harboring some of the largest and most viable populations in the U.S. One of the greatest threats to Maine's wood turtle populations is illegal collection for the pet trade; collectors can quickly decimate local populations.

Natural Communities: The area surrounding Seboomook Lake contains a wide range of upland, wetland, and aquatic communities. Three areas in the unit stand out as having state-wide significance: one natural community and two ecosystems.

- Exemplary Bulrush Beds found in a number of coves and shallow areas in the shallower western basin of the lake.
- A 215-acre exemplary Unpatterned Fen Ecosystem. The Carry Bog wetland complex is made up of a series of wetlands running west to east along Carry Brook, about a mile and a half south of the east end of Seboomook Lake. The wetlands are influenced by heavy past and current beaver activity, creating a mosaic of numerous natural community types, each of which is too small to be considered exemplary quality on its own. Collectively, however, the mosaic of forested and non-forested natural communities comprise an exemplary ecosystem. Natural communities included in this ecosystem are Mixed Graminoid Shrub Marsh, Northern White Cedar Seepage Forest, Water-Lily – Macrophyte Aquatic Bed, Spruce – Fir – Cinnamon Fern Forest, Sheep Laurel – Dwarf Shrub Bog, Spruce – Larch Wooded Bog, Mixed Tall Sedge Fen, and Sweet Gale – Mixed Shrub Fen.

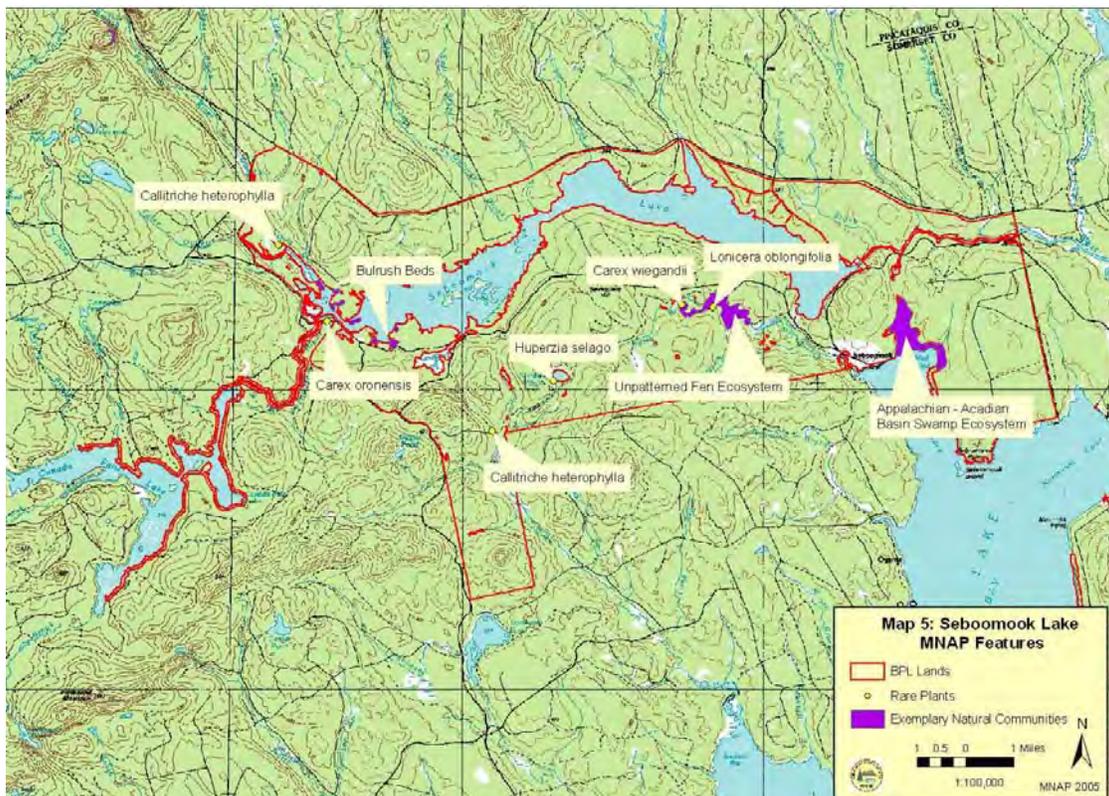


Figure 7: Exemplary Plant Communities and Ecosystems

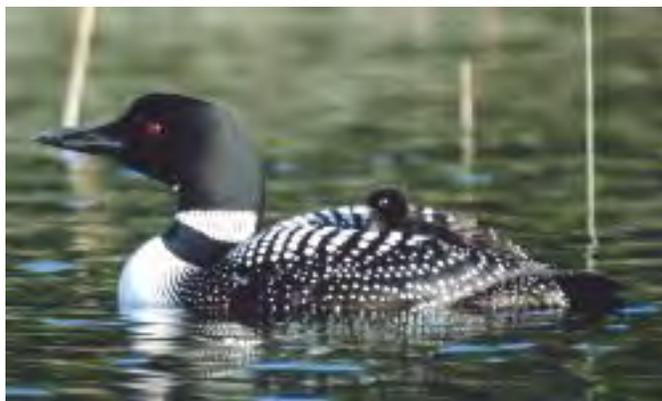
- A 240-acre exemplary Appalachian-Acadian Basin Swamp Ecosystem is found north of Mud Cove in the Northwest Cove of Moosehead Lake. The large forested wetland includes closed canopy peatland areas alternately dominated by black spruce and northern white cedar. Along the subtle stream drainage, old beaver activity has created a more open canopy Northern White Cedar Woodland Fen. Most of the forested wetland has little to no signs of cutting, and a few cored cedar trees were 108 and 176 years old.

Other wetlands in the unit include Bluejoint Meadows and Alder Shrub Thickets along drainages such as Socatean Stream. Cedar Woodland Fens and Spruce – Larch Wooded Bogs can be found in wetland basins such as the abandoned river meander on the north side of the North Branch of the Penobscot River in the unit. Spruce – Fir – Cinnamon Fern Forests are a common forested wetland type in Seboomook, found near Socatean Pond, in the drainage north of Socatean Pond, and on Seboomook Point. Semi-enriched hardwood sites were also encountered frequently, especially in the unharvested stream buffers that intersect Seboomook Road. Typical sites have a canopy dominated by sugar maple with white ash, red spruce, and yellow birch also prominent.

Wildlife Resources: With an abundance of water and wetlands, the Seboomook parcel is home to a broad array of Maine’s well-known wildlife species. The Bureau will manage these lands to support and enhance the specific habitat needs of several of these, including prominently, deer and Canada lynx (which have complementary needs), as well as grouse and the Common Loon.

The Common Loon is a species of heightened interest as federal funds from the North Cape oil spill settlement were used in part to purchase the Seboomook lands. The North Cape oil spill settlement funds are intended to permanently protect loon nesting habitat as compensation for the loons killed by the spill. As a condition of the funding, new recreational facilities on state-owned lands within the Seboomook Unit are prohibited within 1,000 feet of a loon nesting site, and within the next 1,000 feet consent is required from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (or the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife as its agent).

Studies by the BioDiversity Research Institute (BRI) conducted using loon mitigation funds in 2004 identified loon territories (inhabited by a pair of loons) and nest sites on Seboomook Lake, Canada Falls Lake, Moosehead Lake, and Baker Lake, and assessed productivity for that one season. The Biodiversity study noted that overall 2004 was a good year for loon chick production in the area assessed



(included 13 lakes in the general region of the West Branch conservation easement and state acquired lands in the Seboomook Unit), noting that productivity was lower on the managed reservoirs (including Seboomook and Canada Falls Lakes) than on the natural lakes, due to water level fluctuations. As noted in the Hydrology discussion, beginning this year, water levels will be

maintained at relatively stable levels during the nesting season, and as a result, we can anticipate higher success rates for nesting loons in the future.

Wetland habitats on the unit provide important habitat for waterfowl and wading birds such as great blue heron, American bittern, black duck, mallard, Canada goose, ringneck duck and common merganser. Songbirds frequently observed in or near wetlands are red-winged blackbird, common snipe, spotted sandpiper, tree swallow and swamp sparrow.

Beaver and muskrat are generally confined to the tributary rivers and streams because of the past substantial water level changes in Seboomook Lake, which leave lodges stranded and subject to predation. Continued substantial fall drawdowns on Seboomook Lake will remain a limiting factor for use by beaver and muskrat. However, more stable levels on Canada Falls Lake may increase the suitability of some riparian areas of this lake for beaver and muskrat. River otter, mink, coyote, fox, pine marten and many prey species of mice, shrews and voles are common to abundant on the unit.

Past timber harvesting has created significant areas of early successional forest, which is habitat for a number of species, including moose, bear, grouse woodcock, and the endangered Canada lynx. Lynx prey on snowshoe hare which thrive in early successional forests. The Bureau will manage the parcel to provide both mature and early successional forests. Grouse and woodcock are actively sought by hunters, especially early in the season. Moose, hunted in the fall, are abundant in this area but the lack of extensive clear-cuts will decrease habitat quality and population size over time. Black bear are also numerous on the unit. As with moose, the loss of early successional stage forest as the forest matures could result in a decline in habitat suitability for bear, unless management of the unit results in more quality beech stands.

The previous land manager, Wagner Forest Management Company, and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife had executed a cooperative management agreement for approximately 5,400 acres of deer wintering area on the Seboomook unit. While there may be ample early successional habitat, the lack of suitable winter shelter in this region limits deer populations below what the summer habitat can support. This area of Maine lies at the northern edge of Wildlife Management District 9, which is rated as having moderately severe winters (4 severe winters per decade) and the southern edge of Wildlife Management District 4, which has severe winters (9 severe winters per decade). Deer wintering areas declined precipitously after the salvage harvests that took place during the spruce budworm infestation. Increasing the amount of deer wintering habitat will help restore deer populations in the area.

Fisheries Resources: Brook trout are present in both lakes and comprise the bulk of the recreational fishery. Canada Falls Lake has a good wild brook trout population, which has been enhanced since 1994 by an agreement reached between the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and Great Northern Paper Company (prior owner of the dams) to limit the winter drawdown on Canada Falls Lake to 11 feet instead of the allowable 26 feet. This resulted in a significantly larger population of wild brook trout in that lake. New restrictions that limit the drawdown to only 3.5 feet will substantially increase the habitat for this fish. Landlocked salmon and rainbow smelt have been stocked in both lakes with little success except for the smelt in Seboomook. Other species common to both lakes are lake chub, common shiner, blacknose dace, white sucker, longnose sucker and fallfish. Many of these species serve as alternate hosts for fresh water mussels. White perch and lake whitefish are absent from both water bodies.

Maintenance of the dam at Seboomook Lake is important to avoid population of the upper watershed lakes with perch that compete with the native brook trout. For this same reason, MDIFW's management objectives do not include the development of fish passage facilities at the Seboomook dam.

The West Branch is a popular fall landlocked salmon fishery, with flows from Seboomook Lake ramped up during the month of September to attract fish from Chesuncook Lake (and simultaneously draw the Seboomook Lake level down in preparation for winter). In addition, there is a spring trout fishery in the South Branch, in part from drop-downs from Canada Falls Lake, and the West Branch is also a popular trout and salmon fishing area in the spring. New lake water level and river flow management regimes that began in the spring of 2005 should enhance the fisheries habitat within the Unit, particularly for native brook trout and landlocked salmon by providing minimum flows in the rivers that vary by season in accordance with the life stages of these species, and when winter drawdown limits are approved by FERC, by providing more overwintering habitat in the lakes.



West Branch of the Penobscot River – BP&L photo

Historic and Cultural Resources:

Nomenclature: Seboomook is an Abenaki word for “at or near the large stream.” Socatean Pond is based on another Abenaki word meaning “divided into two parts.” Three brooks flow into Seboomook Lake from the north. Nulhedus Stream is named from an Abenaki word meaning “falls on each side.” Logan Brook is named for its slow-moving water, while Gulliver Brook is named in reference to Jonathan Swift’s Gulliver from Gulliver’s Travels. Negro Brook at the west end of Seboomook Lake was named for an African American lumberman who cut logs there. Seven Mile Hill is named for its location, seven miles from Seboomook.

Prehistory: A report prepared on archaeological investigations in the Seboomook Unit region as part of the licensing effort for the Seboomook and Canada Falls dams (1998, Clark, J., E. Moore and R. Will, *Results of Phase I Archaeological Survey of the Storage Project [FERC No. 2634]*) describes the pre-historical context for the region. The report notes a number of artifacts have been found in the area over the course of several investigations by others conducted as early as 1914, which provide evidence of a long history of human presence in the region.

The following are excerpts from that report:

Maine possesses an archaeological record of human activity that likely dates back more than 11,000 years ago. Archaeologists have divided this long record of prehistoric cultural history into three major periods (Paleo-Indian, 9,500 to 11,500 years ago; Archaic, 2,800 to 9,500 years ago, and Ceramic or Woodland, 500 to 2,800 years ago) . . . Archaeological remains from all three periods have been found within the project area.

Archaeological remains recovered from Seboomook Lake indicate that human activity occurred there for most, if not all, of Maine's cultural prehistory. This is not surprising given the fact that several major waterways are present in the project area that, not only would have offered important food resources to Native people, but also would have served as important transportation routes.

(In addition), a dark gray, fine-grained metasandstone has been identified within the Seboomook Formation which underlies a portion of the project area. . . dependent on quality, rock such as this could have been sought out for prehistoric tool making.

Maine's earliest inhabitants are referred to as Paleo-Indian. The Paleo-Indian Tradition is widespread throughout North America between 11,500 and 9,500 years ago and is believed to include the first migrants into the New World from Asia. Elsewhere, these immigrants relied on large game animals--many of which are now extinct--for food. . . . the discovery of a few fragmentary bone remains at early sites elsewhere in New England indicate that caribou may have played an important role in Paleo-Indian subsistence. It is also likely that available small mammals, birds, and fish were probably taken as food.

Paleo-Indian settlement pattern is characterized as one of small, temporary campsites. By the end of the Paleo-Indian period . . . the environment had undergone a transformation from mixed tundra/woodland to forest that contained, among other tree species, white pine, and oak.

Very few Late Paleo-Indian Tradition sites have been found until recently. One site within the project area near Pittston Farm at the west end of Seboomook Lake also contains Late Paleo-Indian remains . . . Another artifact fragment discovered during (this) Phase I on Canada Falls Lake is also associated with the Late Paleo-Indian period.

Other artifact finds show that people used the Seboomook Lake area during the Archaic Period (c. 9,500 to 2,800 years ago) and the Ceramic (Woodland) Period (c. 2,800 to 500 years ago).

. . .during the Early and Middle Archaic periods (between 9,500 and 6,000 years ago). . . forests continued to expand in Maine and changed from largely coniferous species to forests of mixed hardwoods and softwoods. . . . The inferred settlement and subsistence pattern for the Early Archaic suggests that small groups of nomadic hunters and gatherers continued to live in Maine and possessed a much more diversified economy than their Paleo-Indian ancestors. . . The first cemetery sites known in Maine appear in this time period. They include burials sprinkled with red ochre and grave offerings of ground stone tools including woodworking gouges, slate spear points, and ground stone rods.

The Late Archaic period . . from 6,000 years ago to 2,800 years ago, . . experienced many changes in forest composition and in the kinds of wild food plants and animals available for gathering and hunting. Habitation sites--many of them covering thousands of square meters--are also recorded from a variety of locations including coastal shell middens, lake margins, and along large and small waterways.

The introduction of pottery-making into Maine Indian culture signifies the beginning of what archaeologists in Maine call the Ceramic period. . . Ceramics first appear in the archaeological record of Maine about 2,800 years ago and persisted until European contact. Aboriginal ceramics and other diagnostic Ceramic Period artifacts have been recovered from the project area. However, due to the cool climate, it is improbable that any food growing by prehistoric Native peoples occurred in the project area.

In a report summarizing archaeological research conducted as part of the West Branch Project acquisition (Spiess, 2004), it is noted that the West Branch of the Penobscot was part of a well-known canoe route to Quebec incorporated into surveys of Maine in 1761 and 1764, following Native American canoe routes. Two portage carries between the Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers, located at the north end of Moosehead Lake, were used by early Native Americans (and are still used by canoeists today): the Northeast Carry, in the township of the same name, and the Northwest Carry, in Seboomook Township. By 1847 the Northeast Carry route included a 2 mile wooden track railway pulled by draft animals, as well as portage.

Historical Use of the Area for Logging Operations: Starting in the mid-1800s the legislature began granting charters to various groups of individuals to build dams in northern Maine in recognition of the importance of the logging industry to the Maine economy. These early dams were commonly timber crib and/or earthen fill structures that were prone to rot and washed out frequently. By the turn of the century, when Great Northern Paper established its Millinocket mill and began acquiring rights to many of these small dams, some had already undergone numerous episodes of breaching and rebuilding. In 1870, a charter was granted to the Canada Falls Dam Company; while the Seboomook Dam was chartered in 1893. These dams were later rebuilt to serve as hydropower storage dams.

Pittston Farm was established sometime between 1850 and 1879, and was purchased by Great Northern Paper Company in 1906, after which it was expanded to include over 100 acres and serve Great Northern's timber operations. Barns housed over 100 horses and held over 300 tons of hay. The complex included a blacksmith shop, pump house, ice house, grain storage for 6,000 bushels, a potato storage house for 6,750 bushels of vegetables, and eventually included a boarding house for 40 men, a 50 seat dining hall, and hospital facilities.



Pittston Farm 1914 – Great Northern Paper Co. archives

After mechanical tractors replaced horses, and rivers ceased to be used for log drives, the farm gradually changed to a sporting camp serving hunters, anglers, and outdoor enthusiasts. The farm was not included in the state acquisition of the Seboomook Unit, but its role as a historic site and destination for recreationists is intimately linked with the Seboomook Unit.

History of Seboomook Landing: Seboomook Landing, at the northwest corner of Moosehead Lake, while not within the Seboomook Unit, is part of the rich history of this area. Developed as an elite resort in the early 1800's, it was reached via steamship out of Greenville. It included quite a complex of buildings at one time, which were later used as a prisoner of war camp during World War II, where German prisoners (some from Rommel's elite Africa corps) worked in the timber industry in the region. Today those historic structures are gone, and Seboomook Landing is the site of a private campground.

History of Seboomook Lake Dam: The Seboomook Lake dam was chartered in 1893. The first dam was a timber crib structure with an 18 foot head that was replaced in 1912 by a larger timber dam with a 28 foot head. Another dam was built downstream of the 1912 dam in 1926. Great Northern Paper Company built the existing concrete dam in 1936 and the last major repair work was made in 1988 (Clark, Moore and Will, 1998).

The construction of the earlier timber crib dams entailed a major effort, as described below (excerpted from Clark, Moore and Will, 1998):

Alfred Greer Hempsted, in his comprehensive history of lumbering in the West Branch area, described the 1926 construction of the Seboomook dam.

The first timber of the...dam was laid on October 25, 1926, and the dam was ready for the spring drives. Some idea of the amount of work done in that period can be gathered from the amount of material used. It is estimated that 1,000,000 board feet of timber, 14,000 cubic yards of rock, 21,000 board feet of hard pine for the gates, and 25 tons of iron were used. [The dam] is built on solid ledge which necessitated the removal of 2,500 cubic yards of seamy and loose ledge, which was later used for ballast...An Ingersoll Rand compressor was used in the nearby quarry for getting out rock for ballast. The timber used was...cut at Nigger Brook Camp...and at Burbank [Stream]...C. J. Sargent was in charge of hauling the timber to the dam...To accommodate the 150 men and 20 horses needed in the construction of the dam, it was necessary to build a set of camps. They were constructed on the north bank of the river opposite the boom house. The camps were all made of boards and covered with tar paper; no logs were used. The set of camps consisted of two bunk houses, a cook room, an office and foreman's room, a filer's camp and wash room, a blacksmith's shop, a tool house, a dynamite house, a garage, and a hovel with a hay shed in the center. (Hempsted 1931: 71-75).

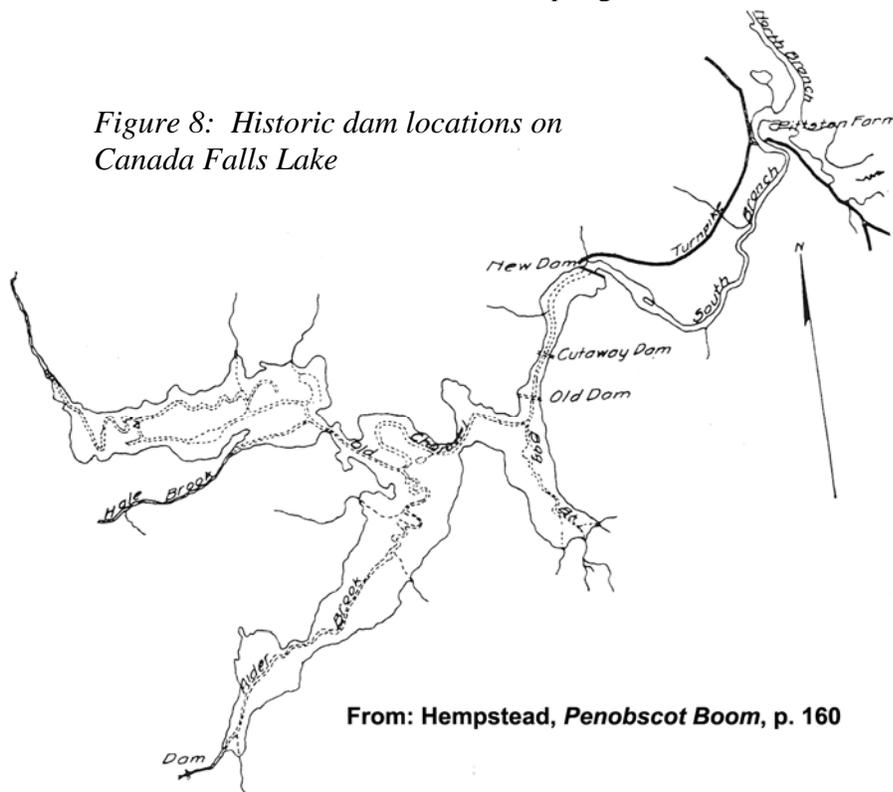
From its earliest construction, booms at Seboomook Dam sorted timber from the upper part of the West Branch. By releasing water from the dam, operators could drive logs though a canal into Carry Pond to within one thousand feet of the highest point between Penobscot and Kennebec waters. There, two steam-powered chains, each 600 feet long and built in 1893, towed them over the height and dropped them into a wooden sluiceway that ran the two miles down to Carry Brook. From there, the brook's waters moved them to Moosehead Lake where they could be boomed and towed down the lake to East Outlet. Then the logs were driven down the Kennebec River to lumber mills and manufacturing plants all along the Kennebec. This chain

and sluiceway system operated until Great Northern Paper bought the dam company in 1926. In an average year, the system moved eight to ten million board feet.

History of Canada Falls Dam: The Canada Falls Dam lies west of Seboomook Lake on the South Branch of the Penobscot River. A series of dams were constructed on the South Branch, the earliest upstream of the present dam, which failed and were replaced numerous times. The early history of the Canada Falls Dam is provided by Clark, Moore and Will, 1998:

In 1870, a charter was granted to the Canada Falls Dam Company and two structures were built -- a dam 0.5 miles below Bog Brook and a roll dam just below the present-day dam (letter from Brian Stetson to Earle Shettleworth, April 18, 1996). Both of these structures were subsequently washed out. In 1890, another dam was built which washed out the following spring. It was rebuilt in the fall of 1891 and washed out once more in the spring of 1892.

Figure 8: Historic dam locations on Canada Falls Lake



From: Hempstead, *Penobscot Boom*, p. 160

In 1912-13 a new dam with a 26-foot head of water flooded the region behind it, creating the Canada Falls Deadwater. By backing up this water and releasing it at the time of drives, it would exert enough pressure to drive logs to the Seboomook Dam operation. In 1922, the Canada Falls Dam Company built a concrete dam about 100 feet downstream eventually replacing the wooden dam; which was purchased and improved by the Great Northern Paper Company in 1926-27.

Great Northern made extensive repairs to the concrete dam in 1982. The dam is now owned by Great Lakes Hydro America, LLC which purchased Great Northern's hydropower assets in 2002.

In the 1960s, the Maine Forest Service maintained a popular campground at Canada Falls Dam on lands owned by Great Northern Paper Company. Later the North Maine Woods organization was formed by the north woods landowners to manage the recreation sites formerly managed by the Forest Service.

Canada Falls Campground 1960



A TYPICAL MAINE FOREST SERVICE CAMP SITE



Recreation Resources:

Recreational Uses: Recreation on the unit includes fishing, hunting, camping, wildlife viewing, boating, snowshoeing, back-country skiing, and snowmobiling. There is interest in expanding allowed uses to include horseback riding, bicycle riding, and ATV riding. These uses are not normally allowed in the NMW system. However, in 2006 Pittston Farm was granted permission to allow horses to be trailered into their facility.

Recreation Facilities and Opportunities: The Seboomook and Canada Falls parcels have some developed facilities, including a number of primitive campsites and boat launches, described below. In addition, visitors can choose to stay at a commercial campground – the Seboomook Wilderness Campground, or at a sporting camp and lodge – Historic Pittston Farm, which, although not part of the state ownership, are imbedded in it as “in-holdings” and provide an unusual spectrum of food and lodging opportunities for this otherwise remote area. The following facilities and opportunities are available on the Seboomook and Canada Falls Parcels. Map 6 shows campsites, boat access sites, and snowmobile trails on the Unit.

Campsites: There are 10 designated primitive camping locations on the Seboomook and Canada Falls parcels including 47 campsites; these are former NMW campsites now owned by BP&L. In addition, there are two camping locations at sites owned by Great Lakes Hydro America LLC at Seboomook Dam, with a total of 3 campsites. Except for one campsite, the Seven-Mile Hill campsite, these campsites are all on water. Two on Canada Falls Lake are water access only. Two of the campsites on the West Branch below Seboomook Dam (Roll Dam and Burbank) are part of the Penobscot River Corridor West Branch trip.

Boat Launch and Canoe Portage Facilities: There are four boat launch facilities on the Seboomook and Canada Falls parcels; including two on Seboomook Lake, one on Canada Falls Lake, and one on the West Branch of the Penobscot River at Roll Dam. In addition, there are existing canoe portages around both Seboomook and Canada Falls Dams. The boating and canoe portage facilities on Seboomook Lake and Canada Falls Lake are owned and maintained by Great Lakes Hydro America as part of their Hydropower License requirements, and will be improved within three years of the date of the most recent License, December of 2004.

Canoeing and Whitewater Boating Opportunities: The Penobscot River Corridor is a water trail that is part of the State Parks system. The start of the West Branch trip has been traditionally either at Roll Dam, now part of the Seboomook Unit; or at Lobster Stream off the Lobster Trip Road. The popular take-out for this trip is at Umbazooksus Stream. This is about a 35 mile trip. Some travel all the way to the Ranger cabin and boat launch at the constriction between Ripogenus Lake and Chesuncook Lake, another 16 miles all on the lake. Some folks also extend the trip by putting in at Seboomook Dam (another 2.5 miles) and a few even start at the boat access at the other end of Seboomook Lake (another 17 miles).

With State ownership of the Seboomook Unit, the Bureau now has management control of the lands adjacent to two additional river sections tying into the water trail – The North Branch and the South Branch of the Penobscot River, whose confluence is the inlet to Seboomook Lake just above Pittston Farm.

Boating Flow Releases: Under the new FERC hydro license issued in December of 2004, new whitewater boating opportunities will be available on the South Branch, West Branch and North Branch of the Penobscot River.

The South Branch will be managed to have whitewater boating releases every Saturday beginning in July and lasting through mid September - this is a more technical whitewater boating area than the West Branch, with Class V water. Flows will range from 500 cfs to 900 cfs, as compared to a minimum flow of 75 cfs. The South Branch is one of 29 Class V boating stretches featured in “Steep Creeks of New England, a Guide to Class V Runs for the Experienced Whitewater Enthusiast” by Greg and Sue Hanlon (1999).



Canada Falls Dam – photo courtesy of Jim Clark at TRC

Notably this run is the only one of the 29 that will be available on a regular and predictable basis due to the scheduled releases – the others are boatable only in the spring runoff and after storms if you get there at the right time. Recent publicity in the March/April boating publication “American Whitewater” features the South Branch and the unique opportunity to also stay at a historic farm – Pittston Farm.

The boating flow release schedule for Canada Falls-South Branch is set as follows:

Flow releases (cfs), Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM:

Weekend	July	August	September
1	500	600	750 (Labor Day Sat)
2	600	750	600
3	600	600	500 (on or before the 15 th)
4	900	750	

On the West Branch, the new hydro license also calls for higher minimum flows below Seboomook Dam – 500 cfs compared to the past minimum of 150 cfs; this will provide a nice flow level for beginning to intermediate level whitewater boating below Seboomook Dam. There is also one scheduled higher “technical” flow – 1,500 cfs, - to occur on the Saturday of Labor Day Weekend.

For the North Branch; beginning in 2006, there will also be a fall flow release timed for fisheries attraction made possible by releases from water stored at Long and Dole Pond. This could also benefit those wanting to begin an extended PRC trip via the North Branch.

Snowmobile Trails: The “Moosehead Loop Trail” crosses the Seboomook Unit as shown on Figure 9. It is part of an extensive system around Moosehead Lake and connects to the West to Jackman and to the East to Millinocket. Pittston Farm is a major hub for snowmobilers, with food, gas, and lodging available.

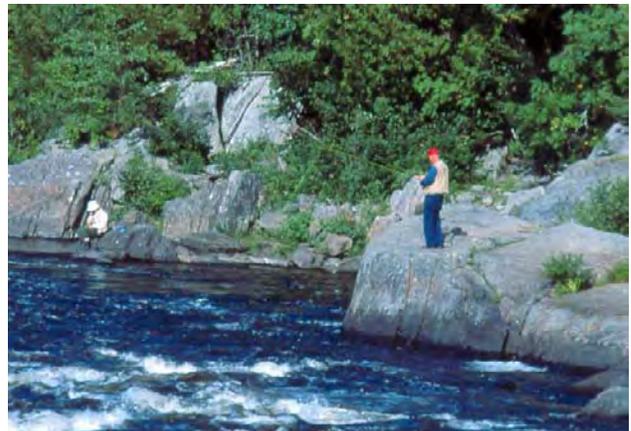


Snowmobiles at Pittston Farm refueling and following the groomer - BP&L photos

Hunting and Fishing: The Seboomook area attracts hunters for deer, moose, bear and small game. Both Historic Pittston Farm and Seboomook Wilderness Campground are used by hunters as base camps, and the late fall is one of the busiest seasons of the year for these establishments. Deer hunting pressure and buck harvest rates are rated as low by MIF&W in the surrounding wildlife management districts (WMD):

	<u>WMD 8</u> <u>east of Moosehead</u>	<u>WMD 9</u> <u>west of Moosehead</u>	<u>WMD 4</u> <u>north of Moosehead</u>
Hunter-days/mi ²	30	30	15
Bucks/100 mi ²	34	19	25

The West Branch of the Penobscot River below Seboomook Dam is a highly popular salmon and brook trout fishery, and one of the few quality big river fisheries in the north Maine woods area. Canada Falls Lake has a productive wild trout population, which, under the new management of the lake (see hydrology) is likely to support an even more robust wild trout population.



*Fishing on the West Branch
Bill Silliker photo, courtesy Forest Society of ME*

Bear Baiting Sites: Prior to acquisition by the state, North Maine Woods operated 11 beat baiting sites on lands now within the Seboomook parcel. NMW has continued to operate these sites for the Bureau during the Plan development.

Timber Resources:

Seboomook Parcel: This parcel is mostly gently rolling topography surrounding a twelve mile long lake. Except from on the lake itself, vistas tend to be modest in length though the forested hills and shorelines are attractive.

Harvest History: The forest has an extensive history of timber harvesting. During the 1970s and 1980s, harvests were mostly driven by spruce budworm damage, and included widespread clear-cuts on the lands between the lake/river and the Golden Road, except on Pittston Academy Twp, which holds the largest areas of tall, closed canopy softwood stands on the tract. At the end of this period and into the 1990s, large clear-cuts were made on the southeast part of the tract, covering the eastern 2/3 of Little W Twp. Most of the clear-cuts have been treated with herbicides, and hold good stocking of spruce-fir seedlings and saplings, occasionally with significant pine component.

Over the past ten years, harvesting has mostly been heavy partial cuts south of the lake, in all types. The Seboomook unit was acquired by the state in 2004 from Merriweather, LLC, who purchased the land from Great Northern Paper Company in the mid 1990's. Wagner Forest Management LLC managed the land for Merriweather. Merriweather initiated another round of cutting south of the lake from 2001 to 2003. This most recent harvest included heavy cutting of the extensive stands dominated by mature aspen in the Carry Brook drainage, in response to the recent jump in demand for aspen products. There has also been a limited amount of light thinning of softwoods done with cut-to-length processors.

The most pressing silvicultural need is further harvesting of mature aspen. The road access is mainly in place, though most of the new roads need to be graveled. These mature stands are beginning to lose value. Though no other areas appear to demand imminent harvest, there are many on which an improvement harvest would be desirable. This tract is almost all good growing land, with sufficient stocking and quality to provide substantial timber volumes in the near term, and increased volumes once the regeneration in the 1970s clear-cut acres is ready for commercial thinning, probably at least 20 years away.

Stand Types: Softwood stands cover 8,600 acres, 21% of the parcel. Most are found on moderately well to somewhat poorly drained sites, with a lesser amount in areas of poor drainage. Over ¾ of the softwood acres are dominated by spruce-fir, the remainder by wet-site species such as cedar, tamarack, and black spruce. The most extensive stands of tall, closed canopy softwoods are found on the northwest corner of the tract, in a major deer wintering area (DWA). Another sizable DWA is located at the opposite corner on Little W Twp, and is partially in good softwood cover and partially in recent, well regenerated clear-cuts.

Mixedwood stands were divided by Wagner into predominantly softwood (8,300 acres, 20% of the parcel) and predominantly hardwood (10,500 acres, 26% of the parcel).

Hardwood stands cover just under 12,000 acres, 30% of the parcel. The most abundant hardwood species tract-wide on all types are red maple, sugar maple, yellow birch, white birch, then aspen. As red maple is common in all types, the leading species in hardwood stands is sugar maple, and yellow birch is probably next, red maple third. Most hardwood stands have

received some harvesting during the past thirty years, with the cut usually being heavier in the intolerant hardwood type due to shorter lived species. Most tolerant hardwood stands hold sufficient stems of good quality to produce valuable timber products, and large old trees are scattered throughout most acres.

Canada Falls Parcel: This 853-acre parcel consists almost entirely of riparian buffer along the lake and river. It is often steep-sided river corridor, and even when flatter will not be conducive to timber management due to its narrow and elongated character and, more importantly, its recreational and visual character. The forest types here resemble those of the larger Seboomook tract for volumes, but are heavier to softwoods. Over 70% of the parcel timber volume is softwoods, 40% in spruce alone, 18% fir, 13% cedar. The leading hardwoods are yellow birch, sugar maple, and red maple, all at 6-7%. Volume averages almost 20 cords per acre, in part because harvesting has been lighter near the waters.

Administrative Concerns:

Roads: There are approximately 30 miles of public use roads in this unit, principally the South Seboomook Road, the “Cut-off” or “Shortcut” Road, the Roll Dam Road, and the Seboomook Dam Road. The 20-mile Road and the Canada Falls dam Road are not part of the Seboomook Unit. The state does not own any portion of the Golden Road; the deed specifies the boundary as a 120-foot offset from the road centerline. However, the state has secured vehicular access rights for use by the public of the above mentioned roads that connect to the Seboomook Unit and within the surrounding West Branch easement lands. The state does not have vehicular access rights at this time for the entirety of the 20-mile road, but is working to secure those rights.

The condition of the roads on the Unit at the time of acquisition was very rough. Many of these roads were impassable in the spring which is when a large amount of use occurs (fishing and whitewater boating). In addition, the Roll Dam Road and the Cut-off Road were both difficult to negotiate in the summer without 4-wheel drive.

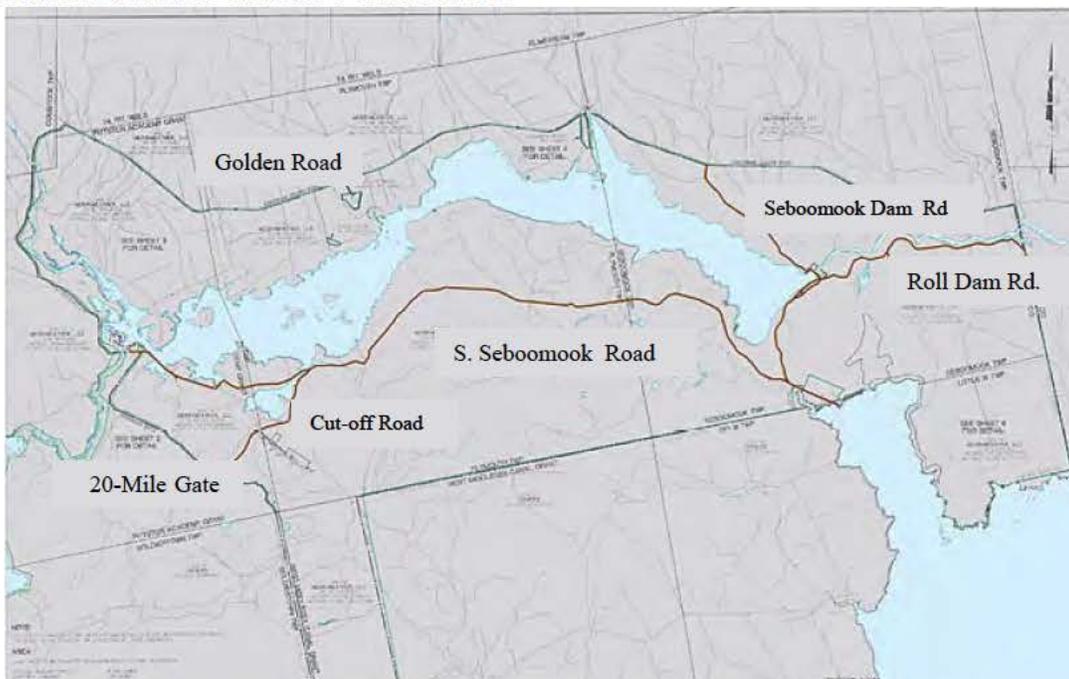


Figure 10: Road Systems in and surrounding the Seboomook Parcel

In 2004 the Bureau focused its attention on assessing the state of the main public vehicular access roads. In addition, work began on a “stop-gap” basis on the worst sections of the South Seboomook Road with the Bureau supplying materials and a user donating machine time. In 2005 major work was done on the Roll Dam Road; and in 2006, on the South Seboomook Road.

The Bureau plans to continue to improve and upgrade these roads to our standards over the next several years. The goal of these access improvements is to correct environmental problems, prevent future degradation of the road system and provide improved public access.

All of the work will be done on existing roads around Seboomook Lake and the West Branch of the Penobscot. Although the Cut-off Road is in poor condition it is not essential for vehicular access but does reduce travel distances by 5.5 miles. (Note: The Bureau does not own the road around Baker Lake or Canada Falls Lake. The main vehicular access road to the St. John Ponds parcel, the Gulliver Brook Road, was and continues to be gated by the adjacent landowner in order to comply with LURC Remote Ponds zoning for these ponds (see below for a summary of these restrictions).

Gated Roads on the Parcel: The previous owner had installed three gates on the woods management road that branches off the South Seboomook Road at the Seven-Mile Hill area, leading into the Socatean Ponds, and looping back to the South Seboomook Road. These gates were installed to comply with the restricted access requirement imposed under the LURC zoning ordinance for the Socatean Ponds which are designated as Remote Ponds. Access restrictions limit motorized access other than snowmobiles to not closer than one-half mile. The gate nearest the Seven-Mile Hill entrance is not required to comply with the LURC restrictions, and the Bureau has removed this gate.

North Maine Woods and Gated Access: The Seboomook Unit presently lies within the North Maine Woods system. Management of the Unit as part of that system has been the topic of discussion and negotiation between the Bureau and North Maine Woods since the start of the planning process in 2004. The Bureau values its relationship with North Maine Woods very highly, and is seeking to develop a partnership with North Maine Woods that would enable it to manage the Seboomook lands in accordance with the Bureau’s mission and statutory mandates, and continue to be part of the North Maine Woods system. The existing arrangement, however, imposes relatively high fees on visitors to Seboomook's public lands. Discussions with NMW have been far-ranging, and several specific proposals have been reviewed in which the Bureau has offered to secure NMW's income from operations at the Unit, in return for flexibility with regard to fees. Specifically, the Bureau sought to cover the costs of the NMW gate system for visitors to the Seboomook Unit with revenues it receives from timber management, as it does on its other public reserved lands. Unfortunately, despite these good faith discussions and considerable detailed work, the North Maine Woods Board voted, in its March 2006 annual meeting, not to accept the proposal the Bureau had worked out with the NMW Administrative Committee, but instead, to continue the status quo, and to have its Executive Committee and a representative from Wagner Paper work directly with the Bureau to arrive at a resolution that addresses their concerns. The Bureau is now examining alternatives, including withdrawing from the NMW system if necessary to achieve the flexibility it needs to fulfill its mission and mandates. The Bureau will continue discussions with NMW as it considers these options.

St. John Ponds Parcel

Character of the Land Base

The St. John Ponds parcel includes an assemblage of small ponds that form the headwaters of the St. John River (Figure 11). Most of the unit has been harvested heavily in the recent past, and many of the interesting natural features on the unit occur on or near its numerous ponds. Several unmaintained logging roads traverse the parcel. Vehicular access to the parcel is limited by a gate installed on the Gulliver Brook Road just off the Golden Road. The entire 3,890 acre parcel was acquired with a stipulation that it be managed as an Ecological Reserve.

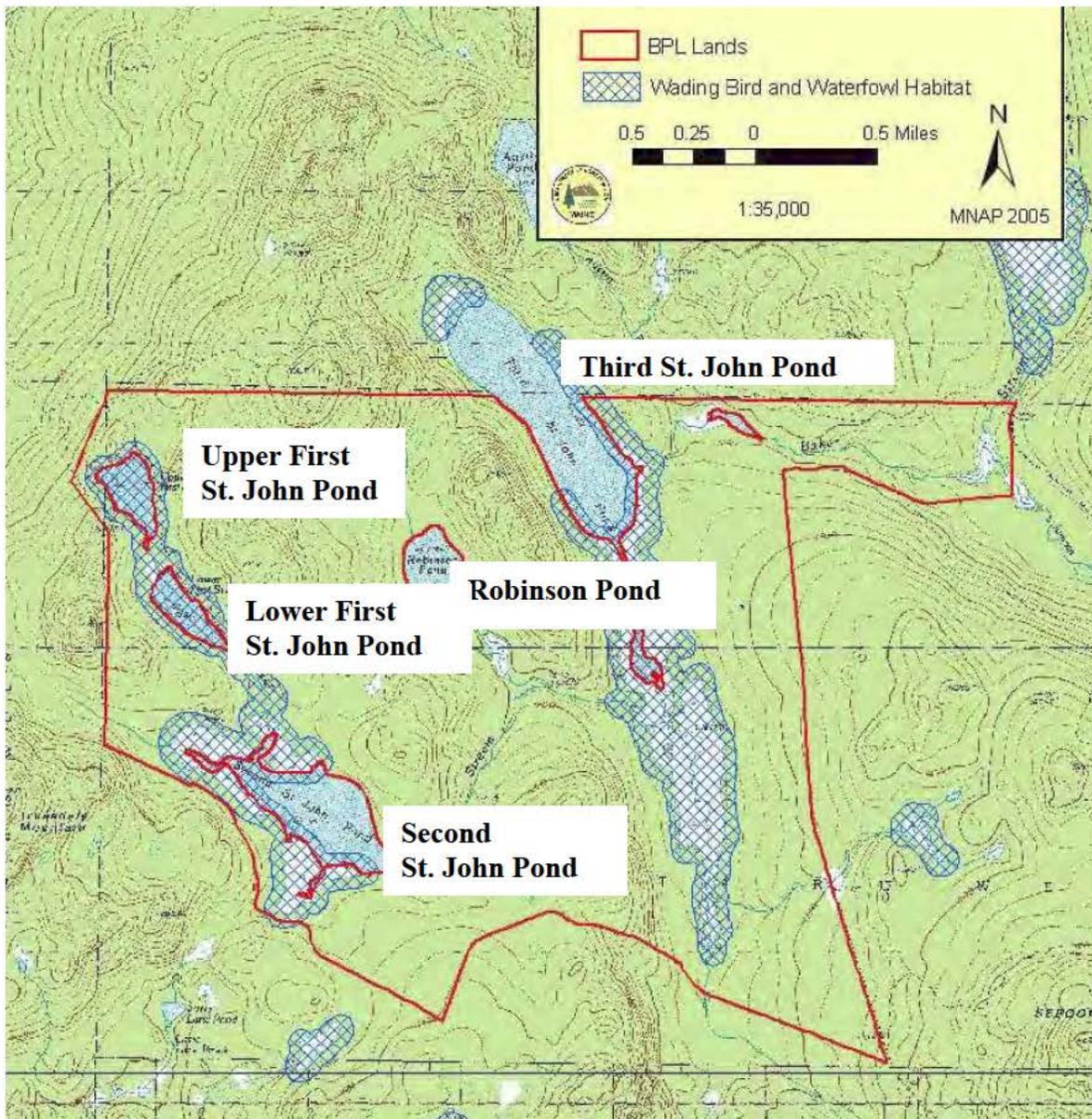


Figure 11: The St. John Ponds Parcel

Natural Resources

Geology and Soils: The St. John headwaters are hillier than elsewhere on the unit, with exception of Big Spencer Mountain, and reach elevation of about 2,000 feet. This part of unit is almost entirely underlain by the Frontenac formation, a bedrock unit that consists of coarse-grained sedimentary rocks. Glacial till deposited during Maine's last glaciation 11,000 years ago tops this sedimentary rock . Soils at St. John Ponds have not been mapped.

Hydrology and Water Quality: Upper First St. John Pond is 30 acres in extent. Lower First St. John Pond is 29 acres and Secchi disc visibility extends to a depth of 1.6 feet (0.5 meters). Robinson Pond 34 acres and Secchi disc visibility extends to a depth of 2.6 feet (0.8 meters). Second St. John Pond is 105 acres, and Secchi disc visibility extends to a depth of 3.3 to 3.8 feet (1.0-1.15 meters). Third St. John Pond is 190 acres and Secchi disc visibility extends to a depth of 6.6 to 7.0 feet (2.0-2.15 meters). Small streams connect these ponds that collectively form the headwaters of the St. John River.

Wetlands: The St. John Ponds unit has a total of 532 acres of wetlands; 199 of these acres are forested, while 333 acres are open wetlands (Map 8). The unit has 600 acres of wading bird habitat. The 252 acre wetland south of Third St. John Pond comprises the bulk of the wetland acreage on the unit.

Ecological Processes: The wetland south of the Third St. John Pond shows evidence of fluctuating water levels such as old stumps and dead cedar trees in the marshy areas. No direct evidence was observed, but changing water levels often point to the presence of beavers.

Rare Plant and Animal Species: Rare plants on the unit include blue-beaked sedge (*Carex rostrata*), ranked S2, found by Second St. John Pond, Third St. John Pond, Robinson Pond, and in a drainage by an old logging road. Blue-beaked sedge tends to grow in open, sunny, saturated or inundated areas and reaches the southern limit of its range in northern New England. Wiegand's sedge (*Carex wiegandii*), ranked S3, was also found by Third St. John Pond in a transition zone between a Spruce – Fir – Cinnamon Fern Forest and an Alder Thicket. No rare animals are known from the St. John Ponds parcel.



Wetlands below Third St. John Pond – MNAP photo

Natural Communities: Though the upland forests on the St. John Pond unit have been harvested heavily in the recent past, many interesting wetlands adjacent to the ponds remain intact. In contrast to upland forests on the unit, forested wetlands have not been recently harvested.

Third St. John Pond: Only a portion of the 190-acre Third St. John Pond is within the state-owned parcel. Significant natural communities include:

- a 252-acre exemplary streamshore ecosystem - a wetland that includes both forested and non-forested natural community types.
 - The southeastern part of the wetland contains a middle-aged spruce – larch forested bog with 70% canopy closure. The canopy is dominated by red spruce (*Picea mariana*) and balsam fir, with a small amount of mountain paper birch (*Betula cordifolia*). The trees are mostly 6 to 10 inches in diameter, and there is evidence of a historic cut 40 or more years ago.
 - closer to Third St. John Pond an extensive shrub marsh that flanks both sides of the inlet stream - a sweet gale mixed shrub fen with an abundant amount of old, dead trees and stumps. The shrub layer is made up of speckled alder (*Alnus incana*) and northern white cedar. There is a narrow band of northern white cedar woodland fen with stunted cedar (about 20 feet tall) adjacent to the upland on both sides. The water level in this area was historically higher in this area probably as a result of an old beaver dam.
- A remnant patch of mature beech-birch-maple forest on a steep slope (~50%) west of the Third St. John Pond wetland that runs along Baker Stream. The ledges are seepy and well shaded, but many large trees were removed in a harvest likely during the late 1990s.

Second St. John Pond: The most southwesterly of the ponds, 106-acre Second St. John Pond, is slightly less than a mile long and approximately ¼ mile wide at its widest point. Natural communities include:

- a 30-acre beaver-influenced peatland surrounding the inlet on the south side;
- a sweet gale – mixed shrub fen to the north;
- a leatherleaf boggy fen north of the sweet gale – mixed shrub fen toward the pond's edge;
- a wet sheep laurel – dwarf shrub bog community type with approximately 65% shrub cover towards the interior of the peatland, away from the open water and in a slightly raised area.

Robinson Pond: The 34 acre Robinson Pond is a more or less circular pond, approximately ¼ of a mile in diameter. Significant natural communities include:

- a ten meter wide band of mature cedar – spruce seepage forest surrounding the north and west sides by. Most of the cedar is in the 14 to 28 inch diameter range, but some trees are as large as 35 inches in diameter. Within this buffer, there is evidence of selective cutting approximately 80 or more years ago. Areas upslope of the buffer were harvested within the last ten years.
- This cedar seepage transitions into a leatherleaf boggy fen in the area surrounding the inlet stream on the north side of the pond.

- a remnant patch (a few acres) of a mature beech-birch-maple forest west of the pond, just on the other side of an old logging road. There is 90% canopy closure with sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) as the dominant species. The trees range from 8 to 16 inches in diameter, and there is evidence of a selective cut 40 or more years ago

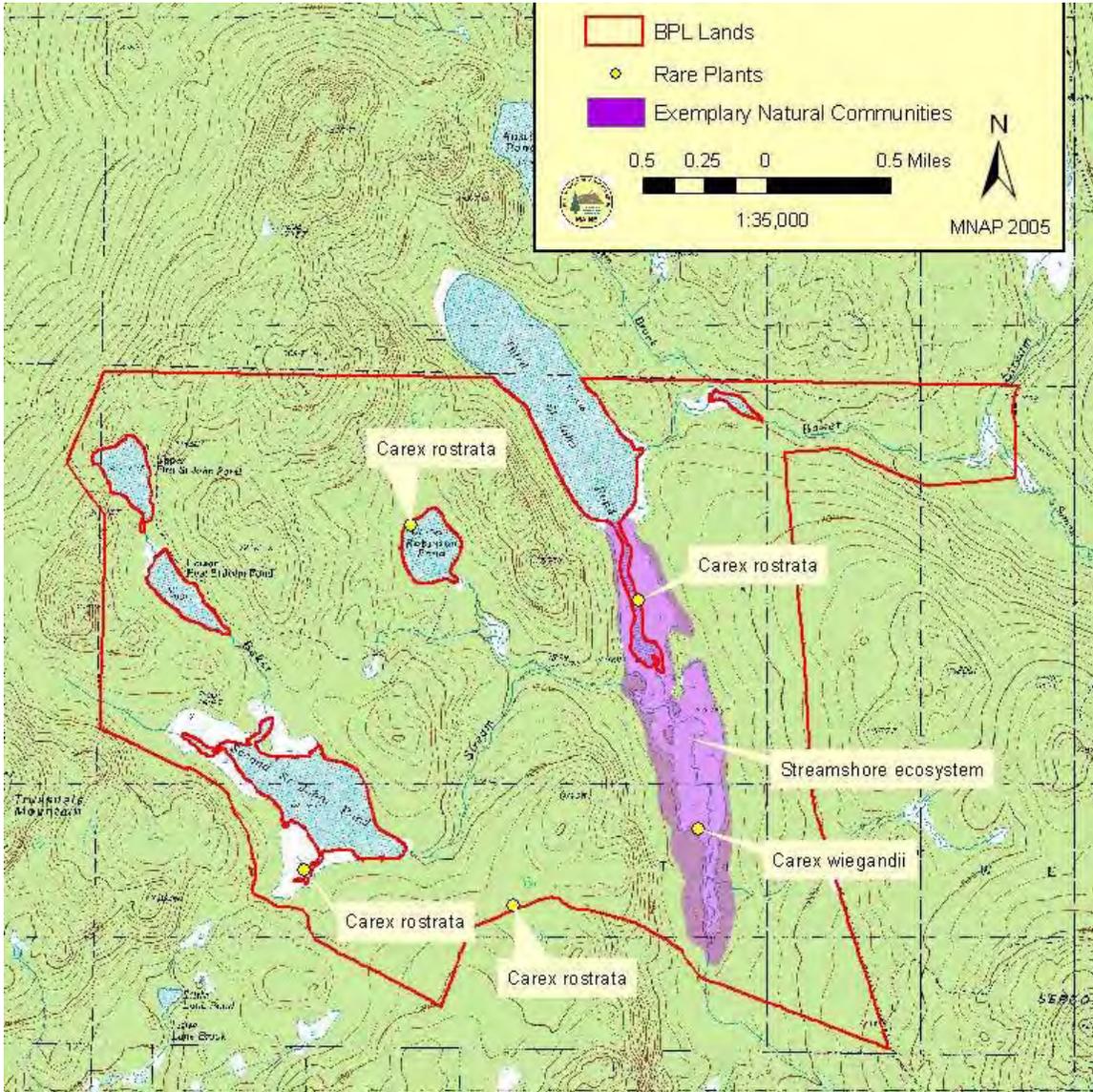


Figure 12: Rare Plants and Exemplary Ecosystems

Fisheries and Wildlife Resources

Fisheries Resources: Though wildlife species have not been surveyed on the unit, all the ponds have been surveyed for fish species. Most ponds have brook trout (except Robinson) and an assortment of shiners, dace, chubs and yellow perch. There have been no identified endangered or threatened animal species found on this parcel.

Wildlife Resources: The outstanding feature of this parcel is the extensive wetlands which occur between the 5 small ponds and off the parcel. The uplands have been heavily harvested and roaded but the significance of the wetlands resulted in the entire parcel being designated as an ecological reserve in 2003 prior to state ownership.

The recent harvesting provides abundant early successional habitat for pine siskin, dark-eyed junco, magnolia warbler, Nashville warbler, ruby and golden crowned kinglets and yellow-bellied flycatcher.

This parcel is within the region that has the highest moose densities in the state. A lack of dense softwood shelter limits deer populations and other softwood dependent species such as pine marten, snowshoe hare and spruce grouse. Coyote, red fox, porcupine and weasels are residents of this habitat. Other mammals associated with the wetlands include beaver, mink and muskrat. Bird species found around wetlands include great blue heron, black duck, common snipe, tree swallow and red-winged blackbird.

Historic and Cultural Resources:

The St. John Ponds were named after the date that the St. John River was discovered by Samuel de Champlain in 1604. It was St. John the Baptist's Day. Little is known about the historical or pre-historical use of this area. An archaeological investigation completed in 2006 by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for the Land for Maine's Future Board and Forest Society of Maine found no evidence of prehistoric use of the lakeshore landscape, although the dense young tree growth inhibited the investigation. The remains of an old dam at the outlet of Third St. John Pond dated this dam at the late nineteenth century or early 20th century.

Recreation Resources:

This parcel has traditionally been used for hunting and fishing. Vehicular access to the parcel is now limited by a gate on the Gulliver Brook Road at its junction with the Golden Road, approximately 5 miles from the parcel. The gate was installed by Wagner Forest Management Company in order to meet existing land use regulatory requirements for the protection of remote ponds and to provide a remote recreation area. The St. John Ponds, except for Robinson Pond, are zoned as Remote Ponds under LURC zoning, which limits road access to not closer than one-half mile of the ponds. The Bureau, under the terms of the access easement it holds with the landowner, Merriweather LLC, for public use of this road, may request the landowner to remove the gate, subject to a plan that addresses any land use regulations and that will not allow access through into T5R17 or interfere with timber harvest operations in the area. This provision would allow the Bureau to relocate the gate to a point on the Gulliver Brook Road closer to the state

lands, provided the Bureau installs and maintains the replacement gate, and subject to prior approval of the landowner, Merriweather LLC.

Timber Resources:

The St. John Ponds parcel was acquired by the state in 2004 from Merriweather, LLC. Prior to acquisition by Merriweather in the 1990s, the land was part of the vast Great Northern Paper holdings. Because of its ecological reserve status, timber management will not be an option.

Under Merriweather ownership, the land was managed by Wagner Forest Management LLC. The unit received heavy, extensive harvesting in the 1990s, and parts of the unit appear to have been repeatedly herbicided.. Current regeneration consists of seedling- and sapling-sized softwood stands and young hardwood stands that were harvested by overstory removal.



*Typical road and forest conditions in the St. John Pond parcel
MNAP photo*

The stocking is 65% hardwoods, some due to preferential cutting of spruce and fir but mostly because of site characteristics. The most abundant species by far is sugar maple at 30%. Spruce is second at 19%, yellow birch is third with 12% and red maple and fir each make up 10%.

The area east of 3rd Pond and its outlet were heavily cut or clear-cut 10-20 years ago, and appear to hold mostly softwood saplings, possibly having been herbicided. The rest of the tract is mostly tolerant hardwood stands grading to mixedwood along ponds and brooks. Essentially all acres were partially harvested, some cut heavily, during the same years as the land to the east.

Baker Lake Parcel

Character of the Land Base

Baker Lake lies in the upper portion of the St. John River waterway in the northern region of Somerset County and is a popular starting point for trips down the St. John River. The Baker Lake parcel was acquired by the state in 2003 from Merriweather, LLC. Under Merriweather's ownership, the land was managed by Wagner Forest Management Company. Prior to that it was part of Great Northern Paper Company's vast holdings. The state's 1,620 acre Baker Lake ownership consists of a narrow buffer around the lake (500 – 2000 feet) and its associated wetlands, and a roughly 550 –foot buffer along the east side of Baker Brook extending to the town line between T7R17 WELS and T8R17 WELS. Funds provided by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) assisted in the purchase of this unit, subject to an agreement with TNC that the acreage "be managed as Public Reserve land for remote recreation and in a manner that preserves its important conservation and scenic values."

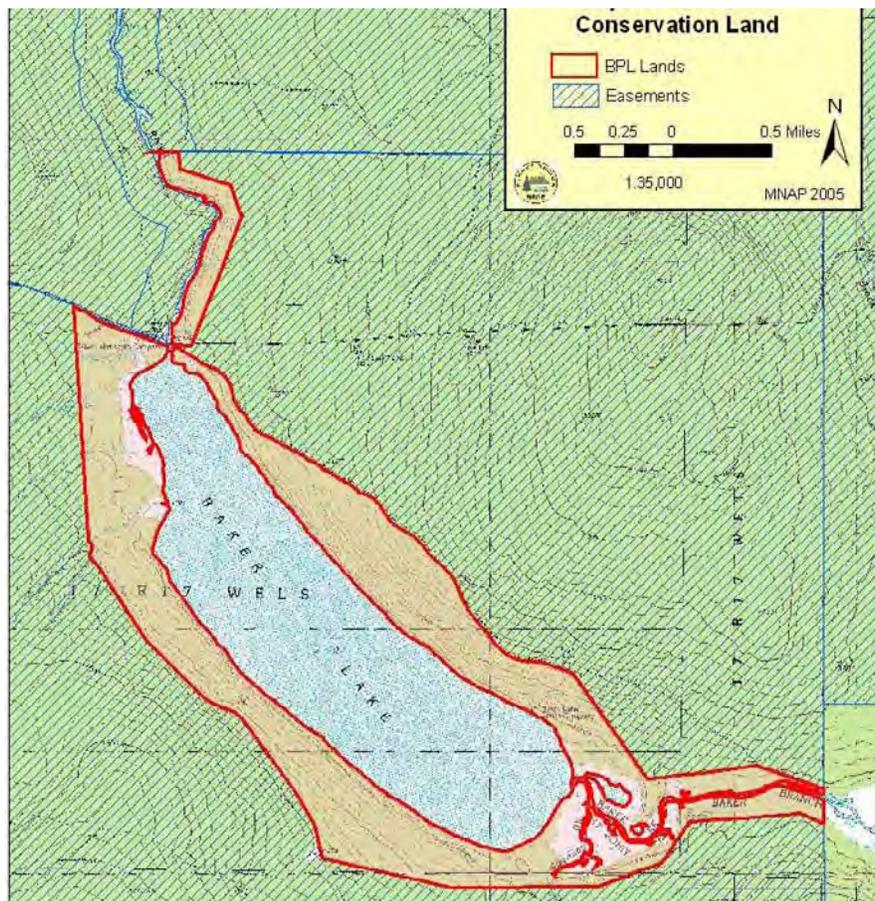


Figure 13 - Baker Lake Parcel

Natural Resources

Geology and Soils: Baker Lake is underlain by a single geologic unit known as the Northeast Carry Formation. This formation is primarily slate and fine sandstone and dates to around 400 million years ago, when two of the earth's plates were separating (or rifting).

The surficial geology of the southern half of the lake is defined as a stagnation moraine, while the northern half of the lake is till deposits, both related to the last glaciation of the state 11,000 years ago. Along the inflow and outflow of Baker Lake is stream alluvium. Soils have only been mapped for the southern half of Baker Lake. The dominant soil type in this area is the Daigle-Aurelie association. These deep, silty soils are derived from dense glacial till and often include slivers of rock. The soils that are part of the southeastern wetland on the lake are considered histosols, soils rich in organic matter.



Wetland south of Baker Lake – MNAP photo

Hydrology and Water Quality: Baker Lake is 1,231 acres in size and forms part of the headwaters to the St. John River. Secchi disc visibility extends to a depth of 9.2 to 9.8 feet (2.8 to 3.0 meters), and pH levels for the lake range between 6.82 and 7.14. The lake has some very shallow areas that can catch unsuspecting motor boats, though it does reach a maximum depth of 30 feet. Lake levels fluctuate seasonally with spring runoff.

Wetlands: The Baker Lake parcel includes a total of 436 acres of wetlands. Forested wetlands comprise 172 acres, while the remaining 263 acres are non-forested. Most of open wetlands are located around the edge of the lake, with the open wetland at the lake inflow comprising the bulk of the open wetland acreage. The wetlands at Baker Lake support 427 acres of inland wading bird habitat.

Ecological Processes: The naturally fluctuating water levels of Baker Lake help maintain the natural communities that surround the lake. In particular, spring flooding accompanied by ice scour (chunks of ice dragging across the soil, often uprooting, damaging, or killing fragile seedlings) allows communities such as sedge meadows to flourish where trees could not survive. In the surrounding uplands, spruce budworm infestations have likely damaged forests. By preferentially choosing balsam fir as its host, spruce budworm alters forest composition, reducing the fir component of the canopy.



Rare, Threatened or Endangered Animal Species: There are no identified endangered or threatened wildlife species found on this parcel. Rare animal species found on this parcel include the wood turtle (ranked S4) and Tomah mayfly (ranked S2). Both species occur in aquatic and riparian habitats that currently receive regulatory protection.

The wetland complex on the south end of Baker Lake is home to wood turtles. Wood turtles are declining throughout their range, with Maine harboring some of the largest and most viable populations in the U.S. This species of special concern spends most of its time in or near streams

or rivers, while becoming increasingly terrestrial during the summer months when it frequents adjacent forests, fields and wetlands. Wood turtle population growth is constrained by the short growing seasons and cold winters of Maine. Combined with human disturbance, these constraints could jeopardize the viability of wood turtle populations throughout the state. One of the greatest threats to Maine's wood turtle populations is illegal collection for the pet trade; collectors can decimate local populations in a short amount of time.

Tomah mayflies (ranked S2) have been located just upstream of the wetland complex on the St. John River inlet to Baker Lake, and suitable habitat exists within the Baker Lake parcel. Though they occur in sedge meadows, a common wetland type, Tomah mayflies are globally rare and are currently known almost entirely from Maine. They depend on highly productive, seasonally flooded sedge meadows along large streams or rivers to complete their life cycle, which includes feeding on decaying plant matter in the meadow as larvae in the spring, emerging from the water as adults when spring floodwater recedes, laying eggs in the stream channel nine days later, hatching in December, and growing slowly as nymphs under the ice until spring flooding. The majority of this wetland is mapped by MDIFW as wading bird and waterfowl habitat.

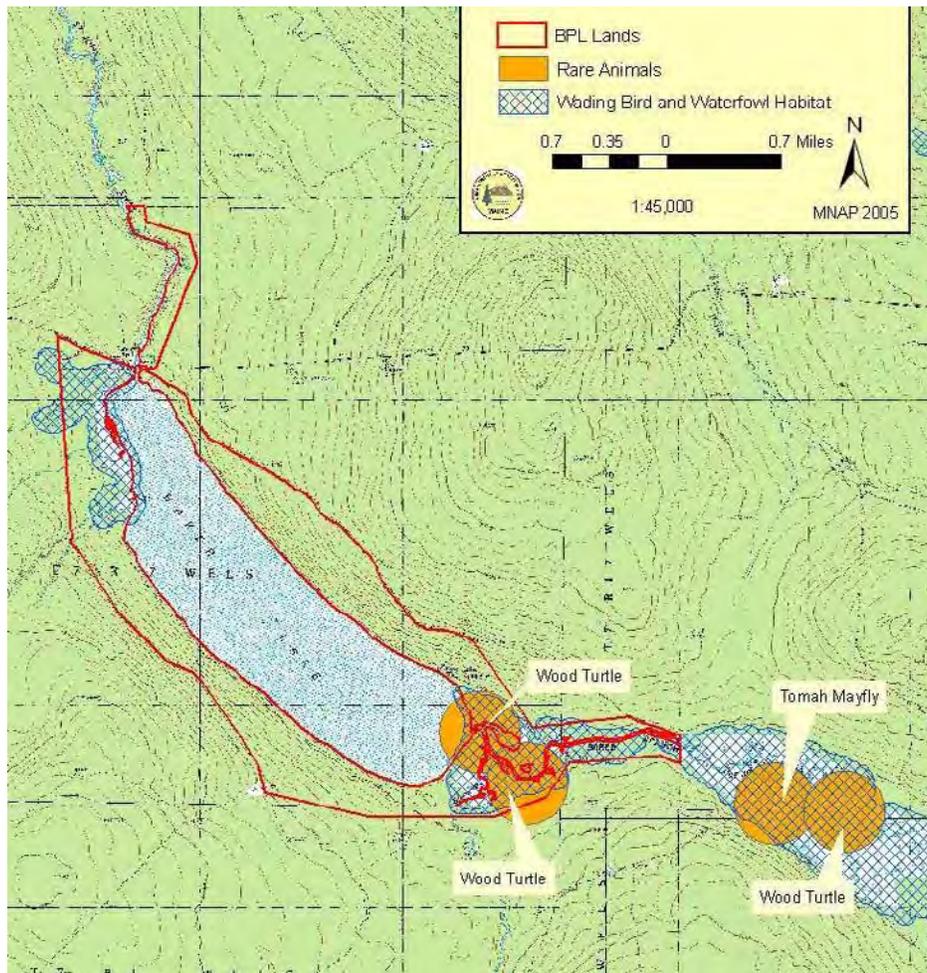


Figure 14: Rare Animal Species, and Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat

Natural Communities: Significant natural communities include:

- a small (a few acres) bulrush bed, a lakeshore community type, located immediately south of the northern Baker Lake campsite near the outlet of the St. John River. It extends southward along the shore for approximately 100 meters and is dominated by tall rushes and other graminoid species and has various aquatic plants intermixed in the standing water.
- A complex of wetland communities comprising a 270-acre exemplary streamshore ecosystem is found where the St. John River enters Baker Lake (at the southeastern end of the lake). Low, sandy beaches at the lake's edge grade into alder shrub thickets in drier areas. In wetter areas closer to the inlet stream and associated pools, a mixed graminoid shrub marsh dominates. Soils in these areas range from silty to mucky.

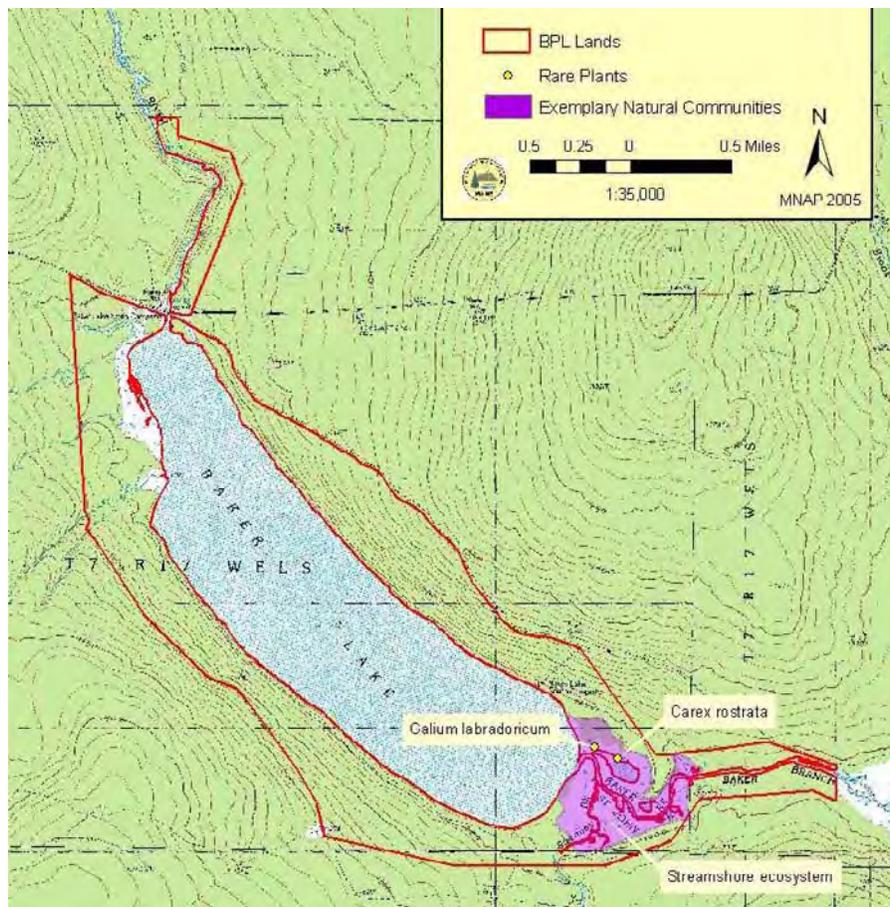


Figure 15: Baker Lake Rare Plants and Exemplary Natural Communities

Two rare plants were found within the stream shore community at the south end of the lake on the north side of the inlet: bog bedstraw (*Galium labradoricum*) and blue-leaved sedge (*Carex rostrata*). Both species tend to be found in wet sedge meadows.

Fisheries Resources: Fish found in Baker Lake include: blacknose dace, blacknose shiner, brook trout, common shiner, cusk, fallfish, golden shiner, lake chub, landlocked salmon, longnose sucker, muskellunge (“muskie”), pearl dace, rainbow smelt, white sucker, and yellow perch. The introduction of muskies in Lac Frontiere by the Quebec government in the 1960s enabled the non-native fish to migrate into Maine waters lying within the St. John River watershed. Muskies first appeared in Baker Lake in 1984 and have since established populations in other areas within the watershed. They are valued as sport fish for their large size and aggressive fighting. However, as large, fast-growing predators, they also feed on whatever is available, including native trout and salmon populations. The lake receives moderate fishing pressure in the spring.

Wildlife Resources: The uplands that surround Baker Lake likely support a typical mix of wildlife for the region. Moose in this region are abundant and deer are scarce. Black bear are common and coyote, red fox, snowshoe hare, American marten, porcupine, beaver, muskrat, mink, weasels and river otter also occur in this region.

The uplands support songbird species associated with mature softwood types and riparian zones such as sharp-shinned hawk, Spruce grouse, black-backed woodpecker, gray jay, red-breasted nuthatch. Wetlands provide habitat for great blue heron, black duck, common snipe, tree swallow and red-winged blackbird.

A territorial common loon pair has been documented on Baker Lake during recent surveys but successful breeding could not be determined. Common and red-breasted mergansers utilize the lake for breeding and brood rearing.



Muskie fishing in northern Maine – photo courtesy of Ross Lake Camps, Clayton Lake

The riparian zone and wetland habitats support reptiles and amphibians such as wood turtle, spotted, blue spotted salamanders and red spotted newt. American toads, green frog and mink frog should also be found here.

Historic and Cultural Resources:

Archeological artifacts discovered at Baker Lake indicates use of this area by Native Americans at least in the Ceramic Period, between 800 AD and 1300 A.D. or later. As today, this headwaters area probably was part of a canoe route following the St. John River, and connecting (via Big Bog) to the North Branch of the Penobscot River. A significant find of Kineo rhyolite artifacts suggests this was part of trade route for this valued stone (Speiss and Putnam, 2006). The large wetland at the inlet end of the lake was likely part of the lake at one time, and could have been attractive for prehistoric settlement, according to Spiess (2004).

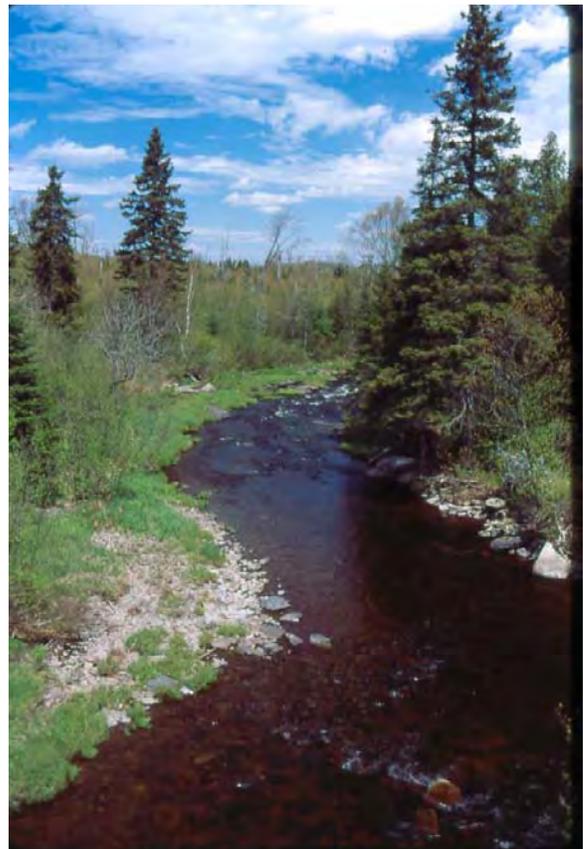
The Baker family settled in the area in 1773 and had many descendants for whom Baker Mountain, Lake, Stream, etc. were all named. Moscow Township was originally called Bakerstown.

Recreational Resources:

A portion of the lands adjacent to Baker Stream (250 feet from the stream beginning 400 feet downstream of the Baker Lake outlet) lies within the area subject to a LURC approved Resource Protection Plan for the St. John River. The Plan prohibits commercial and residential development, subdivisions, water impoundments or utility projects; and provides for the continued management of non-intensive public recreational activities. There are no campsites in this part of the Baker Lake parcel.

A camping area and unimproved boat launch are located at the outflow of Baker Lake, and this launch is often used as a starting point for canoeing trips down the St. John River. The camping area appears to be used heavily, and much of the vegetation in and around the campsite is trampled. Another campsite is located on the south end of Baker Lake. The Nature Conservancy owns a private camp immediately across the lake's outlet in addition to land north of the unit.

Sport fishing has become popular on the lake, especially since the unauthorized introduction of muskellunge, resulting in motorized boats being common despite the lake's shallow areas.



***Baker Brook** – Bill Silliker Photo
courtesy of the Forest Society of Maine*

Timber Resources:

The 1,625 acre parcel surrounds Baker Lake and both sides of the Baker Branch running into the lake. Although the waterside strip width is 1,000 feet or a bit more, the Baker Lake lands will be difficult to manage efficiently for timber. This is mainly lowland and mid-slope acres, most of which have received heavy cutting since 1980. A 2001 timber appraisal conducted by Wagner estimated the stocking at 10 cords per acre, evenly split between hardwoods and softwoods. Prior to the most recent harvests, this land was almost certainly much heavier to softwoods, more in line with the Canada Falls tract, which is over 70% softwood by volume. Spruce and fir share 43% of the volume, spruce predominant, while sugar maple and yellow birch combine for another 28%, indicating that some of the land is more fertile mixedwood/hardwood site. Red maple, white birch, and cedar share another 23% of tract volume. Given the low volumes, even if this parcel is designated for timber management, it is unlikely that any harvest activities would be indicated during this Plan interval.

Administrative Resources:

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Warden Service, has a cabin on the eastern shore near Baker Brook, which was constructed as a base of operations for work in this area, under an agreement with Great Northern Paper Company. The Bureau assumed, when it took title to the lands around Baker Lake, that such administrative structures would continue under a lease agreement with the Bureau.



Baker Lake, looking south – BP&L photo

Big Spencer Mountain

Character of the Land Base

Big Spencer Mountain juts incongruously from the surrounding landscape and presides over the surrounding gently rolling hills. The hardwood forests near the mountain itself appear not to have been harvested in thirty or more years, though portions of the tract closer to its boundaries experienced heavy clearcutting in the 1980s and 1990s. The plant communities of Big Spencer form a good representation of montane forests progressing along an elevational gradient, and two exemplary natural communities were found on the parcel.

Big Spencer Mountain was acquired by The Forest Society of Maine from Great North Woods, LLC in 2001, and subsequently transferred it to the State with the stipulation that it be managed as an Ecological Reserve. The land had been managed by Wagner Forest Management Company. A small parcel (2.3 acres) at the summit was excluded from the acquisition. The in-holding contains some structures, including an unattended fire tower, two large banks of solar panels, a small communications building, and a wood helipad platform.



Big Spencer Mountain – MNAP photo

Natural Resources

Geology and Soils: Big Spencer Mountain is capped by quartz-rich volcanic rocks that resist weathering. The volcanic bedrock was deposited in an ocean basin as North America collided with a microcontinent in the Acadian orogeny 400 million years ago. Surrounding and underneath this volcanic cap is a formation comprised of dark sandstone, siltstone, and slate – sediments that were part of the ancient ocean basin. This sedimentary rock weathers easily compared with the volcanic rock and is one of the constituents of the rolling landscape that is prevalent in the area.

The top of Big Spencer Mountain has no surficial geology deposits and is simply defined as bedrock. The sides and base of the mountain are coated in a layer of till deposited during the last glaciation. Soils on Big Spencer have not been mapped.

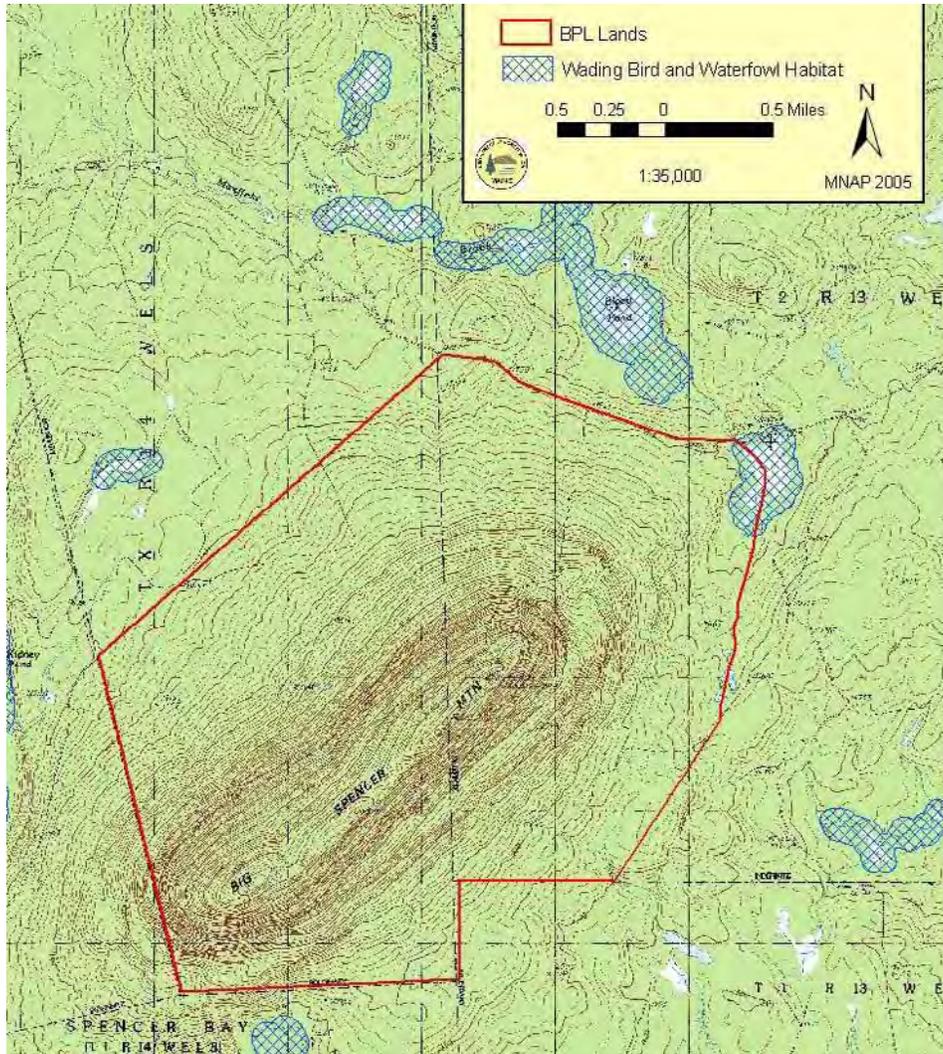


Figure 16: Big Spencer Mountain Parcel

Wetlands: Big Spencer’s sparse wetlands all occur at the periphery of the unit, mostly along the eastern boundary. There are a total of 41 acres of wetlands, 15 of which are forested and 26 of which are open. Thirty acres on the unit are considered wading bird habitat.

Ecological Processes: Ice, wind, and cold temperatures at the top of Big Spencer Mountain limit the number of species that can successfully live there. “Krummholz” (meaning “crooked wood”) is the term used to describe the balsam fir, black spruce, and heart-leaf paper birch that populate this harsh environment. As the name implies, the growth form of these species under these conditions tend to be low, dense, and shrub-like. Often one tree will have multiple leaders that have died back, and much of its summer growth may be stripped by the ice and winds of winter. As anyone who has ever tried to bushwhack through such a community can attest, these dense growth forms create a virtually impenetrable, dwarfed forest of trees up to ten feet tall.

Spruce budworm damage is evident along the ridge of Big Spencer Mountain. Since balsam fir is the preferred food of the budworm, a krummholz community dominated by fir is an easy target for the pest. The most recent outbreak occurred in the 1980s, though budworm damage is difficult to assess against the backdrop of krummholz wind and ice damage.

The hardwood communities on the unit show evidence of typical small gap disturbances from ice, windthrow, or natural tree mortality. These gaps increase to complexity of forest structure and add to the diversity of microhabitats in the forest for plants and animals.

Natural Communities:

- Ten to twenty acres of the summit is krummholz – stunted balsam fir and black spruce (up to ten feet tall) and extremely dense, in most areas underlain by a thick carpet of mosses. An open area at the summit contains a number of structures for communications. In addition, an area of about ¼ acre has been severely trampled by hikers.
- The remainder of the lands above 2,000 feet is best characterized as a fir – heartleaved birch – sub-alpine forest natural community along the spine of the mountain. This upper elevation forest has little to no evidence of past harvesting but frequent evidence of natural disturbance, including past insect damage and wind/ice damage. Balsam fir, red spruce, and heartleaved birch dominate the canopy. The slope is bouldery and ranges from 30% to 45% in grade.



The Spruce – Northern Hardwoods Forest on Big Spencer, MNAP photo

- Around 2000 feet elevation, a band of heart-leaved paper birch (*Betula cordifolia*) runs along the north side of the mountain.
- Below this band, a spruce – northern hardwoods forest characterizes the transition zone from the subalpine forest to the mixed-wood and hardwood dominated middle and lower slopes. The eastern side of the mountain drops off steeply to the southeast, with numerous sparsely vegetated cliffs – the largest roughly 200 feet tall. Some areas of the lower slopes show signs of past harvesting (i.e., within the past three decades). Heavier past harvest levels are evident within about ½ mile of the road network. On the north side of the mountain, past harvest signs become minimal above 1,700 feet, and on the east side, harvest signs are minimal above 1,900 feet. One cedar tree was measured to be 36 inches in diameter, and a few spruce trees on these lower and intermediate slopes were aged to be over 200 years old. Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), and yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) dominate the canopy with red spruce and heartleaved birch found scattered towards the upper edges of the community.

The most botanically interesting features of these lower hardwood and mixed-wood slopes are seasonal drainages – one following the T2 R13/TX R14 town boundary on the north side of the mountain and several others on the lower western slopes. These seasonal drainages support several uncommon rich woods species.

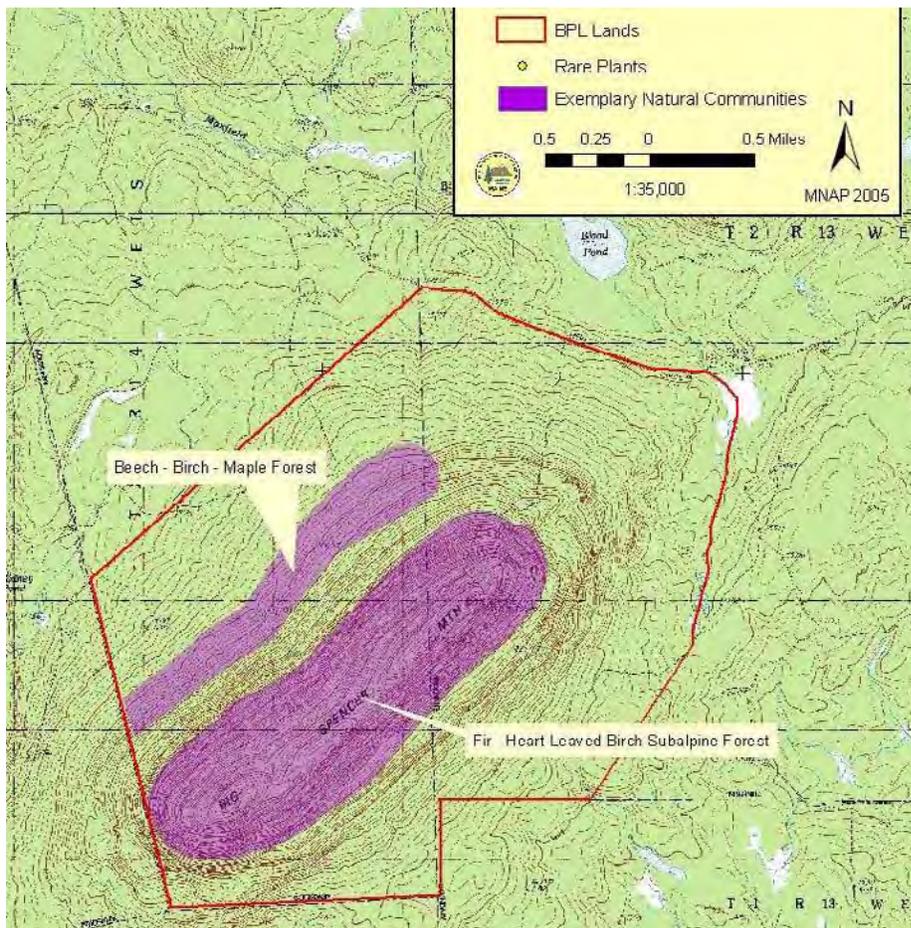


Figure 17: Exemplary Natural Communities

Wildlife Resources: Beyond the typical mix of wildlife species found in this area of the state, Big Spencer Mountain is known to harbor some uncommon species that require large, unfragmented blocks of forest land. The extensive, mature hardwood forest on the northwest slope of the mountain provide suitable habitat for a suite of forest interior warblers including black-throated blue, black-throated green, black and white and northern parula. While the black-throated blue warbler, which depends on mature deciduous forests, has a healthy population in Maine, about 20% of the global population of this species breeds in Maine, making habitat conservation in Maine important for the health of the whole species.

Extensive high elevation krummholz forest on Big Spencer Mountain provides optimum habitat for Bicknell's thrush, a species of special concern due to restricted habitat. Bicknell's have been documented at this location for the last 5 years through annual surveys. MDIFW recently included Big Spencer among the handful of sites in Maine providing habitat for this species of special concern. Cliffs on the southeast side of the unit could provide nesting sites for ravens.



Bicknell's Thrush (photo by Yves Aubrey, Canadian Wildlife Service)

Point counts on Big Spencer in 2001, 2003, and 2004 conducted by Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) detecting the following bird species: Bicknell's thrush, Swainson's thrush, blackpoll warbler, winter wren, white throated sparrow, American robin, black-capped chickadee, boreal chickadee, brown creeper, black throated green warbler, cedar waxwing, golden crowned kinglet, hermit thrush, magnolia warbler, myrtle warbler, Nashville warbler, ovenbird, purple finch, rose breasted grosbeak, ruby crowned kinglet, slate colored junco, yellow bellied flycatcher, yellowbellied sapsucker, and yellow shafted flicker.

There are limited wetlands along the eastern border of the property and no ponds on the property. Amphibian species are limited by a lack of suitable habitat. Reptile species found in this type of habitat are northern redbelly snake.

Recreational Resources:

Current uses include hiking, bird watching tours, snowmobiling, and hunting. The state has received requests for bear-baiting sites on the reserve, but none have been granted. An established trail (an old jeep trail that was constructed to serve the now abandoned warden's cabin at about elevation 2,000) leads up the east slope of the mountain. The trail to this point is used by both hikers and snowmobilers. It is not a groomed trail, and is quite steep in places. The trail is also eroding in places. The hiking trail continues on from the cabin and terminates at the mountain's east summit. The summit, though it contains a number of structures, affords panoramic views of Mt. Katahdin and many of the region's larger lakes.

Historic and Cultural Resources:

Big Spencer Mountain was an important fire lookout tower station for the Moosehead region, and held the State record as the longest continually operated fire tower, from 1906 to 1991, nearly 85 years of service. It was discontinued when the Forest Service replaced staffed towers with a program using periodic air reconnaissance flights. The fire warden's cabin remains on the mountain, in deteriorated condition. The tower itself is located on lands retained by Northwoods, LLC at the top of the mountain.

Warden's Cabin (BP&L photo)
Fire Tower (Al Hutchinson photo)



Timber Resources:

This 4,242 acre parcel was gifted to the State with the provision that it be designated as an ecological reserve. Thus timber management will not be an option on this tract.

The inventory done by Wagner in 2000 covered 3,198 forested acres and estimates the stocking to be 25 cords per acre. Nearly all of the other 1,044 acres is exposed ledge or noncommercial forest land on Big Spencer itself. Perhaps half of the commercial (inventoried) forest land is a mix of types at the lower elevations of the tract, especially east of the peak. These areas have received light to moderate cutting over the past 20 years, and have moderate to full stocking. In between those two broad land types lies a mature northern hardwood stand (synonymous with tolerant hardwoods for this document) that has had little or no harvesting during the past 30+ years. This stand probably would not meet the definitions of old growth, perhaps not even the current threshold for "late successional", but does have significant volumes in large stems.

On the inventoried acres as a whole, hardwoods are dominant (85% of total volume) and sugar maple is the most common species, making up 49% of the volume. Beech, spruce, and yellow birch are next, each holding 10-11% of tract cords.

Administrative Management Concerns:

Structures: In addition to the warden's cabin, there are two "squatter's" cabins located on the southern edge of the parcel. These buildings, which are simple tar papered woods camp buildings, are to be removed. The outbuilding at the warden's cabin also contains cans of old paint and possibly other hazardous materials that need to be removed and disposed of properly.

Roads: Two woods management roads appear to lead into the parcel on the northwest side and eastern boundary. These could be access points for unauthorized motorized use (such as ATVs) and should be blocked and monitored.

V. A Vision for the Seboomook Unit

General Principles:

The Seboomook Unit Management Plan is a commitment to the public that the Unit lands will be managed in accordance with the Bureau's mission and goals, and within prescribed mandates.

Multiple Use Management

1. Management of the Seboomook Unit is based on the principle of multiple use to produce a sustained yield of products and services, and sound planning (Title 12, Section 1847);
2. The Unit provides a demonstration of exemplary land management practices, including silvicultural, wildlife, and recreation management practices (Title 12, Section 1847).

Recreational Uses

3. The Unit provides a wide range of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities (IRP); including provision of remote, undeveloped areas (Title 12, Section 1847).
4. There is full and free public access to the Unit together with the right to reasonable use of those lands, except reasonable fees are charged to defray the cost of constructing and maintaining overnight campsites and other camping and recreation facilities. Restrictions on free and reasonable public access are imposed where appropriate to ensure the optimum value of the Unit as a public trust. (Title 12 Section 1846).

Specific to the Seboomook Unit:

Overall Vision

5. The Seboomook Unit provides a "back woods" experience in a relatively accessible portion of Maine's vast undeveloped northern forest region.
6. Management of the Unit provides a high quality recreational experience, demonstrates exemplary multiple use and sustainable forestry, advances understanding of the value of special protected resources; and models partnerships with private landowners, businesses, and organized user-groups.
7. The spectrum of available recreation experiences ranges from "remote" (not accessed by road, with use characterized as low-intensity, low-impact, and primarily non-motorized) to "primitive, vehicle-accessible" including hunting, lake and river boat based fishing, bank fishing, trapping, flatwater and whitewater boating, hiking, primitive camping, wildlife viewing, nature study, bicycling, mountain biking, horseback riding, snowshoeing, back-country skiing, winter camping, and snowmobiling. ATV touring occurs through cooperative arrangements with adjacent landowners, as part of a significant extended ATV trail system.
8. Visitors to the Seboomook Unit can easily and conveniently obtain information about the recreational facilities and opportunities on the Unit, the Penobscot River Corridor, and the surrounding North Maine Woods lands. The Seboomook and Canada Falls parcels are managed with an active yet unobtrusive ranger presence.

Remote Recreation Experience

9. The recreational experience on Seboomook, Canada Falls, and Baker lakes is one of being in a remote, undeveloped area. Lakeside camping opportunities include drive-to primitive sites, walk-to remote sites, and remote water access sites.
 - The lakes are used primarily for fishing, kayak and canoe touring, or pleasure boating in small watercraft. Boat access facilities are either carry-in or suitable for small-motored boats. Personal water craft are not allowed.
 - Areas are designated around the lakes, suitably buffered from deer yards, snowmobile trails and private camps, for remote winter camping, snowshoeing, and back-country skiing.
10. The St. John Ponds area remains a remote area with no road access. Roads on the parcel are allowed to revert to forest, except for any road determined to be needed for fire control. Over time the forest regenerates into an undisturbed mature forest. The area offers dispersed backcountry, non-motorized recreational opportunities including wild brook trout fishing, hunting, camping and orienteering. No trails or facilities are developed. Motors are prohibited on the lakes.
11. The mature forest, hiking trail and spectacular summit views of Big Spencer Mountain provide opportunities for backcountry hiking, snowshoeing, wildlife and bird watching, camping and hunting.

Recreational Trails and Facilities

12. The recreation and wildlife values of the unit are maintained with a minimum of trails, roads or improvements, such as parking areas. Any recreational improvements are located in proximity to existing roads and facilities, or in areas that minimize impacts to wildlife and other sensitive resources.
13. Nature trails are developed along sections of the rivers and at other selected areas that offer unusual wildlife or scenic viewing opportunities.
14. Equestrian, bicycling, mountain biking, and ATV trails are designated or developed to provide a high quality back woods trail experience, and to minimize adverse impacts on wildlife, other users, and adjacent landowners, and are managed through a collaboration involving the state and local clubs or businesses, and surrounding landowners.
15. The existing popular snowmobile ITS Connector trails that are part of the “Moosehead Loop” trail continue to be provided through partnerships with snowmobile clubs, and are improved or relocated as necessary to avoid conflicts with timber management or other uses, while providing a quality snowmobiling experience and contributing to a regional winter tourism opportunity.

Forest and Wildlife Management

16. The quality of the forests on the Seboomook, Canada Falls, and Baker Lake parcels is improved, and a multi-aged forest is being regenerated that supports a high quality recreation experience, enhances wildlife habitat, and, on those portions of the parcels actively managed for timber, produces high value products through the growth of large trees.
17. A significant portion of the Seboomook parcel is managed cooperatively with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for deer yards and other wildlife habitat, including special protection areas around eagle and loon nests.
18. Timber management, where allowed, is conducted with a minimum of roads. Existing timber management roads have been systematically evaluated to determine which should be retired and which are needed for forest or recreation management objectives. A core system of roads is available for public vehicular use (public use roads); and forest management roads are designated, when not being actively used for forest management, either for vehicular access, or for hiking, hunting, snowshoeing, back-country skiing, equestrian uses, or mountain biking.



View from Big Spencer Mountain -Al Hutchinson Photo

VI. Resource Allocations

Summary of the Resource Allocation System

The Resource Allocation System is a land management-planning tool first developed in the 1980's, and formalized in a document entitled *Integrated Resource Policy (IRP)*. The IRP was further refined through a public process that produced the current version, adopted December 18, 2000. The Resource Allocation System, which is used to designate appropriate management based on resource characteristics and values, is based on a *hierarchy* of natural and cultural resource attributes found on the land base. The hierarchy ranks resources along a scale from those that are scarce and/or most sensitive to management activities, to those that are less so. The resource attributes are aggregated into seven categories or "allocations," including (from most sensitive to least) special protection, backcountry recreation, wildlife management, remote recreation, visual consideration, developed recreation, and timber management.

This hierarchy defines the type of management that will be applied where these resource attributes are found, with *dominant* and *secondary* use or management designations as appropriate to achieve an integrated, multi-use management.

The following is a description of the Resource Allocation System categories applied in this Plan, the management direction defined for each category in the Bureau's Integrated Resource Policy planning document, and the application of these allocations within the Unit.

Overview of Allocations for the Seboomook Unit

Resource Allocation	Dominant Allocations (acres)	Secondary Allocations (acres)
Special Protection		
Ecological Reserves	8,159	
Significant Natural Areas*	825	
Wildlife Management	10,670	31,580
Remote Recreation	4,850	10,482
Developed Recreation	100	
Timber Management	26,630	15,520
TOTAL ACRES	51,245	

* Not including wetlands and wildlife habitat such as den trees, snags, and other habitats that will be delineated for protection in the course of any timber inventory and prescription process.

SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS

Designation Criteria

- 1. Natural Areas**, or areas left in an undisturbed state as determined by deed, statute, or management plan; and areas containing rare and endangered species of wildlife and/or plants and their habitat, geological formations, or other notable natural features;
- 2. Ecological Reserves**, established by Title 12, Section 1801: "*an area owned or leased by the State and under the jurisdiction of the Bureau, designated by the Director, for the purpose of maintaining one or more natural community types or native ecosystem types in a natural condition and range of variation and contributing to the protection of Maine's biological diversity, and managed: A) as a benchmark against which biological and environmental change can be measured, B) to protect sufficient habitat for those species whose habitat needs are unlikely to be met on lands managed for other purposes; or C) as a site for ongoing scientific research, long-term environmental monitoring, and education.*" Most ecological reserves will encompass more than 1,000 contiguous acres.
- 3. Historic/Cultural Areas** (above or below ground) containing valuable or important prehistoric, historic, and cultural features.

Management Direction

In general, uses allowed in Special Protection areas are carefully managed and limited to protect the significant resources and values that qualify for this allocation. Because of their sensitivity, these areas can seldom accommodate active manipulation or intensive use of the resource. Secondary recreation use is allowed with emphasis on non-motorized dispersed recreation. For the two Ecological Reserves that are part of this Unit, Remote Recreation is designated as a secondary allocation. Other direction provided in the IRP includes:

Vegetative Management on Ecological Reserves, including salvage harvesting is also considered incompatible. Commercial timber harvesting is not allowed on either Ecological Reserves or Special Protection natural areas.

Wildlife management within these areas must not manipulate vegetation or waters to create or enhance wildlife habitat.

Management or public use roads are allowed under special circumstances, if the impact on the protected resources is minimal. For the St. John Ponds and Big Spencer Mountain Ecological Reserves, existing roads will be discontinued except as needed for fire control.

Trails for non-motorized activities must be well designed and constructed, be situated in safe locations, and have minimal adverse impact on the values for which the area is being protected. *Trail facilities and primitive campsites* must be rustic in design and accessible only by foot from trailheads located adjacent to public use roads, or by water. For the St. John Ponds area, no trails or facilities will be constructed.

Carry-in boat access sites are allowed on water bodies where boating activity does not negatively impact the purposes for which the Special Protection Area was established.

Hunting, fishing, and trapping are allowed where they do not conflict with the management of historic or cultural areas or the safety of other users.

Research, interpretive trails, habitat management for endangered or threatened species, are allowed in Special Protection natural areas unless limited by other management guidelines.

Special Protection Areas Designated for the Seboomook Unit

For the Seboomook Unit, Special Protection areas defined include areas officially designated as Ecological Reserves, and significant natural communities as defined by the Maine Natural Areas Program and Bureau staff specialists through field assessments. This allocation includes a total of approximately 9,000 acres over all the parcels included in the Seboomook Unit (further detailed in the parcel by parcel discussion which follows). Overall, Special Protection allocations include:

- Carry Bog Wetland Complex, Seboomook parcel – 215 acres
- Mud Cover Appalachian-Acadian Basin Swamp Ecosystem , Seboomook Parcel – 240 acres
- Mature Oak community, Seboomook parcel – roughly 100 acres
- Streamshore Ecosystem, St. John River inlet to Baker Lake – 270 acres
- St. John Ponds Ecological Reserve – 3,917 acres
- Big Spencer Mountain Ecological Reserve – 4,242 acres



The exemplary Streamshore Ecosystem on the south end of Baker Lake – MNAP photo

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

Designation Criteria

- 1. Essential habitats** are those regulated by law and currently consist of bald eagle, piping plover, and least tern nest sites (usually be categorized as Special Protection as well as Wildlife Dominant Areas).
- 2. Significant habitats**, defined by Maine’s Natural Resource Protection Act, include habitat for endangered and threatened species; deer wintering areas; seabird nesting islands; vernal pools; waterfowl and wading bird habitats; shorebird nesting, feeding, and staging areas; and Atlantic salmon habitat.
- 3. Specialized habitat areas and features** include rare natural communities; riparian areas; aquatic areas; wetlands; wildlife trees such as mast producing hardwood stands (oak and beech), snags and dead trees, den trees (live trees with cavities), large woody debris on the ground, apple trees, and raptor nest trees; seeps; old fields/grasslands; alpine areas; folist sites (a thick organic layer on sloping ground); and forest openings.

Management Direction

Recreation and timber management are secondary uses in most Wildlife Dominant Areas. Recreational use of Wildlife Dominant Areas typically includes hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, trapping, and sightseeing. Motorized trails for snowmobiling and ATV riding are allowed to cross these areas if they do not conflict with the primary wildlife use of the area and there is no other safe, cost-effective alternative (such as routing a trail around the wildlife area). Direction provided in the IRP includes:

Habitat management for wildlife, including commercial and noncommercial harvesting of trees, will be designed to maximize plant and animal diversity and to provide habitat conditions to enhance population levels where desirable.

Endangered or threatened plants and animals – The Bureau will cooperate with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and Maine Natural Areas Program in the delineation of critical habitat and development of protection or recovery plans by these agencies on Bureau lands.

Timber management as a secondary use in riparian buffers will employ the selection system, retaining all den trees and snags consistent with operational safety. In other wildlife-dominant areas it will be managed to enhance wildlife values.

Wildlife Management Areas Designated for the Seboomook Unit

Wildlife dominant areas on the Seboomook Unit include LURC designated deer yards, IF&W cooperative landowner designated deer yards (continuation of areas designated by previous owner), and riparian shoreline areas along the lakes and major rivers (330-foot zone from edge of water), and along minor streams (75-foot zone from edge of water). Included within the riparian zone are two known bald eagle nest sites. Additional areas may be defined through detailed field work related to forest management – these areas could include vernal pools and other wetlands, snags and den trees, for example.

This allocation, as a dominant category, includes a total of approximately 10,670 acres over all the parcels included in the Seboomook Unit (further detailed in the parcel by parcel discussion which follows). In addition, managing to enhance wildlife habitat is a significant component of the Bureau’s approach to timber management, and hence it is a significant secondary use within the Timber Management areas (26,730 acres), and even the Remote Recreation Areas where timber harvesting occurs (4,850 acres). Overall, Wildlife Management allocations include:

Wildlife Management– Dominant Use
Seboomook / Canada Falls – 10,200 acres
Baker Lake– 470 acres

Wildlife Management– Secondary Use
Seboomook / Canada Falls – 30,680 acres
Baker Lake – 900 acres



Young bull moose on Canada Falls Road – Photo courtesy of Jim Clark, TRC

REMOTE RECREATION AREAS

Designation Criteria

1. Allocated to protect natural/scenic values as well as recreation values. Often have significant opportunities for low-intensity, dispersed, non-motorized recreation.
2. Usually are relatively long corridors rather than broad, expansive areas.
3. May be a secondary allocation for Wildlife Dominant areas and Special Protection – Ecological Reserve areas.
4. Examples include trail corridors, shorelines, and remote ponds.

Management Direction

Remote Recreation areas are allocated to protect natural/scenic values as well as recreation values. The primary objective of this category is to provide non-motorized recreational opportunities; therefore, motorized recreation trails are allowed only under specific limited conditions, described below. Timber management is allowed as a secondary use. Direction provided in the IRP includes:

Trail facilities and remote campsites will be rustic in design and accessible by foot from trailheads, management and/or public roads, or by water.

Existing snowmobile and all-terrain vehicle activity may be continued on well-designed and constructed trails in locations that are safe, where the activity has minimal adverse impact on protected natural resource or remote recreation values, and where the trails cannot be reasonably relocated outside of the area.

New snowmobile or all-terrain vehicle trails are allowed only if all three of the following criteria are met:

- (1) no safe, cost effective alternative exists;
- (2) the impact on protected natural resource values or remote recreation values is minimal; and
- (3) the designated trail will provide a crucial link in a significant trail system;

Access to Remote Recreation areas is primarily walk-in, or boat, but may include vehicle access over timber management roads while these roads are being maintained for timber management.

Remote Recreation Areas Designated for the Seboomook Unit

Remote Recreation areas are being designated around Seboomook Lake, Canada Falls Lake and Baker Lake. In addition, the Wildlife Dominant riparian areas surrounding these lakes will be designated Remote Recreation as a secondary allocation (further detailed in the parcel by parcel discussion which follows). The total acreage in Remote Recreation – dominant areas for all parcels in the Seboomook Unit is 4,850 acres; Remote Recreation as a secondary use accounts for another 10,482 acres; as detailed below.

Remote Recreation – Dominant Use

Seboomook Lake – 3,950 acres

Baker Lake – 900 acres

Remote Recreation – Secondary Use

Seboomook Lake – 1,591 acres

Canada Falls Lake – 523 acres

Baker Lake – 209 acres

St. John Ponds – 3,917 acres

Big Spencer Mountain – 4,242 acres



*Remote Winter Camping Near Pittston Farm–
courtesy of the Conovers, Winterwalk 2005*

VISUAL CONSIDERATION AREAS

Many Bureau-managed properties have natural settings in which visual attributes enhance the enjoyment of recreational users. Timber harvests which create large openings, stumps and slash, gravel pits, and new road construction, when viewed from roads or trails, may detract significantly from the visual enjoyment of the area. To protect the land's aesthetic character, the Bureau uses a two-tier classification system to guide management planning, based on the sensitivity of the visual resource to be protected.

Designation Criteria

Visual Class I. Areas where the foreground views of natural features that may directly affect enjoyment of the viewer. Applied throughout the system to all shorelines, trails, public use roads, and management roads open to public vehicular traffic.

Visual Class II. Include views of forest canopies from ridge lines, the forest interior as it fades from the foreground of the observer, background hillsides viewed from water or public use roads, or interior views beyond the Visual Class I area likely to be seen from a trail or road.

Visual Class I Management Direction:

Timber harvesting is permitted under stringent limitations directed at retaining the appearance of an essentially undisturbed forest.

Openings will be contoured to the lay of the land and limited to a size that will maintain a natural forested appearance.

Within trail corridors or along public use roads it may be necessary to cut trees at ground level or cover stumps.

Branches, tops, and other slash will be pulled well back from any trails.

Scenic vistas may be provided.

Visual Class II Management Direction:

Managed to avoid any obvious alterations to the landscape.

Openings will be of a size and orientation as to not draw undue attention.

Visual Consideration Areas Designated for the Seboomook Unit

For the Seboomook Unit, where the topography is relatively gentle and most public use will occur along roads or on the water, Visual Class designations will be layered over other allocations so that any timber harvest in the Visual Consideration areas will be subject to the additional Visual Consideration management guidelines.

Visual Class I areas will be defined on the ground for areas adjacent to public use roads, lake and river shorelines, areas around Developed Recreation sites, and designated trails (including snowmobile trails). These are detailed for each parcel in the following section.

Visual Class II areas will be defined as areas beyond the immediate foreground, such as distant hills, viewed from public use roads or from the lakes (as seen from a boat, or from a shoreline viewing the opposite shoreline).



The North Branch of the Penobscot River - BP&P photo

DEVELOPED RECREATION AREAS

Designation Criteria

Developed Class I areas are low to medium density developed recreation areas, while *Developed Class II* areas have medium to high density facilities and use such as campgrounds with modern sanitary facilities. In the Seboomook Unit, there are no Class II Developed Recreation areas being proposed.

Class I Developed Recreation Areas

1. Typically include more intensely developed recreation facilities than found in Remote Recreation Areas such as:
 - drive-to primitive campsites with minimal supporting facilities;
 - gravel boat launch areas and parking areas;
 - shared use roads and/or trails designated for motorized activities; and
 - trailhead parking areas.
2. Do not usually have full-time management staff.

Management Direction

Developed Recreation areas allow a broad range of recreational activities, with timber management and wildlife management allowed as secondary uses. Direction provided in the IRP includes:

Timber management, allowed as compatible **secondary use**, is conducted in a way that is sensitive to visual, wildlife and user safety considerations. Single-age forest management is not allowed in these areas. Salvage and emergency harvests may occur where these do not significantly impact natural, historic, or cultural resources and features, or conflict with traditional recreational uses of the area.

Wildlife management may be a compatible **secondary use**. To the extent that such management occurs, it will be sensitive to visual, and user safety considerations.

Visual consideration areas (see below) are often designated in a buffer area surrounding the Developed Recreation area.

Developed Recreation Areas Designated for the Seboomook Unit

Class I Developed Recreation areas allocated for the Seboomook Unit include existing primitive drive-to and water access campsites, and public use roads. Boat access sites at Canada Falls and Seboomook Lake are part of the Brookfield Power LLC hydropower project and are not on Bureau lands; however, the existing unimproved boat access on the West Branch at Roll Dam and at Baker Lake are on Bureau lands and are designated as Developed Recreation Class I areas.

Some additional areas are proposed for this allocation if it is determined that additional facilities are needed and appropriate. In most cases, these areas are anticipated expansions to existing drive-to facilities (see Management Recommendations Section for details). The Plan recommends some new water access campsites on Canada Falls Lake, Seboomook Lake, and potentially Baker Lake, although the number and exact location of these is yet to be determined.

This allocation, including existing and proposed Developed Recreation Class I areas, but excluding roads, totals less than 100 acres over all the parcels in the Seboomook Unit. These are further detailed in the parcel by parcel discussion which follows.



Roll Dam Campsite, West Branch Penobscot River – BP&L Photo

TIMBER MANAGEMENT AREAS

Designation Criteria

1. Area meets Bureau guidelines as suitable for timber management, and is not prohibited by deed or statute.
2. Area is not dominated by another resource category. Where other uses are dominant, timber management may be a secondary use if conducted in a way that does not conflict with the dominant use.

Management Direction

The Bureau's timber management practices are governed by a combination of statute and Bureau policy, including but not limited to policies spelled out in the IRP. These general policies include:

Overall Objectives: The Bureau's overall timber management objectives are to demonstrate exemplary management on a large ownership, sustaining a forest rich in late successional character and producing high value products (chiefly sawlogs and veneer) that contribute to the local economy and support management of Public Reserved lands, while maintaining or enhancing non-timber values (secondary uses), including wildlife habitat and recreation.

Forest Certification: Timber management practices (whether as a dominant or secondary use) meet the sustainable forestry certification requirements of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, and the Forest Stewardship Council.

Roads: Public use, management, and service roads are allowed. However, the Bureau, in practice, seeks to minimize the number of roads to that needed for reasonable public vehicular access or timber harvesting.

Recreational Use: Most recreational uses are allowed but may be subject to temporary disruptions during management or harvesting operations. The Bureau has latitude within this allocation category to manage its timber lands with considerable deference to recreational opportunities. It may, through its decisions related to roads, provide varying recreational experiences. Opportunities for hiking, snowshoeing, back-country skiing, horseback riding, bicycling, vehicle touring and sightseeing, and ATV riding all are possible within a timber management area, but may or may not be supported or feasible, depending on decisions related to creation of new trails, or management of existing roads and their accessibility to the public.

In addition, the IRP provides the following specific direction for timber management:

Site Suitability. The Bureau will manage to achieve a composition of timber types that best utilize each site.

Diversity: For both silvicultural and ecological purposes, the Bureau will maintain or enhance conditions of diversity on both a stand and wide-area (landscape) basis. The Bureau will manage for the full range of successional stages as well as forest types and tree species. The objective will be to provide good growing conditions, retain or enhance

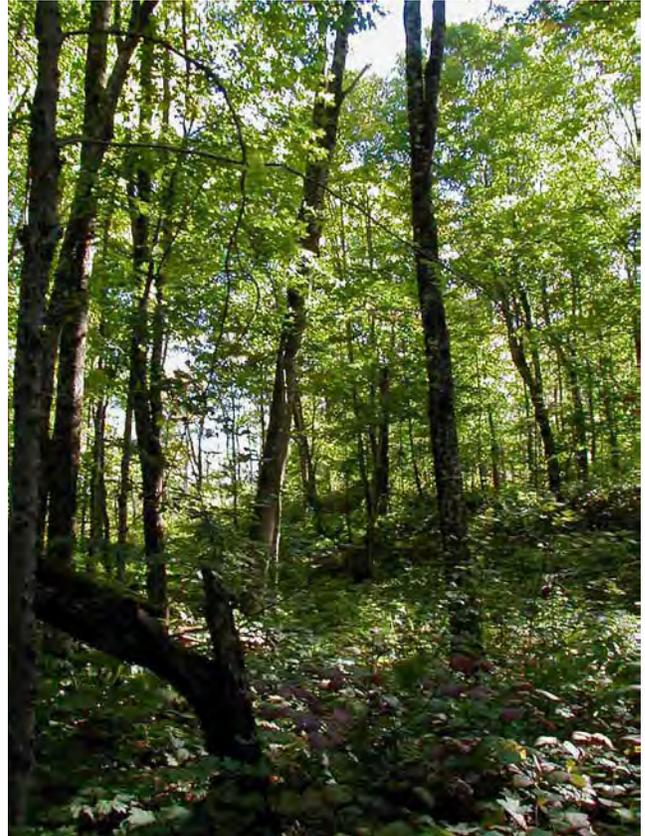
structural complexity, maintain connectivity of wildlife habitats, and create a vigorous forest more resistant to damage from insects and disease.

Silvicultural Systems: A stand will be considered single-aged when its tree ages are all relatively close together or it has a single canopy layer. Stands containing two or more age classes and multiple canopy layers will be considered multi-aged. The Bureau will manage both single- and multi-aged stands consistent with the objectives stated above for Diversity; and on most acres will maintain a component of tall trees at all times. Silvicultural strategy will favor the least disturbing method appropriate, and will usually work through multi-aged management.

Location and Maintenance of Log Landings: Log landings will be set back from all roads designated as public use roads. All yard locations and sizes will be approved by Bureau staff prior to construction, with the intention of keeping the area dedicated to log landings as small as feasible. At the conclusion of operations, all log landings where there has been major soil disturbance will be seeded to herbaceous growth to stabilize soil, provide wildlife benefits, and retain sites for future management needs.

Timber Management Areas Designated for the Seboomook Unit

Within the Seboomook Unit, Timber Management as a dominant use is designated only on the Seboomook Parcel. It includes all areas that are not designated for Special Protection, Wildlife, Remote Recreation, or Developed Recreation. The total area in this allocation is 26,630 acres.



Example of Bureau Multiple Use Forest Management at Little Moose Unit, Greenville – BP&L photos

Allocations for the Seboomook Lake Parcel

Special Protection as Dominant Use. Two areas have been identified by the Maine Natural Areas Program as significant areas deserving special protection: the 240 acre Mud Cove Bog between Moosehead Lake and Seboomook Lake (ancient outlet of Moosehead Lake); and the 215 acre Carry Bog complex running west to east along Carry Brook, south of the east end of Seboomook Lake. Note that the Bureau will review areas adjacent to the Mud Cove Bog special protection area with MNAP during the harvest prescription process for these lands to determine if additions to the special protection area are warranted, since the boundaries of this area were defined by an acquisition survey and not from the on-the-ground evaluation that MNAP conducted for this area. In addition, there is a population of mature oaks in southern half of the West Middlesex Canal Grant that is unusual in this region, has high value for mast production, and is therefore proposed for designation as a special protection area.

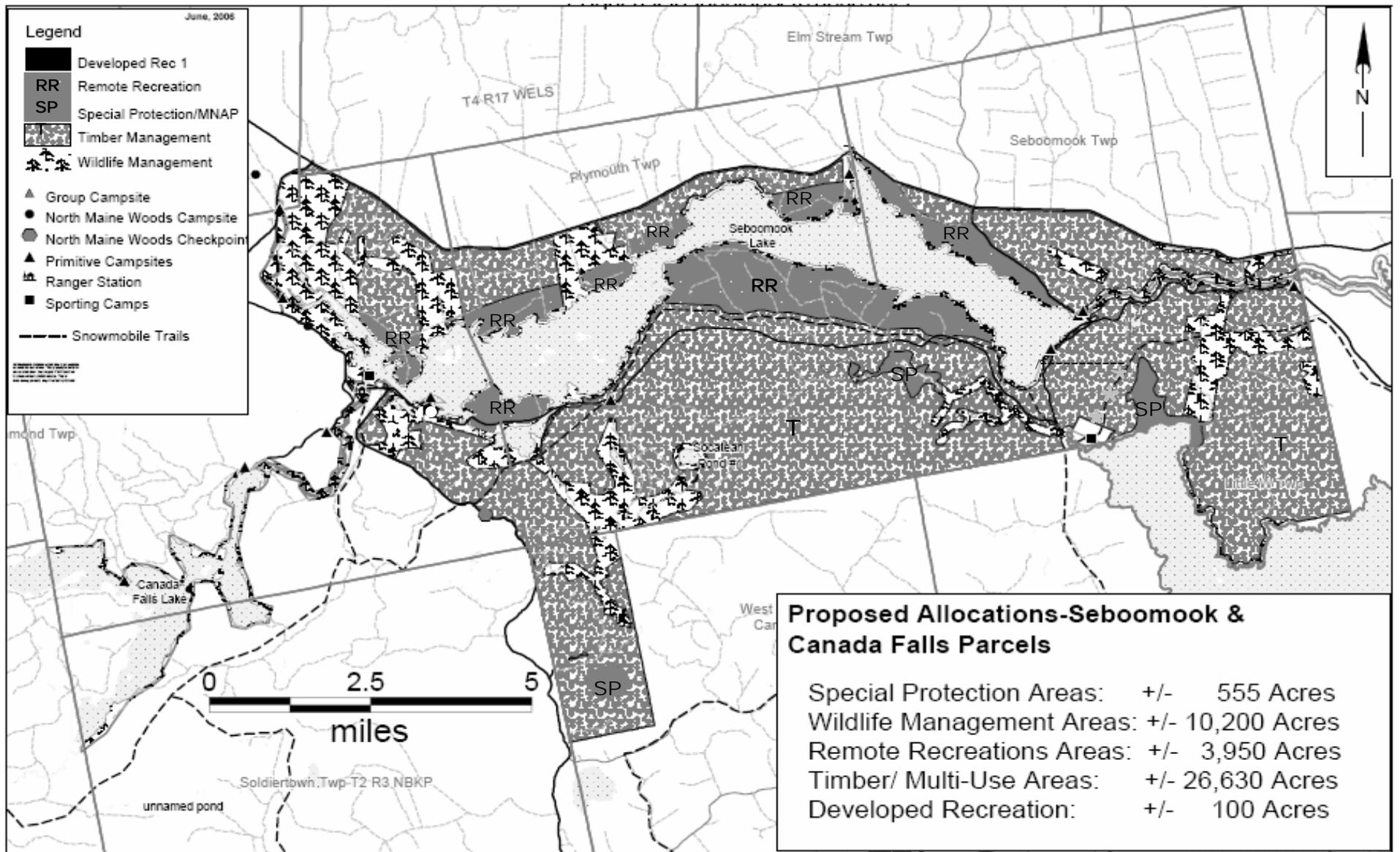
Secondary uses within the Special Protection Area. These areas are primarily wetlands. Recreational use of this area may include hiking, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing, hunting, fishing and trapping. There are no existing roads or trails within these areas, and no new facilities are proposed. Because these areas are protected due to botanical values, motorized uses and horseback riding would not be allowed.

Wildlife Management as Dominant Use. This parcel contains approximately 9,350 acres of lands that will be allocated for Wildlife Management as the Dominant Use, including LURC designated deer yards, deer yards per landowner agreement (expanding upon LURC designations) and riparian areas (within 330 feet of major water bodies or 75 feet of minor streams).

Remote Recreation as a Secondary Allocation within the Wildlife Dominant Area. Remote Recreation will be allocated as a secondary use for Wildlife Dominant riparian areas within 330 feet of Seboomook Lake (excepting the area along the eastern shore near the dam, and the Kings High Landing peninsula), as well as a 330-foot buffer along the North Branch of the Penobscot River (excepting existing drive-to camping areas). Allowed uses may include fishing, hunting, trapping, camping, hiking, and nature walks/sightseeing. Some areas may be off limits to hiking or camping to protect nesting waterfowl (especially loons) or disturbance to nesting eagles or other sensitive species. In the winter, camping, snowshoeing and back-country skiing would be permitted uses, except in areas that coincide with deer management areas. Existing snowmobile trails that cross these areas are allowed but would be relocated where feasible to improve the quality of the remote recreation experience. Any future motorized recreation trails would be sited to avoid these areas.

Other Wildlife Dominant areas on this parcel would have recreation as a secondary use, with limitations as needed to protect wildlife values.

Timber management would also be a secondary use in these areas, subject to modifications to enhance wildlife habitat, or restrictions that could limit the timing or nature of the harvests to avoid impacts to wildlife, and subject to any Visual Class I and II requirements.



Remote Recreation as the Dominant Use. A *Remote Recreation* designation will be applied to a band of land surrounding Seboomook Lake, of variable width, ranging from two hundred (200) to five hundred (500) feet on the north side of the lake to as much as a mile wide on the south side of the lake. These areas are largely defined in relation to existing gravel and woods roads, deer yards, and the east-west snowmobile trail that transects the unit on the south side of Seboomook Lake. This Remote Recreation area is associated with and supports the current and largely non-motorized remote experience that prevails when paddling or boating on Seboomook Lake, and will also provide areas suitable for non-motorized winter recreation activities. It includes the following areas:

- Approximately 950 acres surrounding the western bay of Seboomook Lake, subject to re-evaluation relative to potential for additional deer yard areas.
- Approximately 3,000 acres surrounding the eastern bay of Seboomook Lake, defined primarily as the area between the lake and public use roads or the existing or alternate snowmobile trails.

Secondary Uses within the Remote Recreation Areas. Timber management is allowed in this allocation, subject to restrictions that could limit the timing or nature of the harvests to avoid impacts to recreational uses, and subject to any Visual Class I and II requirements. Wildlife management is also an allowed secondary use.

Developed Recreation Class I as the Dominant Use. Developed Recreation Class I sites include existing primitive drive-to campsites, located on Seboomook Lake at Kings High Landing (6 sites west end of the lake near Pittston Farm), and Seboomook Ledge (3 sites, east end of the lake, southeast shoreline); along the West Branch at Roll Dam (5 sites), and Burbank (2 sites at the very edge of the parcel); along the North Branch at Leadbetter Falls (4 sites, nearest the Golden Road) and North Branch (1 site); and one site on the South Seboomook Road at Seven Mile Hill. For this allocation, areas in the vicinity of these existing drive-to campsites will be evaluated for possible development of additional drive-to campsites. Snowmobile trails on the Seboomook parcel are also Developed Recreation Class I.

There are also 3 campsites at Seboomook Dam that are not on state ownership, which are part of the GLHA license, and two boat launch areas, also on GLHA property. These in-holdings would otherwise be classified as Developed Recreation I sites.

This allocation also includes the following roads which are designated public use roads (for vehicular access):

- Seboomook Road (junction of 20-Mile/Rockwood Road to Seboomook Dam)
- Seboomook Dam Road (connector from Seboomook Dam to Golden Road)
- Roll-Dam/Burbank Road (from Seboomook dam to Northeast Carry Township)
- Carry Brook Road (also called the Campground Road; from Seboomook Road to property line for Seboomook Campground)

Uses Secondary to Developed Recreation I Areas. Timber management that is sensitive to visual, wildlife and user safety considerations is allowed as a secondary use in Developed Recreation areas.

Visual Consideration Areas

Visual Class I (Foreground): The standard for Visual Class I is the appearance of an essentially undisturbed forest. These standards for forest management will apply

- (1) to the shorelines of
 - Seboomook Lake,
 - Moosehead Lake,
 - Beaver Brook Pond,
 - the Socatean Ponds,
 - the North Branch, and
 - the West Branch,
- (2) along all public use roads located within or on the periphery of the parcel; and
- (3) along any designated hiking, nature, snowmobile, horseback, bicycle, or ATV trails.

Visual Class II (Background): A ***Visual Class II designation*** requires that forest openings be of a size and orientation so as not to draw undue attention. This standard for forest management will apply to background hillsides viewed from public use vantage points including water, shorelines, boat access sites, public use roads, trails, or campsites.

Timber Management Areas. Areas not designated as Special Protection, Wildlife Management, Remote Recreation, or Visual Consideration areas will be managed for sustainable timber values, meeting third party forestry certification standards, while providing high value wildlife habitat and opportunities for a spectrum of back woods recreation uses. See the attached map for locations of this allocation.

Allocations for the Canada Falls –South Branch Parcel

Wildlife Management as the Dominant Use. Except for the campsite areas near the Canada Falls dam and at the Warden Site on the South Branch (midway down the river), the Forest Service lease site at adjacent to the bridge over the South Branch, and an area proposed for a whitewater put-in about 1,000 feet below the dam, the entire shoreland strip that comprises this parcel will be allocated for Wildlife Management as a Dominant use. The ownership varies in width from approximately one hundred (100) to six (600) hundred feet, with the majority between two hundred fifty (250) and three hundred fifty (350) feet. It includes one active eagle's nest on Canada Falls Lake, and protection of loon nesting areas with restrictions on new recreation facilities in proximity to active loon nests.

Remote Recreation as a Secondary Allocation within the Wildlife Dominant Area. The shoreland strip at Canada Falls Lake and along the South Branch of the Penobscot River will be designated for Remote Recreation as a secondary use. Allowed uses may include fishing, hunting, trapping, canoeing, boating, camping, hiking, and nature walks/sightseeing. Some areas may be off limits to hiking or camping to protect nesting waterfowl (especially loons) or disturbance to nesting eagles or other sensitive species. In the winter, camping, snowshoeing and back-country skiing would be permitted uses, except in areas that coincide with deer management areas. Groomed

snowmobile trails will not be allowed in this area, in order to provide a remote, quiet zone for snowshoeing, back-country skiing, and winter camping.

Timber Management as a Secondary Use: Timber management is allowed as a secondary use, but due to the narrow strip of land, may not be feasible or appropriate except to enhance wildlife and recreation. For example, a blow-down area along the South Branch presently is an impediment to development of a trail along the river.

Developed Recreation Class I as the Dominant Use: Two areas on this parcel have drive-to primitive campsites, which are defined as Developed Recreation Class I: an area around the dam on Canada Falls Lake, and the campsite midway down the South Branch, known as the Warden campsite. In addition, there are two new facilities for whitewater boating – a put in below the dam, and a take-out on the Forest Service lease site near the bridge, constructed in 2006 using a grant received from Great Lakes Hydro America, LLC.

There are also several recreational facilities at the Canada Falls Dam area that are on properties not owned by the state, including a boat launch on Great Lakes Hydro America LLC property, and a number of campsites that are on Merriweather LLC property.

Visual Consideration Areas. Visual Class I (foreground) and II (background) forest management standards will apply to the entire parcel.

Allocations for the Baker Lake Parcel

Special Protection as Dominant Use. The extensive wetland complex at the south end of the Lake, including the associated lands adjacent to the inlet stream, has rare plant and animal species and is part of a more extensive wetland draining into the lake, beyond the state ownership. This area will be designated as a Special Protection area.

Secondary uses within the Special Protection Area. This area is primarily an open wetland. Allowed recreational uses of this area may include canoeing on the river, hunting, fishing and trapping.

Wildlife Management as the Dominant Use. The riparian zone extending 330 feet from the shoreland of the lake, and including the adjacent wetlands located at the north end of the lake, as well as the full width of the state ownership adjacent to the east side of the outlet, are designated as wildlife dominant. An exception to this is the area adjacent to the road at the outlet, which will be designated *Developed Recreation I* (see below). This allocation includes the portion of lands adjacent to Baker Brook outlet that are included in the St. John River Resource Protection Plan. Management as wildlife dominant with remote recreation as a secondary allocation meets or exceeds the protections defined in the Resource Protection Plan.

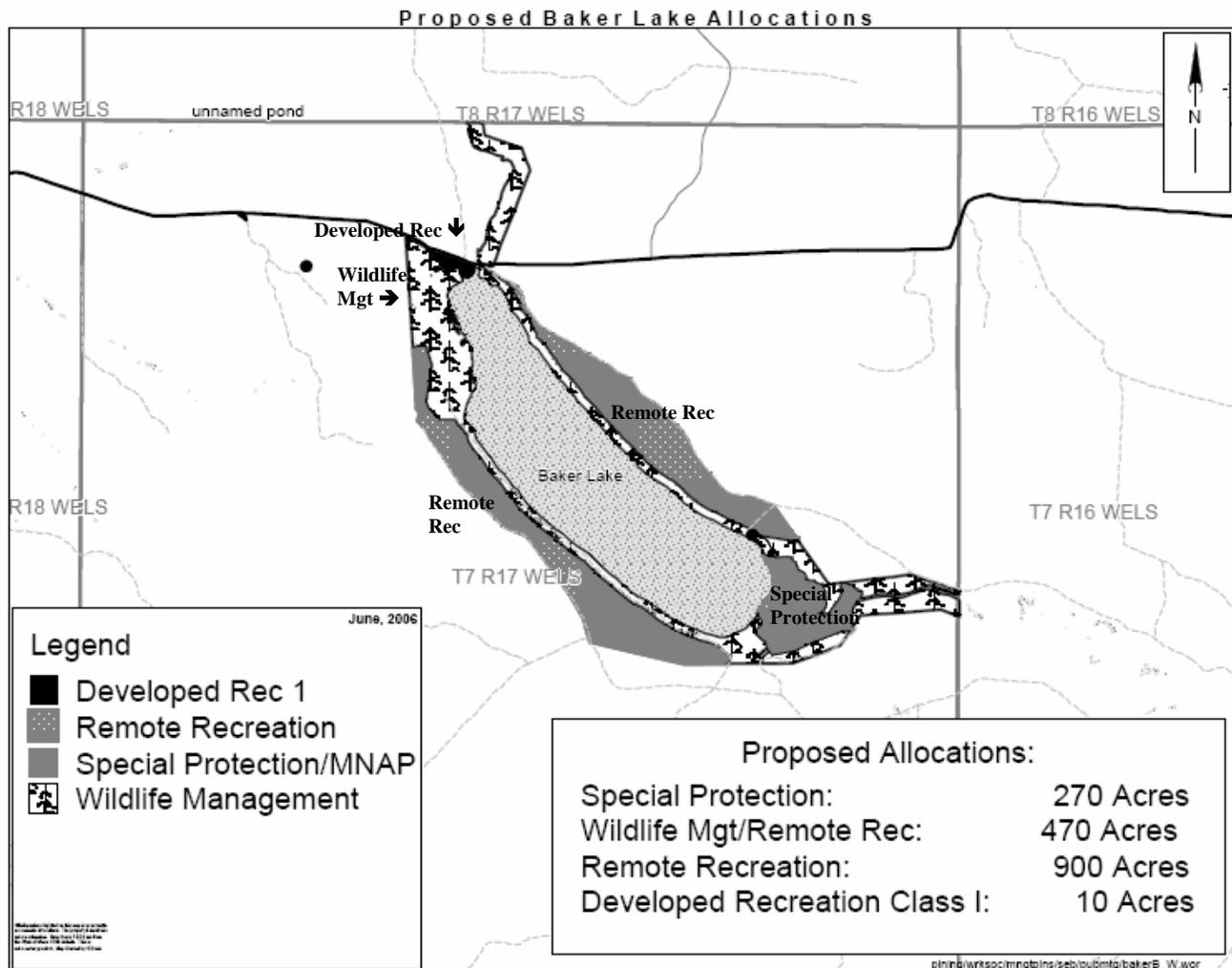
Remote Recreation as a Secondary Allocation within the Wildlife Dominant Area. The shorelands and riparian areas within this allocation are generally suitable for recreation uses allowed in Remote Recreation areas. There may be seasonal requirements to avoid potential conflicts with wildlife such as limited camping or harvesting during critical nesting periods.

Timber Harvesting as a Secondary Use within the Wildlife Dominant Area. Timber harvesting will be allowed in the wildlife dominant zone, subject to wildlife management and recreation needs.

Remote Recreation as Dominant Use will be applied to the remainder of the Baker Lake parcel, excepting the area adjacent to the road at the outlet. Timber management and wildlife management are allowed secondary uses in this area, subject to restrictions (see previous discussion).

Developed Recreation I will be applied to the area adjacent to the road at the outlet, which is presently used for boat access and camping. The area includes room for expansion to the camping area, improvements to the boat launch, and provision of a parking area.

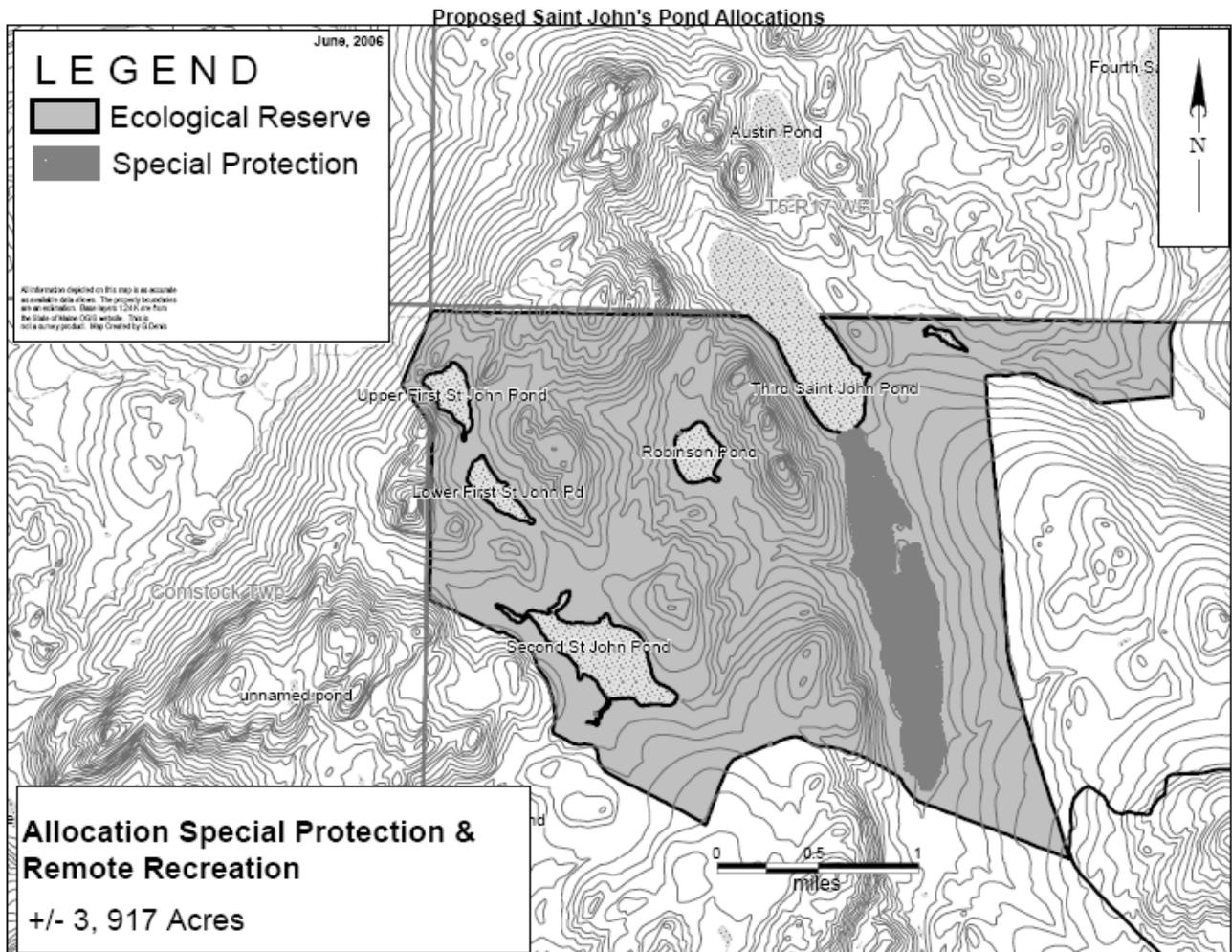
Visual Consideration Areas. A Visual Class I designation will apply to lands adjacent to public use roads and all shorelines. Visual Class II will apply to background hillsides viewed from the water and public use roads.



Allocations for the St. John Ponds Parcel

Special Protection as Dominant Use. The entirety of the St. John Ponds parcel is designated as an Ecological Reserve and as such is a Special Protection area. There will be no interference with natural processes (except wildfires will be controlled and management needed for the protection of endangered species found on the parcel will also be allowed).

Remote Recreation as Secondary Allocation. This parcel is being designated for non-motorized remote recreation, including fishing, hunting, trapping, hiking, back-country skiing, and primitive camping. Vehicular access is currently controlled via a gate at the Golden Road.

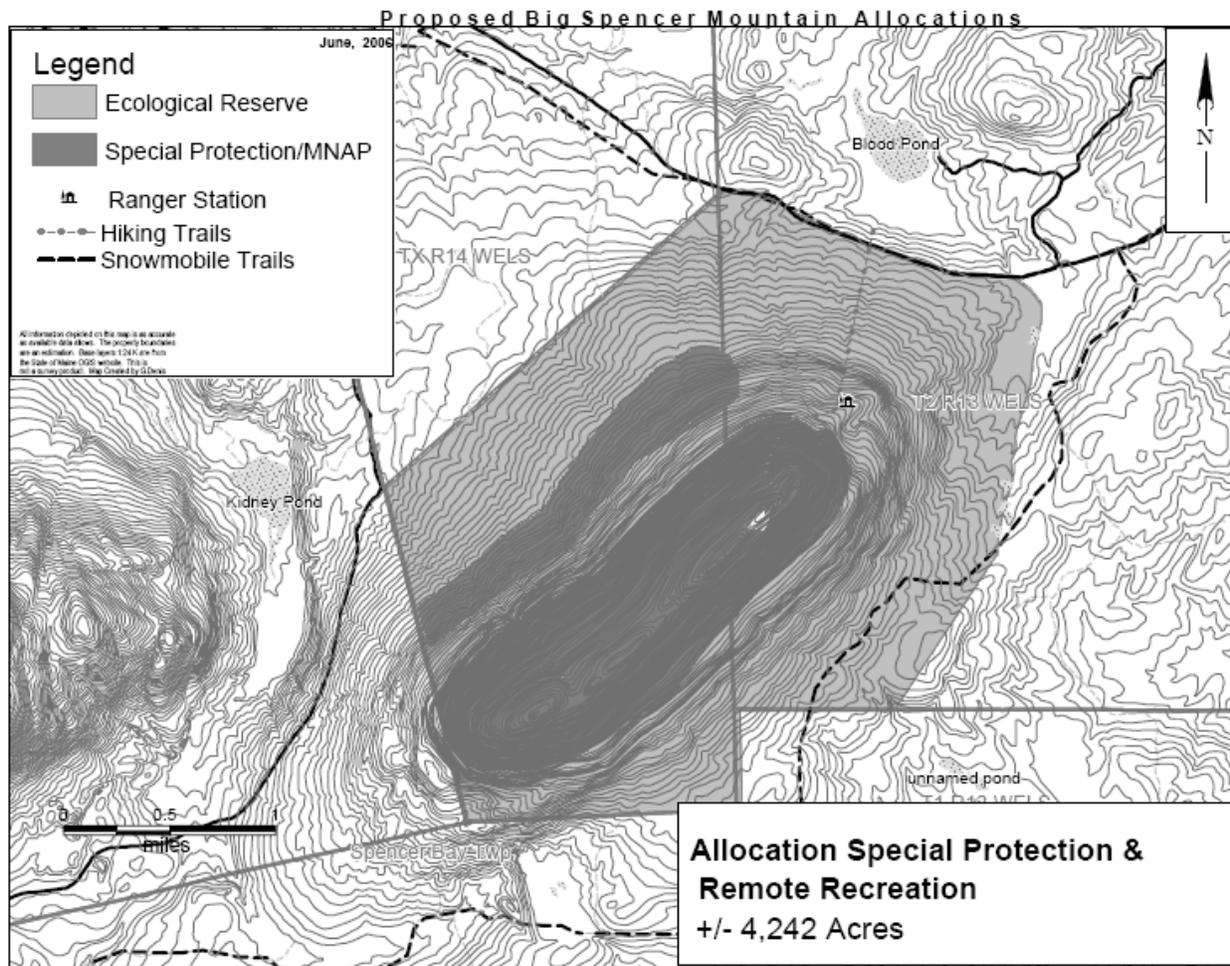


Allocations for the Big Spencer Mountain Parcel

Special Protection as Dominant Use. The entirety of the Big Spencer Mountain parcel is designated as an Ecological Reserve and as such is a Special Protection area. There will be no interference with natural processes (except wildfires will be controlled and management needed for the protection of endangered species found on the parcel will also be allowed).

Remote Recreation Secondary Allocation. This parcel, as an Ecological Reserve, allows non-motorized uses including hunting, trapping, hiking, back-country skiing, and primitive camping; but restricts motorized uses (see discussion in the previous section, Summary of the Resource Allocation System, under Remote Recreation).

Timber management is not an allowed use except in connection with fire-fighting; a prescribed burn is allowed if necessary to replicate natural processes that maintain specific natural communities or rare species populations.



VII. Management Recommendations

Seboomook and Canada Falls Parcels

Special Protection Areas

Protection of habitat of documented rare, threatened, endangered, and special concern species

- For protection of wood turtle habitat, within a 330-foot riparian zone along the entire length of the North Branch and the West Branch 1, timber harvest should be managed in accordance with the MDIFW “Threatened and Endangered Species in Forests of Maine: A Guide to Assist with Forestry Activities.” This recommends that 25 feet of the riparian zone nearest the waterway remain unharvested; the rest of the riparian zone be managed with single tree or small group selection cuts that maintain 60-70% cover; and construction of roads and log landings within the riparian management zone be avoided or minimized.
- For protection of the broad-tailed shadowdragon and extra-striped snaketail, located along the West Branch below Seboomook Dam, and for creepers, a small mussel documented in Carry Brook, MDIFW also recommends avoiding use of broad-spectrum insecticides within a ¼ mile buffer of the stream for 0.6 mi. (1 km) upstream and 0.6 mi. (1 km) downstream from the occurrence.
- Bald eagle nesting sites are considered Essential Habitat and should be managed in consultation with MDIFW’s regional biologist. Some activities within 1320 feet of the nest are regulated by the Essential Habitat law administered by MDIFW.

Protection of documented rare plant populations and exemplary natural communities

- Invasive species are always a concern at boat launches. Pursue ways to educate boaters at boat launches about the threat of spreading invasive aquatic plants into these lakes and rivers.
- Management activities should avoid the use of herbicides that target grasses and sedges and avoid excavation in areas where Orono sedge (*Carex oronensis*) is found (near the intersection of the 20-Mile Road and the South Seboomook Road).
- Avoid locating hiking trails or horse riding trails in the vicinity of the outlet of Socatean Pond #1 to protect the Northern Fir-moss (*Huperzia selago*).

Wildlife Management

- Review the current deer yard designations and expand these areas where appropriate. Designate areas that are re-allocated from Remote Recreation to Wildlife Dominant (from the 950 acres of Remote Recreation lands surrounding the western bay of Seboomook Lake that are located adjacent to deer yards) for Remote Recreation as a secondary use.
- Manage some areas for blocks of young softwoods to serve the complementary needs of Canada lynx and deer.

- Continue existing bear baiting sites pending review for consistency with Bureau policy and development of a woods road use management plan identifying vehicular access roads. Limit the number of sites to not more than the current number (11).
- Examine the potential for other species habitat management opportunities that could be implemented on other areas of the parcel, for example, for grouse and woodcock (also see discussion under Timber Dominant areas below).
- Retain oak and beech stands for mast production.
- Monitor/evaluate areas where additional protections are required to reduce impacts to wildlife habitat (see management recommendations for protected species above under “Special Protection Areas”).
- Observe special protections defined by deed for loon nest sites, including:
 - (1) No new non-forestry improvements (other than replacements of non-forestry improvements existing at the time of acquisition of the property by the State) within 1,000 feet of a loon nest site.
 - (2) No forest management activities within 250 feet of a loon nest site during the loon nesting season (from May 1 to July 31st).
 - (3) All forest management within 250 feet of a loon nest site shall be conducted in a manner that protects the integrity of the loon nest site.
- Continue to monitor loon populations and nesting on Seboomook and Canada Falls Lakes after the conclusion of the USFWS sponsored studies.

Recreation

General

- Extend the Penobscot River Corridor to include the water-based campsites on Canada Falls, the South Branch, the North Branch, and Seboomook Lake. Coordinate the management of the Penobscot River Corridor and the Seboomook Unit Reserved Lands.
- Develop and make available to the public a combined PRC/Seboomook Unit brochure and information packet.
- Provide an information kiosk at all trailheads and parking areas displaying maps showing the recreation areas defined by the allocations, and posting Bureau policies for recreational uses. Provide brochures at these locations.
- Explore possible options for a Parks and Lands Ranger/Information station.
- Conduct a visual consideration analysis to determine Class I and Class II areas on the parcels.
- Evaluate the natural spring near the Seboomook Ledges campsite; if potable, manage to prevent contamination of the site.

Remote Recreation

- Maintain a “remote recreation” zone adjacent to Seboomook Lake, Canada Falls Lake, and the North Branch, the South Branch, and the West Branch, subject, in some areas, to wildlife management concerns (see Management Allocations – Wildlife Dominant with Remote Recreation Secondary).
- Designate these “remote” areas for water access or hike-to camping, and non-motorized winter camping, skiing, and snowshoeing.

- Work cooperatively with the local snowmobile clubs to locate groomed snowmobile trails away from designated remote areas, and to stop grooming the Canada Falls Road.
- Utilize the new whitewater boating take-out parking area near the bridge over the South Branch as a trailhead for any nature trails, cross country ski or snowshoe trails along the South Branch, and provide signage and information at this site for winter remote recreation.
- Protect the remote waters character on Seboomook Lake by pursuing a ban on personal watercraft and limits on boat motor size.
- Protect the remote waters character on Canada Falls Lake by pursuing a ban on personal watercraft and limits on boat motor size if other major landowners are in agreement (Passamaquoddy Tribe and Cassidy Timberlands).
- Allocate any easements obtained from Great Lakes Hydro America LLC on the islands in Seboomook Lake as Wildlife Dominant with Remote Recreation as a secondary use.
- Evaluate the condition and adequacy of the existing water access campsites on Canada Falls Lake; upgrade as needed to meet Bureau standards.
- Develop additional water access campsites on the North Branch, West Branch and Seboomook Lake. Any new facilities must not be closer than 1,000 feet from any known loon nest, and must be approved by the US Fish and Wildlife Service if within 2,000 feet of a loon nest. Relocate campsites if conflicts arise later with loon nest sites.
- Evaluate the suitability and need for additional water access campsites on Canada Falls, and Moosehead lakes, subject to loon protection restrictions. Construct new sites as resources allow.
- Evaluate the suitability and need for remote hike-to campsites within the Remote recreation allocation on Seboomook Lake, subject to loon protection restrictions. Implement as resources allow. Construct new sites as resources allow.

Water Access

- Work cooperatively with Brookfield Power Company to maintain boat access facilities appropriate for a remote waters experience on Seboomook and Canada Falls Lakes, and the West Branch.
- Re-establish the historic Carry Brook canoe portage, including a campsite if a suitable site can be located. Consult with the Northern Forest Canoe Trail organization and the local snowmobile club, which has a trail through this area, in developing this portage and campsite.
- Investigate possible locations for a motorized boat launch facility on the western shore of Moosehead Lake via Carry Brook or through a public-private partnership at Seboomook Campground; implement as resources allow.
- Explore creating a new carry-in boat access to the North Branch below the ledges at the bridge crossing near Leadbetter Falls. Pursue agreements with Wagner/Merriweather to create a portage trail around the ledges in the North Branch at the bridge site. Implement as resources allow.
- Participate cooperatively with Great Lakes Hydro America in developing appropriate put-in and take-out facilities for whitewater boaters on the South Branch and West Branch, including signage, an alternate put-in with parking downstream from the Canada Falls dam put-in site, and a take-out with parking in the vicinity of the bridge over the South Branch near the Forest Ranger station (accomplished in 2006).

- Monitor boating and rafting use on the South Branch and West Branch. If conflicts arise, pursue alternatives to regulate uses through MDIF&W's whitewater boating regulation authority; and the Department's authority to regulate rafting access points on its lands.

Drive-to Campsites

- Evaluate the condition and adequacy of the existing campsite facilities; upgrade as needed to meet Bureau standards.
- Work with Great Lakes Hydro America to upgrade and reconfigure the campsite at Seboomook dam to accommodate more campsites.
- Investigate the suitability and need for additional drive-to campsites in the general vicinity of existing drive-to campsites. Construct new sites as resources allow.
- Reconfigure the group campsite at Roll Dam to provide a day use/lunch spot for whitewater boaters that will not conflict with the campsite use.
- Investigate the need for and feasibility of one or more designated group camping areas. Construct as resources allow.
- Evaluate whether the existing campsite in the Nulhedus gravel pit should be upgraded or relocated.
- Pursue a cooperative agreement with Great Lakes Hydro America regarding the maintenance and management of the existing drive-to campsites located on the Seboomook dam parcel; and designation of these sites as part of the PRC.
- Pursue a cooperative agreement with Merriweather LLC regarding the maintenance of the existing drive-to campsites on Canada Falls Lake and the South Branch. Acquire these sites if possible.

Recreational Trails

- Evaluate the feasibility and cost of a nature trail along the West Branch, and pursue as resources allow.
- Work cooperatively with Great Lakes Hydro America through its FERC license to ensure that the canoe portage/ angler access trail on the north side of the West Branch is in keeping with the remote character of the Unit and meets the needs of the recreating public.
- Evaluate the feasibility and cost of developing a trail along the South Branch to serve as a hiking/nature trail, and to allow paddlers on the South Branch to easily circumvent difficult sections of the river, and pursue as resources allow.
- Locate possible sites for trailheads and parking areas needed to serve any nature trails developed along the West Branch and South Branch, and pursue as resources allow.
- Explore a possible ATV trail route (in common with the snowmobile trail, if possible) and consider establishing one or more dedicated camping areas for ATV users outside of designated Remote Recreation areas, when a regional ATV trail system extends to the Seboomook Unit, to provide a multi-day extended ATV touring opportunity. Develop as resources allow.
- In coordination with the Off-Road Vehicle Program and snowmobile clubs, and as resources allow, discontinue use of the Seboomook and Roll Dam Roads as the primary snowmobile trail; evaluate the suitability of the off-road (now alternate) snowmobile trail that parallels the existing trail to serve as the permanent snowmobile trail; improve or relocate as needed to address safety or environmental issues, and conflicts with

designated Remote Recreation areas. Designate the Seboomook and Roll Dam Roads as back-up snowmobile trails for low snowfall seasons, provided this does not conflict with Bureau timber management activities.

- Evaluate the need or desirability for improvements to the snowmobile trail to better serve the snowmobiling public. Pursue in coordination with the Off-Road Vehicle Program and snowmobile clubs, as resources allow.
- Collaborate with Pittston Farm to develop and maintain trails suitable for horseback riding that may also be used for other purposes such as back-country skiing and snowshoeing.
- In consultation with the Management Plan Advisory Committee, within two years of adoption of this Plan,
 - (1) identify which management or woods roads should be made available as multi-use trails (including, if appropriate, those suitable for motorized vehicular or mechanized uses such as bicycles), and which should be designated for pedestrian uses, with the overall goal of establishing a core of roads available for public vehicular access with significant areas set aside for back woods pedestrian uses (as secondary uses subject to timber operations) including hiking, snowshoeing, back-country skiing, hunting, trapping, wildlife viewing, etc.;
 - (2) review and evaluate any proposals from Pittston Farm proprietors for improvement and use of existing woods roads and trails for horseback riding as an extension of trails on the Pittston Farm property;
 - (3) consider options for a potential ATV trail that would connect to a regional ATV touring trail.

Timber Management

- Evaluate the condition of the forest over the next two to five years, and manage the timber in accordance with standards for Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forest Stewardship Council third party certification; and subject to limitations imposed by the Wildlife Riparian, Remote Recreation, and Visual Class I and Visual Class II allocations.
- Determine which forest areas among those that are available for timber management are most in need of timely timber harvest or other treatment. This includes areas where significant delay would cause loss of timber value, loss of opportunity for improving stand quality, or loss of wildlife habitat enhancement opportunity. One area identified in this category is the mature/over-mature aspen in the Carry Brook drainage. Opportunities to recover timber value and to establish ruffed grouse management areas will decline rapidly as these stands pass beyond maturity.
- Within 2 years of Plan adoption
 - (1) evaluate the condition of the existing woods road network and any environmental issues that need to be addressed.
 - (2) determine, in consultation with the Maine Forest Service, which roads are needed for fire control.
 - (3) identify management roads that will be needed in the near term for timber management; that will be needed in the future for timber management; and that should be closed as management roads.

- (4) evaluate whether the Cut-off Road should be restored (as funds allow) to serve as a public vehicular access road or as a woods management road with specified uses allowed when it is not being actively used for timber management.

Administrative Concerns

Public (Vehicular) Use Roads

- Improve and maintain public use roads to Bureau standards.
- Pursue a cooperative agreement with Merriweather LLC regarding the maintenance of the vehicular access road to Canada Falls Dam and the 20-Mile or Rockwood Road.
- Pursue a cooperative agreement with Plum Creek regarding the use and maintenance of the 20-Mile or Rockwood Road through Soldiertown Township.

Public Access Fees and Use Limitations

- Examine alternatives to the present arrangement with North Maine Woods that will enable the Bureau to manage these parcels in accordance with its mission and statutory mandates for its reserved lands. Throughout this process, continue discussions with North Maine Woods.

St. John Ponds

- Manage as an Ecological Reserve.
- Designate this area for dispersed remote recreation with no developed trails or facilities.
- Allow existing roads that are not needed for fire control to revert to forest; address any environmental issues associated with these roads.
- Investigate the feasibility of moving the gate on the Gulliver Brook Road and providing a parking area on or closer to the parcel boundary. Implement as resources allow.
- Investigate the need and feasibility of establishing one or more parking areas serving potential walk-in access routes to the parcel.

Baker Lake

Special Protection Areas

- Follow recommended guidelines for protection of wood turtle habitat at the south end of Baker Lake as listed above under the Seboomook parcel.
- Work with North Maine Woods to educate the motorized boating public about the threat of spreading invasive aquatic plants into the area lakes, including Baker Lake, which, because of its Muskie fishery, is attracting more motor boat fishing use.
- Avoid siting any new campsites in proximity to the shoreland wetland complexes.
- Coordinate with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to protect sensitive archaeological sites on the parcel.

Wildlife Management

- Pursue a ban on personal watercraft for Baker Lake to protect loons.
- Observe special protections defined by deed for loon nest sites, including:
 - (1) No new non-forestry improvements (other than replacements of non-forestry improvements existing at the time of acquisition of the property by the State) within 1,000 feet of a loon nest site.
 - (2) No forest management activities within 250 feet of a loon nest site during the loon nesting season (from May 1 to July 31st).
 - (3) All forest management within 250 feet of a loon nest site shall be conducted in a manner that protects the integrity of the loon nest site.
- Continue to monitor loon populations and nesting on Baker Lake after the conclusion of the USFWS sponsored studies, as resources allow.

Recreation

- Investigate the possibility of a group campsite that could be water access or remote walk-in access from an established road and trailhead, subject to loon protection restrictions.
- Stabilize erosion issues at the existing camping area on the west shore near the outlet; relocate this campsite if needed.
- Manage the southern campsite as a water access campsite.
- Determine the extent of the Visual Class I and Visual Class II areas surrounding the lake and river.

Timber Management

- Evaluate the condition of the forest over the next two to five years, and manage the timber in accordance with standards for Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forest Stewardship Council third party certification; and subject to limitations imposed by the Wildlife Riparian, Remote Recreation, and Visual Class I and Visual Class II allocations.

Administrative Issues

- Develop a lease agreement with IF&W for the warden's cabin near the outlet.

Big Spencer Mountain

- Manage as an Ecological Reserve and for remote recreation.
- Within two years of Plan adoption, discontinue the existing snowmobile trail.
- Pursue an aggressive effort to establish an alternate high vista destination snowmobile trail in the same general vicinity as Big Spencer Mountain as a replacement to the existing primitive snowmobile trail that follows the old jeep trail to the abandoned warden's cabin. This replacement trail is a high priority for the Bureau; the goal is have an alternate trail in place within two years, or soon as practicable.
- Stabilize the existing erosion and drainage problems on the jeep trail to the warden's cabin. Rehabilitate and improve the trail for hiking and other pedestrian uses, if suitable; otherwise discontinue use of the trail and design an alternate hiking trail to the cabin site.
- Within two years of Plan adoption, remove the warden's cabin and associated structures; maintain the area as a scenic vista serving the hiking trail. Provide the Forest Society of Maine the option to relocate the cabin to a site off the ecological reserve, within that two year period.
- Develop a parking area off the Spencer Mountain Road to serve the trailhead for the hiking trail.
- Develop an interpretive panel commemorating the long service of the fire warden's post on Big Spencer, and place it at the trailhead or at the scenic vista to be retained at the cabin site.
- Discontinue the existing woods management roads on the northwestern and southeastern sides of the parcel.
- Evaluate whether the existing section of the local snowmobile trail that crosses the southeastern area of the parcel can be reasonably relocated outside of the reserve.
- Pursue the removal of unauthorized structures on the southern edge of the parcel.

VIII. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are needed to track progress in achieving the management vision, goals and objectives for the Unit, and effectiveness of particular approaches to resource management. Monitoring and evaluation will be conducted on wildlife, ecological, timber, and recreational management efforts in the Seboomook Unit.

Implementation of Plan Recommendations

The Bureau will develop, within 2 years of plan adoption, a process for implementing, accomplishing, and tracking the management recommendations put forth in the Plan. This will include a framework of recommendations with priority levels assigned and targeted timeframes established by priority level. This framework will be utilized to determine work priorities and budgets on an annual basis. The Bureau will document, on an annual basis, its progress in implementing the recommendations, its plans for the coming year, and adjustments to the target timeframes as needed.

Recreation

Data on recreational use is helpful in allocating staff and monetary resources for management of the Unit, and generally determining the public's response to the opportunities being provided. It also provides a measure of the effectiveness of any efforts to publicize these opportunities. Use data for the Seboomook Unit, except for the Spencer Mountain parcel, has been gathered in the past by North Maine Woods as part of its management of the lands for the prior owner. As long as the Unit is part of the North Maine Woods system, this data will continue to be collected at the North Maine Woods gate. If the Unit is withdrawn from the North Maine Woods system, the Bureau will develop a process for collecting data on use. If a gate is maintained by the Bureau, this could include a registration procedure at the gate. It could also include periodic user surveys. For the water-based campsites on the Seboomook and Canada Falls parcels, the Bureau could utilize measures presently used to monitor use of the Penobscot River Corridor.

In addition to gathering data on use, the Bureau will monitor use to determine:

- (1) whether improvements to existing facilities or additional facilities might be needed and compatible with the vision for the Unit;
- (2) whether additional measures are needed to ensure that recreational users have a high quality experience (which could be affected by the numbers of users, and interactions among users with conflicting interests);
- (3) whether use is adversely affecting sensitive natural resources or the ecology of the area;
- (4) whether measures are needed to address unforeseen safety issues;
- (5) whether changing recreational uses and demands present the need or opportunity for adjustments to existing facilities and management; and
- (6) whether any changes are needed in the management of recreation in relation to other management objectives, including protection or enhancement of wildlife habitat and forest management.

Wildlife

The Bureau, through its Wildlife Biologist and Technician, routinely conduct a variety of species monitoring activities statewide. The following are monitoring activities that are ongoing or anticipated for the Seboomook Unit.

- (1) Two important wildlife populations are being actively monitored on the Unit. Bald eagles are regularly monitored by the MDIF&W non-game species research program. Loons, a species of special interest in this plan as federal loon mitigation funds were used in part to purchase the property; are being monitored on the Unit lakes by the US Fish and Wildlife Service; these studies are expected to continue for at least another year. The Bureau will develop, in consultation with the USFWS, an ongoing program to monitor loon populations and nesting areas on the Unit's lakes.
- (2) The Bureau will establish and run a Bicknell's thrush monitoring survey route annually on Big Spencer Mountain, in cooperation with the Vermont Institute of Natural Science.
- (3) The Bureau cooperates with MDIF&W monitoring of game species, including, for this Unit, deer, moose, grouse, and black bear. Of particular interest are the extensive deer wintering areas on the Unit, since there is a need for this habitat in the region. As staff and budgets allow, the Bureau will coordinate with MDIF&W on aerial and ground surveys of these deer wintering areas to determine the distribution and use related to habitat quality and quantity. These surveys will be conducted during winter under snow conditions that restrict deer mobility.
- (4) The Bureau will identify and map significant wildlife habitat such as vernal pools and den trees in the process of developing its detailed forest management prescriptions. The boundaries of any sensitive natural communities will also be delineated on the ground at this time. Any significant natural areas or wildlife habitat will then be subject to appropriate protections.

Ecological Reserves

There are currently seventeen Ecological Reserves on BP&L lands throughout the state. Ecological Reserves are established "*for the purpose of maintaining one or more natural community types or native ecosystem types in a natural condition . . . and managed: A) as a benchmark against which biological and environmental change can be measure, B) to protect sufficient habitat for those species whose habitat needs are unlikely to be met on lands managed for other purposes; or, C) as a site for ongoing scientific research, long-term environmental monitoring, and education.*" (Title 12, Section 1801). The Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) is conducting long-term ecological monitoring within these Reserves.

There are two Ecological Reserves in this Unit: the St. John Ponds parcel, and Big Spencer Mountain. The MNAP conducted natural resource inventories on these lands in 2004 as part of the reserved lands management planning process. MNAP is also monitoring these lands as part

of its long term monitoring of Ecological Reserves to monitor ecological change within Ecological Reserves and to compare Ecological Reserves to areas under different management regimes. Baseline data will be collected using permanent plots in the St. John Ponds and Big Spencer Mountain Ecological Reserves in summer 2006. These areas will be re-inventoried once every ten years.

Timber Management

Since timber harvesting is both the source of the majority of Lands Division revenue and potentially the most widespread source of ecological disturbance on the landbase, its monitoring is important and is done throughout the Bureau's process. The local work plans, called prescriptions, are prepared by professional foresters according to Bureau policies, with input from staff specialists, then are peer-reviewed prior to approval. Preparation and layout of all timber sales include having field staff look at essentially every acre to be treated before it is to be harvested, with individual tree marking done on the majority of harvest acres. Regional field staff are on site checking on harvest practice and progress frequently, and senior staff visit these sites on a less frequent basis to obtain the overall picture of what is taking place in the forest. After the harvest is completed, roads, trails, and water crossings are put to bed as appropriate, and any changes in stand type are recorded so that the Bureau's GIS system can be updated.

The Bureau is currently developing a post-harvest monitoring plan to assist forest managers in assessing harvest outcomes on all managed lands. The monitoring plan will also address water quality, and Best Management Practices (BMP's) utilized during harvest activities.

Third party monitoring is done mainly through the forest certification programs of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). Each program conducts rigorous investigations of both our planning and on-ground practices. A full FSC audit was completed for all Bureau lands in 2006. The Seboomook Unit was part of that audit, with completion of this Plan required to maintain FSC certification.

Seboomook Unit Management Plan

IX. Appendices

Appendix A: Advisory Committee Members

Appendix B: Summary of Management Issues

Appendix C: Bureau Response to Written Public Comments

Appendix D: Deed Restrictions and Agreements

Appendix E: Guiding Statutes

Appendix F: Glossary

Appendix G: References

Appendix A

Seboomook Unit Management Plan Advisory Committee

Seboomook Unit Planning and Management Staff

David Soucy - *Director, Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Ralph Knoll - *Deputy Director (retired), Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Kathy Eickenberg - *Management Plan Coordinator*
Cindy Bastey - *Chief Planner, Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Peter Smith - *Regional Manager, Public Reserved Lands Western Region*
Leigh Hoar - *Forester, Western Reserved Lands Region*
Tim Hall - *Regional Manager, State Parks Northern Region*
Matt LaRoche - *Manager, Penobscot River Corridor*
Tom Charles - *Chief of Silviculture, Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Joe Wiley - *IF&W Wildlife Biologist assigned to the Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Brooke Wilkerson - *Maine Natural Areas Program specialist assigned to the Seboomook Unit*
Scott Ramsay - *Supervisor, Off-Road Vehicle Program of the Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Tom Desjardin - *Historic Sites Specialist*
George Powell - *Boating Facilities Director, Bureau of Parks and Lands*
Stephen Richardson - *Senior Forest Engineer, Bureau of Parks and Lands*

Other State Agency and Public Members

John Banks, *Bangor*
Kevin Bernier, *Brookfield Power*
Michelle Belanger, *Whitewater Boating Specialist, Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife*
Fred Candeloro, *Northern Lights ATV Club*
Rep. Roderick Carr, *Lincoln*
Diano Circo, *Natural Resources Council of Maine*
Alexandra Connover, *Willemantic*
Albro Cowperthwaite, *North Maine Woods*
Sen. Paul Davis, *Sangerville*
Steve Day, *Maine Forest Service, Greenville Office*
Pat Dorian, *Maine Warden Service*
Louis Durgin, *Dover-Foxcroft*
Paul Fichtner, *Penobscot Lake Lodge*
Bob Guethlen, *Rockwood*
Alan Hutchinson, *Forest Society of Maine*
Doug Kane, *Wildlife Biologist, IF&W Greenville Office*
Dan Legere, *Maine Guide Fly Shop*
Jennifer Mills, *Pittston Farm*
Paul Napolitano, *Ragged Riders Snowmobile Club*
Sandra Neily, *Greenville*
Tim Obrey, *Fisheries Biologist, IF&W Greenville Office*
Bill Patterson, *The Nature Conservancy*
Rep. Earl Richardson, *Greenville*
Greg Shute, *Chewonki*
Rick Sylvester, *Seboomook Wilderness Campground*

Appendix B

Summary of Planning Issues

The following is a summary of management issues raised by staff, and through public comments voiced during public meetings or submitted in writing to the Bureau prior to issuance of the Preliminary Plan on May 24, 2005 (for a more complete record of comments for the entire planning period, from August 31, 2004 to November 3, 2006, see Appendix C: Summary of Written Comments, as well as the meeting notes for the public meetings held during the preparation of this Plan, available on the Bureau's website.)

Seboomook and Canada Falls Parcels

Significant Natural Resources Management Issues

- Concern about the fragility of wetlands in the area and potential harm from ATVs.
- Concern about potential overuse of the area, and impact on the special character of the area.
- Invasive aquatic species are always a concern at boat launches. Finding ways to prevent the spread of these species, including educating boaters, is important to maintaining the quality of the lakes.
- The exemplary areas on the unit are all associated with wetlands. Buffers of these wetlands during timber harvests should be adequate to maintain the quality of the exemplary areas. While most of the rare plant species on the unit are also associated with wetlands, Orono sedge is found in open areas along roads. Management activities should avoid the use of herbicides that target grasses and sedges and avoid excavation in areas where Orono sedge is found.
- For all threatened and special concern wildlife species on the unit, refer to "Threatened and Endangered Species in Forests of Maine: A Guide to Assist with Forestry Activities,"

Fisheries and Wildlife Management Issues

- Development of any new recreational facilities should not be undertaken until there has been a more thorough assessment of loon nesting sites following stabilization of the water levels under the new water management regime that Great Lakes Hydro will begin to implement this year. It is not clear whether the study conducted by Biodiversity Research Institute has been completed or is ongoing into the future.
- Personal watercraft should not be allowed on any lakes where loon habitat protection is a priority.
- There is a need to increase the available dense softwood shelter in the Seboomook region given the scarcity of this forest type resulting from the spruce budworm infestation and commercial harvests. Winter cover is the limiting factor for deer populations in this area. Other softwood dependent species that would benefit from increased softwood areas include pine marten, snowshoe hare and spruce grouse. Coyote, red fox, porcupine and weasels are also residents of this habitat.
- Any winter camping areas or winter recreational trails should be located away from designated deer wintering areas.
- Any beech trees in reasonable condition should be retained for mast production for bear forage.

Historic and Cultural Resource Management Issues

- As with any land managed by the Bureau of Parks and Lands, plans for any ground disturbance should first be referred to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission who can determine if carrying out that plan would disturb any of sensitive areas.
- Archaeological resources are particularly accessible and threatened whenever water levels are low on the lakes or impoundments. Except for Seboomook Lake, which can be drawn down by 17 feet under the recent FERC hydropower license, the lakes and ponds in this unit will experience natural or near-natural water level fluctuations with a minimum potential exposure of artifacts. However, low water levels may result during periods of extreme drought.

Recreation Management Issues

Some participants expressed an interest in development of some new recreational facilities, including:

- A hiking trail along the South Branch and West Branch.
- Informational brochure with information about rare plants and rare plant communities
- Improvements to the canoe portages.
- ATV trails with camping opportunities; could be multi-use trails shared with snowmobiles in the winter.
- ATV loop around Moosehead (like the Moosehead snowmobile loop).
- Back-country cross-country ski trails; some groomed. Area at north end of Seboomook and Canada Falls area are of particular interest.
- Horseback riding trails; Pittston Farm has facilities that may be developed to accommodate horseback riding interests. One of only a few places in the state where large horseback riding groups could be accommodated.
- Improved signage and information about the boat access sites (unaware that the site near Pittston Farm was a Public Boat Launch)
- Review canoe/boating put-ins and take-outs on the South Branch – are these adequate? Is parking area adequate?
- Maine Forest Service concern that riverbank near its cabin not be used as a whitewater boating take-out due to potential erosion and conflict with use of the area for a helicopter landing site.
- Are there adequate parking areas defined for the boat access sites – potential conflicts with camping and use of the area by whitewater boaters at Canada Falls dam.

Other recreation management concerns included:

- Large unit – room for both motorized and non-motorized trails. Can accommodate full diversity of recreational users.
- The NMW system does not allow bicycles, horses, or ATVs. Interest in these uses.
- Need for user-training for safety and resource protection.
- Comments favored allowing ATVs on the Unit:
 - Need to serve older and less able recreationists.
 - Concern about loss of snowmobile trails and other recreational opportunities on private lands.

- Examine suitability of existing snowmobile trails as ATV trails.
- ATV Clubs are just forming in this area. They recognize that any ATV trails need to be supported by active clubs that will take responsibility for trail maintenance, education and training for proper use of ATVs and adherence to established trails.
- Concern about or opposition to ATVs:
 - Review the existing snowmobile trail locations (especially at Carry Brook area) to be sure they are avoiding any sensitive natural areas.
 - Concern about ATV trails in proximity to residences; some theft already from snowmobilers.
 - Opposition to allowing ATVs on the unit due to concerns with erosion, disturbance to wildlife, and intrusion upon traditional uses.
 - Findings of a recent tourism survey found people are not embracing more motorized use in this area. Is affecting quality of life.
- Interest in traditional uses, and maintaining a back-country character to the area.
 - Will there be areas without roads? Will the state consider discontinuing some roads for a more remote recreational experience?
 - What signage is adequate and compatible with the backcountry character of the area?
- Opportunity to promote use of the area. Importance of hiking and snowmobile trails to local and regional economy. Need to address public awareness about the opportunities available on these lands – interest in increasing use of the area through increased public awareness by advertising/publicizing the area.
- Need a “winter plan” that will allocate some areas for motorized use and others for non-motorized uses such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, winter camping. Snowmobiles now go everywhere, even where there are no groomed trails. Have seen them even in St. John Ponds area.
- Management of resources is a key to attractiveness of the area for users: use dropped when deer herd size dropped and when fishing “take” limits decreased.

Timber Management Issues

- Determine through the allocation process which forest acres will be available for timber management (timber-dominant or important secondary use).
- Develop harvest entry into the Carry Brook mature aspen stands soon after Plan adoption.
- Evaluate the condition of the extensive S1 and M1 stands which have resulted from past clearcuts.
- Determine the condition of the currently zoned deer wintering areas, to learn if they are functioning well and whether any timber harvest or other management activity is warranted in the near future.

Management Issues Related to Roads, Access, and NMW Gates

Access To and Within the Seboomook Unit

- How will the roads previously developed as woods management roads be managed?
- The current location of the gates on the road to the Socatean Ponds should be revisited.
- Given limited resources, how important is restoration of the Cutoff Road?
- Regional historical use of North Maine Woods – importance of access to roads and trails to economy of the area.

- Access to unit is important to the economy of the region.
- Concern about how the public be assured of continued access to these lands as there are not guaranteed rights over all private roads leading to the Unit.
- Condition of the roads impedes access – especially the 20-mile road from the end of the county maintained section. Part of broader issue of changing management of roads under new landowners- access is becoming more difficult.
- Will this plan deal with closure of roads on the Seboomook Unit?

NMW Gates and Fees

- Concern about the fee structure and its effect on local businesses and camp owners.
- Concern that fees are discouraging use. Use of NMW is very low compared to past historic use. Hardly anyone there; Canada Falls campground empty, other NMW campsites not nearly used to capacity.
- When people chose to go some other area, like New Hampshire, the state loses revenue – in retail sales, state tolls to get to the area, gas, lodging, guiding, dining. Local businesses lose business even if visitors go elsewhere in Maine.
- View that taxpayers paid for these lands and shouldn't have to pay high fees to use them.
- High fees hit the lower middle income users and retired folks hardest, and they tend to be the traditional users of this area, and account for more of the total use than folks who can afford the fees.
- Getting out of NMW is an option as the unit is on the periphery of the system, like the Nahmakanta Unit was (which was removed from the KI-Jo-Mary System).
- Gate system has benefits for providing oversight of use – registration deters vandalism. Worry about increased use in winter, without gates to provide this security - could see increased vandalism.
- Gates are not operated in the winter. If use increases in the winter, there could be increased vandalism.
- Information provided at the gate is inconsistent or incorrect at times; fees are not consistently charges; gatekeepers are at times discourteous. Need better service ethic and training.
- Impacts of not having a gate, if the unit is withdrawn from the NMW system, including whether the costs for the services now provided at the gate will have to be absorbed by Greenville taxpayers.

St. John Ponds Parcel

Significant Natural Resource Management Issues

- The St. John Ponds unit was acquired under the condition that it be managed as an Ecological Reserve. This designation requires a prohibition on timber harvesting and strict limitations on motorized recreation. Roads on the unit are currently in very poor condition.
- The exemplary ecosystem and rare plants on the unit are all associated with wetlands. Since the unit is an Ecological Reserve, protection for these areas is not a concern.

Historic and Cultural Resource Management Issues

- Spiess (2004) recommends an archaeological survey of this area, beginning with a careful walkover around the lake basins.

Recreation Management Issues

- Parking area at point of barrier for vehicular travel.
- Are there other roads or trails (besides the Gulliver Brook Road) that would provide a more suitable pedestrian access to this area?

Timber Management Issues

- Though not a timber issue per se, decisions must be made on how to manage the existing logging road access, where to block roads and where to put them to bed. Much will depend on recreational access decisions, as well as environmental threat and the expense of closure.

Baker Lake Parcel

Significant Natural Resource Management Issues:

- The campsite and boat launch area on the north end of the lake shows signs of trampling and heavy use. The boat launch is unimproved, shallow, and can be difficult to use, resulting in sediment being stirred up as boats attempt to launch.
- Invasive aquatic plants are always a concern at any boat launch, and steps should be taken to educate users about the consequences of invasive species.
- Management guidelines for wood turtles and Tomah mayflies include maintaining a 330 ft. riparian management zone for 3.1 mi. (5 km) upstream and 3.1 mi. (5 km) downstream from the occurrence. "Threatened and Endangered Species in Forests of Maine: A Guide to Assist with Forestry Activities" recommends that 25 feet of the riparian zone nearest the waterway remain unharvested; the rest of the riparian zone be managed with single tree or small group selection cuts that maintain 60-70% cover; and construction of roads and log landings within the riparian management zone be avoided or minimized. In addition, MDIFW guidelines recommend avoiding the use of broad-spectrum insecticides within a ¼ mile of the stream for 0.6 mi. (1 km) upstream and 0.6 mi. (1 km) downstream of the Tomah mayfly occurrence.
- Rare plants in the unit, blue-beaked sedge (*Carex rostrata*) (ranked S2) and bog bedstraw (*Galium labradoricum*) (ranked S2), are located within a large, non-forested wetland. These plants are probably adequately protected from forestry practices.

Fisheries and Wildlife Management Issues

- Little is known about how the presence of muskies is affecting the population of native species such as brook trout, but it is commonly accepted that brook trout populations will not fare well in the presence of muskies. Muskies are also continuing to spread throughout the St. John River watershed, and their impacts could increase as their population continues to grow. The official IFW policy calls for encouraging anglers to fish out the species, though some would be interested in maintaining muskies as a high-quality sport fishery in the lake.

Recreation Management Issues

- There has been interest expressed for a group campsite on this lake.

Administrative Management Concerns

- Access rights to Baker Lake have not been fully secured, although there has been a long tradition of public access through the North Maine Woods system and policies of the predecessor large landowners such as Great Northern Paper Company.

Big Spencer Mountain Parcel

Significant Natural Resource Management Issues

- The poorly maintained snowmobile and hiking trail that leads to the lookout tower was not designed for the kind of use it receives and is prone to erosion. If the trail continues to be used for motorized recreation, its design will need to be reassessed.
- The area surrounding the lookout tower has been trampled by visitors to the top of the mountain. Although not part of the state-owned parcel, care should be taken to ensure that this trampled area does not expand.
- As an Ecological Reserve, the unit is subject to prohibitions on timber harvest and restrictions on recreation use.

Recreation Management Issues

- Future use of the existing trail to the old warden's cabin.
- Future of the old warden's cabin.
- Need for trailhead parking, both summer and winter, for hiking trail up Big Spencer Mountain.

Appendix C
Maine Department of Conservation
Bureau of Parks and Lands
WRITTEN PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS
WITH BUREAU RESPONSE

I. Recurring Comments Received Throughout the Planning Process
(Not including comments related to the North Maine Woods Gate and Gate Fees; see part V.)
(August 31, 2004 – November 3, 2006)

Comment	Response
<p>Closing the Big Spencer Mountain Snowmobile Trail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposition to continuing the backcountry snowmobile trail up Big Spencer Mountain was expressed in seven comment letters. • Support for continuing the backcountry snowmobile trail up Big Spencer Mountain was expressed in five comment letters. • Support for closing the trail if an alternative destination trail is established was expressed in one letter. 	<p>Closing the Big Spencer Mountain Snowmobile Trail</p> <p>The Bureau will close the snowmobile trail up Big Spencer Mountain within two years. However, statutory and policy guidance for this decision as described below is not definitive; rather it requires interpretation and judgment. Recognizing this, and understanding that this is an existing trail that is important to the local snowmobiling community, the Bureau is committed to finding a replacement high vista snowmobile destination that is safer and in the same general vicinity as the Big Spencer Mountain trail, prior to closing the trail. While it is the Bureau's intention to do this within two years if at all possible, our ability to meet this time frame is subject to a number of factors over which we may have little control, including having adequate staff resources to identify and pursue options on either state or private lands; the willingness of private landowners who may have to grant trail rights to the Bureau for the high vista trail or to connect to the high vista trail; and adequate financial resources to construct the trail. Nonetheless, the Bureau is resolved to implement the decision to close the trail, which is based on the following Bureau Policy and language in the statutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title 12, Section 1805, Designation of Ecological Reserves, subsection 2 defines how existing motorized trails are to be treated in ecological reserves: <u>"2. Trails and roads for motorized vehicle use.</u> The director shall allow the continuing use of an existing snowmobile trail, all-terrain vehicle trail or a road if the director determines the trail or road is well designed and built and situated in a safe location and its use has minimal adverse impact on the ecological value of an ecological reserve and it cannot be reasonably relocated outside the ecological reserve." Note that snowmobile trails in ecological reserves are not absolutely prohibited, but are subject to significant restrictions. The Bureau is committed to honest implementation of these requirements, keeping in mind the ultimate purpose of the requirements is not compulsive exclusion, but rather preserving the integrity of the ecological resource. • The Bureau's <u>Integrated Resource Policy for Public Reserved and Nonreserved Lands, State Parks and State Historic Sites</u> (BP&L, Dec 18, 2000) incorporates the statutory limits on motorized trails: "Existing snowmobile and all-terrain vehicle trails and roads may be allowed to continue in Ecological Reserves

	<p>where they are well designed and built, are situated in safe locations, have minimal adverse impact on the values for which the reserve was created, and cannot be reasonably relocated outside of the reserve. . . However, every effort should be made to relocate roads, motorized use trails and other incompatible activities outside of the Reserve, and to close and revegetate these areas.” (at page 24).</p> <p>The Bureau notes that the specific criteria for continuing existing snowmobile trails do not address destination trails. However, given the overarching direction to relocate motorized use trails outside of the reserve, combined with the poor condition of the trail (it follows an eroding abandoned jeep trail that becomes a stream in runoff conditions), and the questionable safety of the trail (it is narrow and very steep), the Bureau concluded that the trail should be discontinued.</p>
<p>Allowing ATVs in the Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposition to or grave concern for allowing ATVs within the Unit was expressed in nine comment letters. • Support for allowing ATVs within the Unit, provided this is restricted to protect sensitive environmental areas, was expressed in 3 comment letters. • Concern that ATV use be restricted, or very limited, without elaborating exactly what was meant by this; or prohibited from certain areas designated for quiet or remote recreation, was expressed in 3 comment letters. 	<p>Allowing ATVs in the Unit</p> <p>The Bureau’s Off-Road Vehicle Program supports the formation of ATV clubs to work with landowners to develop and steward ATV trails. The Bureau’s experience has been that clubs have a very positive influence on the ATV community, with the result that, where clubs are active, landowners are experiencing few problems with off-trail riding and damage to sensitive areas. The demand for ATV trails is growing rapidly. Maine’s system of ATV trails now attracts the ATV touring public from throughout New England. With a new generation of active-minded retirees with second homes in the region adding to the demand, and a general trend towards ATV recreating, this pressure may continue for some time. ATV clubs have expressed an interest in being able to have access through the Unit to Pittston Farm, a refueling station and a stopover option for an extended ATV touring trip. The Bureau recognizes that the opportunity for multi-day excursions with overnight camping or lodging is rare in the region. The Seboomook Unit is large enough to accommodate this along with a variety of other recreational activities including remote camping and hiking. The Bureau will work with all affected parties, including adjacent landowners, to provide access on specified trails when a regional network of trails extends to the Seboomook Unit, and will work with clubs to ensure ATVs do not travel beyond the Seboomook Unit and use only designated trails.</p>

II. Summary of Written Comments on the Draft Final Plan of the Seboomook Unit Management Plan

(September 20, 2006 – November 3, 2006)

(Not including comments related to the North Maine Woods Gate and Gate Fees; see part V. for these.)

(Comments excerpted or summarized. Typographical, grammatical, or formatting errors have been corrected where possible.)

Comment	Response
From: John Rust, Vice President, Maine Professional Guides Association (November 3, 2006)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Maine Professional Guides Association (MPGA) appreciates the great amount of work put into creating a management plan for the Seboomook Unit. The plan is a vast resource for those wishing to learn about the area and to share that knowledge with visitors as would Maine Guides. The Maine Professional Guides Association is pleased to submit the following comments and suggestions regarding the Final Draft of the Seboomook Unit Management Plan. • The Maine Professional Guides Association (MPGA) makes these comments in support of: sustainable use of Maine's natural resources – lands, waters, fish and wildlife; sustaining Maine's outdoor and natural resource heritage; the principle of multiple land and recreational use; as well as the following positions: • MPGA Supports Landowner Rights - The Maine Professional Guides Association believes that land and water access is vital to guiding, and therefore access must be protected. Access results from respecting and working closely with landowners. For this reason, Guides have a vested interest in developing a mutually beneficial, long term, relationship with the Landowner and the Land – both private and public. We therefore believe that Guides are significant partners in setting policy for and managing recreational uses, especially on publicly owned lands. • Public Benefit Must be Considered - The Maine Professional Guides Association believes there are benefits to conserving special habitats that are vital to wildlife, such as spawning waters, loon nests and deer wintering areas for example. However, the Maine Professional Guides Association does not believe a significant public benefit is derived from converting large tracts into Ecological Preserves where trails, mechanized vehicles, or legal forms of recreation including hunting, fishing, trapping and snowmobiling are prohibited. MPGA opposes the creation of ecological preserves on public lands. In the case of lands and easements donated to the State, MPGA believes that the public's interest should be considered by the State Legislature before the State accepts ownership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bureau appreciates the positive feedback about the Plan. This Plan reflects a new effort in our Management Plans to appeal to the interests of the public and foster appreciation of the resources we manage. • The Bureau welcomes the comments and unique perspective of Maine guides. We have also benefited from having two Maine guides on the Seboomook Unit Management Plan Advisory Committee. Your support for sustainable use and multiple use management are in line with the Bureau's basic mission. • Landowner Rights: We appreciate that Guides must maintain good relations with both public and private landowners. The Bureau also works to secure rights for the public to use private lands, for example, in its the snowmobile and ATV programs. • Public Benefits: The Bureau understands that protecting wildlife habitat is a public value that is especially relevant to Guides. Maine's system of Ecological Reserves was established with significant public input and authorized by the Legislature (Title 12, Section 1805). In 2001 the Bureau designated 13 land areas (68,944 acres) as ecological reserves, and since has acquired 3 areas that were deeded to the Bureau as ecological reserves: Big Spencer Mountain (4,242 acres); Mount Abraham (4,033 acres), and the St. John headwater ponds (3,895 acres). In total BPL now manages 81,146 acres in reserves, out of a total reserve lands base of 568,692 acres (14.2 percent). The Legislature has capped the acreage BPL may designate at 100,000 acres. The ecological reserves must serve one or more of the following legislatively defined purposes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) maintaining natural community types or native ecosystem types that represent an area in a natural condition and range of variation and contribute to the protection of Maine's biological diversity; (2) serving as a benchmark against which biological and environmental change can be measured; (3) providing sufficient habitat for those species

- **Current Uses Must be Supported** - The Maine Professional Guides Association believes that existing recreational practices should be allowed to continue unless they harm the resource in some non-sustainable way. It is not acceptable for one recreational use to be restricted so that another use may be developed. Exclusive use is not an acceptable form of "public access." The State should not intentionally deprive someone of the way of life they have become accustomed to, unless there are vital environmental reasons.

Specific Comments Regarding the Seboomook Unit Management Plan:

"Ecological Preserves" and "Special Management Areas"
MPGA opposes what appears to be the State's creation of ecological preserves beyond those given to the State by deed. This would include the "Special Management Areas" that are to be managed by similar policies.

"Non-Extractive" Wildlife Management: MPGA opposes designating non-extractive Wildlife Management areas. Current wildlife policies are in place that allows hunting, fishing and trapping so that all wildlife is protected as needed. It is stated in the Plan that "Hunting, fishing, and trapping are allowed where they do not conflict with the management of historic or cultural areas or the safety of other users." This would indicate that hunting, fishing and trapping are to be allowed throughout the Unit. There seems to be a conflict in the Plan's Policies where hunting is allowed by one statement, yet banned by another.

Wildlife Protections: MPGA supports protecting wildlife populations through such efforts as increased water flow management and identifying deer wintering

whose habitat needs are unlikely to be met on lands managed for other purposes; or

- (4) serving as a site for scientific research, long-term environmental monitoring, and education.

The establishment of ecological reserves does not, however, prohibit hunting, fishing and trapping as suggested. These uses, in fact, are specifically allowed by statute (Title 12, Section 1801, subsection 1. Allowed Uses). Existing snowmobile and ATV trails are allowed to continue in an ecological reserve if they meet specific criteria as set forth in the statute (see above response related to closing the snowmobile trail on Big Spencer Mountain).

Regarding lands and easements donated to the State, the Bureau is required by statute (Title 12 Section 1850) to have the Governor's approval for these acquisitions, and must report annually to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry to describe any acquisitions and to justify any that do not include guaranteed public vehicular access.

- **Current Uses:** The Bureau's approach to recreation management is to provide a balance of all permitted activities on its lands. It also recognizes that conflicts do take place whenever multiple activities occur together. The resource allocation system, as described in the Integrated Resource Policy planning document (December 2000), provides a mechanism whereby a range of recreational experiences can be accommodated across the land base, so that no one user-group will be excluded, and all will be accommodated, but not necessarily on every acre of the land base. The IRP was developed with a broad array of stakeholders, including the MPGA.

Ecological Reserves/Special Management Areas: See previous response concerning establishment ecological reserves under "Public Benefits." The Bureau has designated the following types of lands as Special Protection Areas, which are, by their nature, sensitive to impacts from intensive uses and hence in need of special protections: areas identified by the Maine Natural Areas Program as exemplary natural communities or areas containing rare and endangered species of wildlife and/or plants; ecological reserves; and significant historic/archaeological resources. As noted above, hunting, fishing, and trapping are allowed in these areas. "Non-Extractive" Wildlife Management: This phrase refers to Bureau management activities only, and applies only to areas designated as Special Protection Areas. Specifically, this limitation refers to management of timber and vegetation for manipulation of wildlife habitat (such as creation of cleared openings) and does not restrict the public's right to hunt, fish and trap in these areas. The text in the Plan has been clarified to state this.

Wildlife Protections: The Bureau is fortunate to have a wildlife biologist from IF&W assigned to BPL full time to work on wildlife management issues on our lands. He

areas before creating new campsites and trails. It should be understood that deer wintering areas might change over time, requiring continued monitoring and reallocating recreational uses.

MPGA supports the plan's protection of loon nests. However, loons can and do live in harmony with human activity - even with PWC uses nearby. And since all loon nests have not yet been identified, and new nests will be constructed from time to time, the proposed 1000 foot separation might be too restrictive.

Multiple Uses: MPGA supports the concept of multiple use, and opposes what appears to be the State's creation of exclusive use areas, specifically, by restricting mechanized access where roads and trails currently exist, or exist due to ongoing forestry harvesting. The Plan appears to use "Remote Recreation" as a definition for many of these areas, including a band of non-motorized area surrounding Sebomook Lake, plus other large tracts. Current multiple uses should be retained, especially where the people of the State of Maine may not agree with the wishes of special interests who believe their ways are the best for everyone.

MPGA does not intend that there should be no restrictions whatsoever, and supports restricting motor vehicles, ATVs, mountain bikes, horses, and foot traffic where serious surface environmental damage would occur. But limiting snowmobiles to only groomed trails is not only environmentally unnecessary, it is likely to have a detrimental impact on the region's snowmobile industry as well as guides who use snowmobiles for tours or hunting. Similarly, creating a band of non-motorized area surrounding Sebomook Lake contradicts with current uses including drive-to boating and camping spots - not to mention that snowmobiles are regularly used to access shoreline campsites in winter.

fully appreciates the challenges of managing deer wintering areas.

The 1,000-foot loon nest protection provision is a condition attached by the US Fish and Wildlife Service to its donation of funds for the acquisition of the Sebomook lands. It applies to loon nests known at the time of the acquisition; however, the Bureau will respect the intent of the restriction and will apply it to nests located after the acquisition date to the extent feasible.

Multiple Uses: The Bureau's Allocation system has a number of land management categories, including Remote Recreation areas, that accommodate a wide range of recreational experiences, as is directed in the Integrated Resource Policy (IRP) (Dec 2000) developed with input from an advisory committee of stakeholders including the MPGA. Title 12, Section 1847 (included in Appendix E of this Plan), directs the Bureau to develop management plans that "provide for outdoor recreation including remote, undeveloped areas." The relatively undeveloped nature of the large lakes and rivers in this unit is unusual for state lands and presents an opportunity not found in many other areas to secure a remote waters experience in a relatively accessible location. At the same time, the Plan continues the existing drive-to campsites on these waterbodies, which are located at the most accessible sites near the dams, and in the case of Sebomook Lake, also near Pittston Farm at the opposite end of the lake, leaving the main body of the lake relatively remote.

The Remote Recreation allocation around Sebomook and Canada Falls Lakes does not include the shoreline at the southeastern end of Sebomook Lake from the Hallett camp to the dam, or any of the existing drive-to camping areas. These campsites will continue to be accessible by motor vehicle or snowmobile. Further, motorized uses are not strictly prohibited in Remote Recreation areas; rather, they are allowed as an exception subject to specific criteria, including no significant impact on the remote recreation experience.

For roads in the Sebomook Unit, the Plan designates the Sebomook Road, Sebomook Dam Road, and the Roll Dam Road as Public Use Roads (for vehicular use); however, Bureau has not yet determined which of the woods roads put in place by the previous owner will be retained as part of the Bureau's forest management road system, and of those, which may be open for public use, whether motorized or non-motorized. This applies to all woods roads, including those in the designated Remote areas. The Plan directs the Bureau to work with the Advisory Committee to develop a recreation use plan for these roads, and to complete such a plan within two years of Plan adoption. Conceivably, it might make sense to designate some roads for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing, and others for snowmobiling in the winter, and in the summer, there may be some roads designated for motorized uses and others for non-motorized uses. However, until such a plan is completed, the Bureau's general policy of

Snowmobile Trails: MPGA supports open access for snowmobiles, so they may ride off-trail and off the groomed trails. Trails through the unit are part of an extensive system looping around Moosehead Lake and connecting to Jackman and Millinocket, with Pittston Farm being a major service hub. Snowmobile recreation has thrived in the Moosehead area because there are good snow conditions, and many unplowed woods roads to ride on. The extensive road network draws many visitors, and spreads out the use so more can be accommodated. Limiting snowmobile use to only the designated trails will have a detrimental impact on the region's snowmobile industry as well as guides who use snowmobiles for sightseeing tours and hunting. In addition, the proposal to move snowmobile use off existing graded roadbeds and onto new woods trails will unnecessarily restrict traffic unless these trails are properly graded and drained so they can be used during low snow conditions.

Warden's Cabin and Fire Tower on Spencer: MPGA supports maintaining the Fire Wardens cabin, and the watch tower should it ever become possible. These are part of Maine's rich forestry heritage, and an attraction to many visitors. It would be a shame to lose them. MPGA supports the plea by the Forest Society of Maine for time to raise funds for any structural preservation needed, and believes that the ecological preserve deed restriction would never have intended for these structures to be lost.

In addition, MPGA supports maintaining access to Spencer Mountain's views by snowmobiles and ATVs, and hopes the State will be able to accommodate those existing users and vital contributors to the area

Equestrian Trails: Horseback riding is not, nor ever was, a part of Maine's north woods heritage. MPGA opposes using State funds to develop and maintain these trails. It must be noted that trails for motor vehicles, snowmobiles and ATVs are funded through dedicated taxes on those users (registration fees and gas taxes). There are also issues involving how horseback riding would interface with hunters from late August until winter. MPGA opposes taking away hunting access in order to give access to horse riders.

While horseback riding was not part of Maine's north woods heritage, draft horses most definitely were. Perhaps there is a tremendous opportunity for the State, and the resort at Pittston Farm, to develop a forest heritage demonstration area where draft teams from the Farm (and from throughout the State) could show visitors how harvesting was done a century ago. Certain areas must be

allowing snowmobiles and motor vehicles on its inactive management roads will serve as an interim policy on the Seboomook parcel. Until the State acquired the property and removed the gate at the Seboomook Road that Wagner had installed to keep vehicles off these woods roads, the public had no vehicular access to these roads in the summer. A tradition of public use of these roads does not, therefore, exist.

Snowmobile Trails: The Bureau policy as stated in the IRP is that "Snowmobiles are permitted on designated trails and in areas not designated for other uses where the activity does not conflict with allowed uses of the Resource Allocation System categories." Accordingly, snowmobiles would not generally be allowed in the Remote Recreation areas (see preceding response related to Multiple Uses). Note, however, that most of the unit is not allocated as remote, so snowmobile use off-trail is allowed in these areas. Regarding the relocation of the snowmobile trail from the Seboomook Road, the Bureau recognizes that this is a major trail and will take into account the need to have a functioning trail for as much of the season as possible and under a wide range of snow conditions. This could involve designating the road as the trail during low snow conditions, provided the road is not being used for active forest management. The Bureau will work closely with partner snowmobile clubs that groom the trails in the area in planning and implementing any changes to the existing system to minimize disruptions to the trail system.

Warden's Cabin and Fire Tower on Spencer: The Bureau does not own the watch tower on Big Spencer Mountain; however, the Fire Warden's cabin is on Bureau land. The cabin is within an ecological reserve. It should be removed to be faithful to the management requirements of ecological reserves. The significance of this cabin to the region, however, is well understood. BPL has provided in the plan for a two-year window for the Forest Society or other group to raise funds to relocate the cabin to another location off the reserve.

Equestrian Trails: The Bureau manages its lands for a wide range of public recreational opportunities, including many that are not a part of Maine's north woods heritage, such as snowmobiling and ATV riding as well as horseback riding. This Unit may be uniquely situated, with the stable facilities available at Pittston Farm, to provide a backcountry horseback riding opportunity. The Seboomook Unit is a large public reserve, with over 40,000 acres surrounding Seboomook Lake alone. This large area can accommodate a wide range of uses, properly planned and managed, without conflicts. The Bureau will designate appropriate areas for horseback riding trails and will manage them to avoid conflicts with hunting and other uses. The principal sources of funding for non-motorized trails on public reserved lands are timber revenues and grants, not ATV or snowmobile funds. Where motorized and non-motorized uses share

harvested, let it be by horse teams.

Misreading Recreational Trends: It is important to understand the current trends in outdoor recreational activities before investing resources. The Piscataquis County study noted might indicate that respondents felt more favorably toward increases in non-motorized activities than motorized ones, with over half of respondents would like to see increases in current levels of camping and hiking, cross-country skiing, and kayaking and canoeing, it is also noted that participation in those activities is actually declining as shown by visitor data for Baxter Park, NMW, and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. Activities on the increase include snowmobiling and ATV-riding. Even hunting is increasing with retail sales for hunting footwear being the highest growth market segment for retailing. We must be careful not to rob Peter to pay Paul, especially when Peter (hunting and snowmobiling) is already vital to our economy and is growing, when Paul (camping, canoeing, and hiking) is shrinking.

Glossary: MPGA supports the use of clear language, so that meaning and intent may be fully understood. Some of the terminology used in the Plan is overlapping or not defined at all in the Glossary. These should be corrected, and include: "people-powered", "motorized", "non-motorized" and "mechanized/non-mechanized."

These distinctions are important in relation to environmental impact, as well as their interactions with other users. For instance, some "people-powered" activities like mountain biking have similar environmental impacts as some "non-motorized" and "non-mechanized" activities like horseback riding, as well as some "motorized" activities. Likewise, some "people-powered" activities like snowshoeing and backcountry ski touring have similar environmental impacts as a "non-motorized" activity like dog sledding, as well as a "motorized" activity like snowmobiling.

The Plan defines "**Motorized**" as "a mode of travel across the land base which utilizes internal combustion or electric powered conveyances; which in itself constitutes a recreational activity, or facilitates participation in a recreational activity. And includes the use of mechanized forms of travel, such as a bicycle, for the same purpose."

The Plan defines "**Non-mechanized**" as "a mode of travel across the land base which does not utilize internal combustion, electric, or mechanically powered conveyances; which in itself constitutes a recreational activity, or facilitates participation in a recreational activity." It is not very clear how this definition would treat bicycles. "Non-Mechanized" would include the "People-Powered" activities of paddling, hiking and ski touring, but not the "People-Powered" activities of mountain biking. "Non-mechanized" would include horseback riding and dog sledding.

"**People-Powered**" is not defined. It is not the same as "non-motorized". "People-Powered" includes a

the same trail, the funding sources could reasonably be combined. In addition, the Bureau anticipates that Pittson Farm will be an active partner in making this opportunity available.

Recreational Trends: The Plan includes information collected by others related to recreation trends and attitudes toward various recreational activities. The Plan does not propose to reduce funding to snowmobile and ATV interests to pay for non-motorized activities. BPL's objective is to provide a balance of opportunities across the spectrum of recreational activities.

Glossary: The definitions in the Plan are standard definitions taken from the IRP, where the principle application of the terms "motorized" and "non-mechanized" was in the context of the Back-Country Recreation allocation, which is not an allocation used in the Seboomook Plan. This can be confusing, and so the terms and definitions in the Seboomook Plan have been revised accordingly. A definition for "non-motorized" has been added and the term "non-mechanized" has been eliminated in this plan. The Bureau chooses not to use "people-powered." The Bureau has used the term "non-motorized" in all of its planning documents to date and believes it encompasses the a broader range of types of recreation than people-powered, including horseback riding and dogsledding, for example. See previous response for "non-extractive wildlife management."

Setting aside terminology issues, BPL understands the different impacts of the various uses, and BPL's management decisions and actions are guided accordingly. The vision statement and the description of uses allowed by allocation generally speak to the actual uses, not the class of uses.

<p>“mechanized” activity like mountain biking, but not horseback riding or dog sledding.</p> <p>The term “Non-extractive” should be added to the Glossary. It is used in the plan but it is missing from the glossary. Does it mean no picking of berries, or cutting of dead wood for campfires? Does it allow catch and release fishing?</p>	
<p>From: Roger and Suzanne AuClair, Rockwood (November 3, 2006)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We wanted to thank the Dept. of Conservation and to say how much we appreciate what appears to be a well planned and thoughtful final draft for the 10-year Management Plan of the Seboomook Unit. • We agree that the Baker Lake campground needs to be upgraded somewhat. • We also have observed the rare wood turtles each spring while fiddleheading on the backwaters of the North Branch, so appreciate that these will be protected. • We re-iterate that King's Landing campground does not need to be expanded because, in our common visits there, we have either encountered no one else or perhaps two other parties. The current campsites are well appointed and well maintained. It is not a high traffic stop, though does support a high quality of wildlife and outdoor experience. This would not make a good dedicated campsite area for motorized groups (such as ATVs), but is a superb place for wildlife watching. We habitually see eagles, loons, mink, moose and deer there, as well as many other water fowl, birds and small mammals. • Finally, again we would not recommend allowing ATVs to be used in the Seboomook Unit. ATV group activities will cause a tremendous problem, both physically to the high quality of our natural resources and to the overall enjoyment of this remote area during the busiest times of year -- spring, summer and fall, where the woods and waters are more fully used by more people and more animal activity than in the winter. Noise, especially of this sort, travels far over water and can be heard from miles around, and regulations will be difficult, if not impossible, to enforce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bureau appreciates the feedback from residents in the area close to the Unit, who have first hand knowledge of the resources we manage. • Regarding King’s High Landing, BPL respects the views expressed about the potential impacts to wildlife from any expansion of the camping area, and its present low use. It already includes six campsites; BPL will monitor use and consider carefully whether this is an appropriate site for more drive-to campsites. The Plan has been redrafted to more generally recommend that any additional drive-to campsites be located in proximity to existing drive-to campsites. • Regarding ATVs, see the response in Part I of these comments.
<p>From: Dawn Sipos (email, November 1, 2006)</p>	
<p>I have been vacationing in the great North Maine Woods, for the past 20 years. My family and I have camped at Seboomook Campgrounds, for 10 of those years. In 2005, my parents finally purchased a camp.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would just like to express my thought on some things that may or may not change in the area. I hope snowmobiling will always be allowed, the trails are great, they are well maintained, and the area is so vast. • It would be nice to see some cross country trails made available. I am not fond of ATVs. They are noise and rip up the trails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bureau actively manages its land to implement the concept of multiple use of its reserved lands, including snowmobiling, ATV riding, and cross-country skiing in appropriate areas. All trails must be located to avoid impacts to sensitive resources. The Bureau has a policy to separate snowmobile and cross-country ski trails wherever possible by a distance that will minimize the sound of snowmobiles to skiers. The Bureau policy for ATV use on public reserved lands limits their use to designated roads and trails, where it is suitable for ATV use in terms of environmental impact, safety, and compatibility with other uses. As with snowmobiles, the Bureau would consider noise in siting any trails. See also the response in Part I. related to the issue of ATV trails.

From: Judith Canepa, New York, NY (October 7, 2006)

- As a visitor who very much appreciates your beautiful state, I am writing about the new management plan for the public lands now held by the state of Maine near Moosehead Lake. In particular, I urge your agency to designate Big Spencer Mountain and St. Johns Pond as ecological preserves, as they are ecologically sensitive and important to the health of the wilderness. And I also ask that both areas be made off-limits to motor vehicles of any kind (including sports vehicles such as snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles), as those types of vehicles cause degradation to the soil and adversely affect the wildlife. Any snowmobile trail on the mountain (Big Spencer) should be located outside the area to be designated as an ecological preserve.

- Both Big Spencer Mountain and the St. John Ponds parcels are designated Ecological Reserves, where motorized uses will be limited in accordance with statutory direction (see also the response in Part I related to the snowmobile trail on Big Spencer Mountain).

From: Lydia Garvey Clinton OK (October 6, 2006)

- I strongly urge you to preserve these vital ecological treasures! NO ORVs- Keep it Wild! These precious areas have much potential & so many species, Protect them!- Our Public lands & watersheds.

- See previous responses in Part I related to ATVs. The Bureau policy regarding snowmobiles as stated in the IRP is that "Snowmobiles are permitted on designated trails and in areas not designated for other uses where the activity does not conflict with allowed uses of the Resource Allocation System categories." Accordingly, snowmobiles would not generally be allowed in the Remote Recreation areas, or in Special Protection Areas (including Ecological Reserves), except in narrow circumstances. Specifically, existing snowmobile and all-terrain vehicle trails and roads may be allowed to continue in Ecological Reserves where all the following criteria are met: they are well designed and built, are situated in safe locations, have minimal adverse impact on the values for which the reserve was created, and cannot be reasonably relocated outside of the reserve.

III. Summary of Written Comments on the Preliminary Plan and First Draft of the Seboomook Unit Management Plan

(May 23, 2005 – December 31, 2005)

(Not including comments related to the North Maine Woods Gate and Gate Fees; see part V. for these.)

(Comments excerpted or summarized. Typographical, grammatical, or formatting errors have been corrected where possible.)

Comment	Response
<p>From: Sherwin Start, Sanford (June 14-15, 2005)</p>	
<p>Seboomook and Canada Falls Parcels:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>In-holdings</u>: We are concerned that "In-holdings"- (Private Lands)within this unit are going to have a serious adverse affect on the State's ability to effectively manage this unit. In addition these private parcels of Lands could at any time be subdivided into to small lots. The State should see if they can get a permanent conservation easement on all of these private lands or even purchase them. I realize that the LURC does control all development in the unorganized areas of the State. • <u>Horses</u>: I have nothing against horses and neither does my wife, but there also has to be limits placed on where and when they can be allowed to go and what they are used for. Unshodded horses cause very little damage as opposed to those with hardened steel shoes. Trails must be kept at minimum pitch and on high -dry ground. Each rider should be responsible for his or her animal's dung. Horse riders should have to pay a small trail construction and maintenance fee. • <u>ATVs</u>: In our opinion, seeing how much damage that ATVs have done in SW Maine, we would recommend that NO ATVS be allowed on any lands within this unit, until such time that hardened surface roads/trails can be built to accommodate them. If the ATV clubs want to post a construction, repair and maintenance bond and assist the State in the development and construction of ATV trails and physically assist in their maintenance as needed, then we would go along with those plans. These ATV trail locations should be very restricted, keeping in mind that resource protection is of the highest priority. • <u>Ecological Reserves</u>: No ATV or snowmobile trails should be allowed in any Ecological Reserves!! We would however be in favor of developing backpacking, cross country skiing and snowshoeing trails, in addition to backcountry primitive tent camping sites. Walk in-walk out and provide your own self contained cooking stoves- no camp fires of any type should be allowed!! In addition traditional hunting, fishing, trapping ,white-water rafting, and canoeing. • <u>Wildlife and Botanical Resources</u>: Protection of natural communities is also critical, and there are numerous plant and animals communities that are very rare and/or protected by either State and/or Federal Laws. These must all costs be preserved in perpetuity!! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>In-holdings</u>: There are very few in-holdings in the Seboomook Unit. They include seven small camplots on Seboomook Lake, three small camplots on Canada Falls Lake, the dam lots retained by Great Lakes Hydro America, a commercial campground on Seboomook Lake which is leased (the Bureau plans to acquire the lands associated with this lease); and a number of small camplots on Moosehead Lake. None of the camplots are large enough to be subdivided. • <u>Horses</u>: The Bureau will designate appropriate areas for horseback riding trails and will manage the use of the trails to avoid environmental damage and conflicts with hunting and other uses. The Bureau anticipates these trails will be multi-use trails (especially in the winter), and will work out a collaborative arrangement with Pittston Farm for the cost and maintenance of these trails. • <u>ATVs</u>: See previous responses in Part I related to ATVs. • <u>Ecological Reserves</u>: The Bureau's <u>Integrated Resource Policy for Public Reserved and Nonreserved Lands, State Parks and State Historic Sites</u> (BP&L, Dec 18, 2000) incorporates the statutory limits on motorized trails in ecological reserves: "Existing snowmobile and all-terrain vehicle trails and roads may be allowed to continue in Ecological Reserves where they are well designed and built, are situated in safe locations, have minimal adverse impact on the values for which the reserve was created, and cannot be reasonably relocated outside of the reserve." Criteria for new trails require, in addition, that the trail be a "crucial link" in a regional trail system. • <u>Wildlife and Botanical Resources</u>: The Bureau has designated Special Protection zones around significant plant communities and the habitat of wildlife species that are rare, endangered or of special concern within the unit.

- Draw down of Canada Falls Lake is excellent right where it is and should be held at this level or even less if possible! Draw down of Seboomook Lake is going in the right direction and every effort should be made to minimize this as much as possible.
- Although in our opinion EVERY WETLAND is an important eco-system, there appear to be numerous ones in the Seboomook unit that have very special significance. These must be protected at all costs from all types of human encroachment!! There is a very serious need for a great deal more study as far as wildlife and fisheries are concerned in this unit and we whole heartedly agree that no development plans should be formulated until ALL of these studies are 100% complete!!
- Forest management: There also appears to be a need for the Professional Foresters to do an intensive compartmentalization of the Unit to bring this Unit back up to full wildlife habitat standards. Our Prescription would be for a balanced hard wood/soft wood mix where possible given the soil, water and ground conditions, especially in those areas are all bodies of water and wetlands.
- Roads: A very careful study must be undertaken by all members of the management team in determining which of the existing roads and trails are of ABSOLUTE VITAL necessity and permanently close those that are not!! All of these roads should be water barred, blocked/diked/ditched to exclude any and ALL types of motorized equipment, top-soiled, seeded /mulched and trees planted there-on.

- Mountain bikes: The use of mountain bikes should be discouraged as next to ATVs they cause unbelievable loss of soil and trail erosion and destruction, and that is a fact!
- ATV on snowmobile trails: Another thing to be VERY CAREFULL of is allowing ATVs to use Snowmobile trails! We have seen it time and again where this has happened and the outcome is devastating to the point that there is almost always total destruction of the snowmobile trail or trails.

St. Johns Ponds Parcel.

- Again it looks like access is a big issue that needs to be dealt with. In view of the fact that this parcel is an ecological reserve there really isn't much that can be done here except for the following recommendations: Have the perimeter surveyed, boundary marked and posted with signs to the effect that "the land behind this sign property of the State of Maine-Ecological Reserve". No motor vehicles of any kind are allowed except in designated areas-ONLY!" All roads that can be used for motorized vehicular travel MUST BE PERMANENTLY CLOSED, except for a small graveled parking area on the SE corner of Third St. John Pond. From there we would want to see a foot trail only. This hiking trail could be used to access about 15 backcountry tent platforms for camping. This trail hiking and backpacking would be exactly as

- Lake Drawdowns: The Bureau does not regulate the drawdowns on the lakes within the Unit. That is done through a federal hydropower licensing process.

- Forest Management: Bureau timber harvest prescriptions are prepared by professional foresters according to Bureau policies, with input from staff specialists. The Bureau does generally manage for a balanced hard wood/soft wood mix, depending on site conditions; and other needs such as deer wintering areas. See also the Timber Management recommendations in the Plan and also the section on Monitoring and Evaluation related to Timber Harvests.

- Roads: The Bureau has not determined as yet which of the woods roads put in place by the previous owner will be retained as part of the Bureau's forest management road system, and of those, which may be open for public use, whether motorized or non-motorized. BPL will evaluate all roads to determine which are needed for forest management, and which should be discontinued and revegetated, and as directed in the Plan, will work with an Advisory Committee concerning the recreational use of these roads.

- Mountain bikes: The Bureau evaluates potential environmental impacts before siting or designing any trails, and is aware of the potential for erosion from mountain biking.
- ATV on snowmobile trails: As above, The Bureau evaluates potential environmental impacts before siting or designing any trails, and is aware of the potential for erosion from ATVuse.

- As an ecological reserve, the St. John Ponds parcel will be off-limits to motorized vehicles. The Plan recommends that no facilities be developed on this parcel, and that existing management roads be closed except if needed for fire control. Note that under LURC regulations, the Bureau may not allow public vehicular access within one-quarter mile of this "remote pond;" hence the Bureau is choosing to close management roads that are not needed for fire control, as no management will be taking place on this parcel other than fore control.

done on the AT. No wood fires to be built unless it is a life or death situation. A seasonal Ranger Cabin would be necessary. This cabin would be very "Rustic" and provide only the barest of amenities. Sleep 2, outside privy, meals cooked on Coleman Stove and light With Coleman lantern(s). It would not be built to be lived in during the winter. The ranger would be in attendance from May 1 to October 1. No ATVs, snowmobiles, trail bikes, cross country motor bikes would be allowed except on the water(ice) portion of Third St. John Pond (snowmobilies only)!! I envision a tough time telling the snowmobilers that area is closed to snowmobiling after they have been allowed to be on it for so many years, but this the stipulation and we must follow through with it!!

Baker Lake Parcel:

- It appears to us that the Baker Lake Parcel is pretty well set other than trying to find another location for the public boat launch and closing the existing one permanently.
- Perhaps a nature scenic trail could be built around the lake? This area has a number of very rare plant communities and a few wildlife species as well that deserve our protection in perpetuity. By one means or another, we must provide the general population the opportunity to visit and experience these rare and beautiful sites and wildlife
- The mere fact that Baker pond is home of one the VERY FEW Muskellunge fisheries west of the Ohio River, will in itself bring many thousands of anglers from all over the Region and Canada. I personally consider this a VERY IMPORTANT fishery, and instead of the IF&W trying to eliminate it, they should be encouraging it's proliferation!
- We are not in favor of "group campsites" any where around or near this Lake! If there are to be campsites here, they should be like those we proposed for the St. Johns Parcel, i.e. Carry in- Carry -out on your back -LEAVE NO TRACE Appalachian Trail type Camping only!!

Big Spencer Mountain:

- Being a Ecological Reserve, here again there isn't much to be done except close off all ATV and Snowmobile Trails that encroach into this area. Here again signs need to be posted on ALL ATV and snowmobile trails that lead into this area, that the Area IS CLOSED TO ALL MOTORIZED USE Except for those types as allowed in designated areas (Automobiles only).
- However there will always be a need for a FOOT TRAIL to the top from one or both ends. If the existing trail to the top is too far gone then close it off permanently, but not before a new for FOOT TRAVEL ONLY has been established.
- The Fire Tower and the "In-Holding" boundary should be surveyed ,marked and posted, as well as the boundary of the Ecological Reserve.
- The DOC/BPL can have the naturalists set up signs and information kiosks to educate the public on what is allowed and not allowed and the attributes, natural communities, visual resources.

- The Plan does not include development of any nature trails for Baker Lake. This parcel is a draw to anglers and canoeists, and presently there is not a demand for more nature trails in this area. The rare plants and animals on this parcel are located in wetlands best accessed by water. The current boat launch needs improvement, but does provide access to those who may wish to see these features.
- The Bureau does not establish IF&W policy. However, their policy related to the Muskellunge fishery is consistent with our management guidelines supporting native species.
- The Bureau establishes group campsites where there is a need to accommodate groups recreating on Bureau lands. This area is the start of many St. John River canoe trips, which often involves groups rather than individuals.
- The Bureau understands the need to provide information to recreation users about its properties, and as standard procedure, develops informational brochures about each unit and posts these and other information, including applicable rules, at trailheads and common other points of entry to its lands.
- The Plan recommends stabilizing or replacing the existing trail and limiting it to foot traffic. See also the response in Part I of these comments.
- The in-holding has been surveyed. It is 2.3 acres, and at the top of a mountain where there is no vehicular access. The risks of a trespass are therefore minimal.
- See comment above (first under Big Spencer Mountain:)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We suggest that the Old Wardens Cabin as well as the two "Squatters Cabins" be bulldozed and covered over, otherwise sooner or later someone will torch it and start a forest fire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan calls for these structures to be removed.
<p>From: Jeff Bagley, Fisheries Biologist, IF&W Greenville (June 20, 2005)</p>	
<p>In reviewing the (Preliminary) Plan, I have just a few comments regarding fisheries management in the Seboomook Unit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing regulations in place for waters in the Seboomook Unit are currently meeting our management objectives. • We feel that access such as trails and launches to waters within the Seboomook Unit are currently adequate. • Note: on page 22 of the Plan under bullet North Branch flow augmentation, line 3; it is stated that flow will provide another fall big river <u>salmon</u> fishery, this should read <u>brook trout</u> fishery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan does not recommend any changes to IF&W fishing regulations except for limitations on personal watercraft and boat motor size. These relate to the Bureau's recreation management objectives, and not to fishery management. • Boat access facilities on Seboomook and Canada Falls Lakes are owned by Great Lakes Hydro America. The recommended river trails are for nature walks, not fishing access. • This error (replacing salmon with brook trout) was corrected in the draft Plan issued in September of 2005.
<p>From: Alexandra Conover, Guide, Willimantic (July 27, 2005)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding the Seboomook Management Plan, here are just my most important observations, coming from the perspective of a wilderness guide conducting regional and global ecotourism canoe trips in this area. • P. 53 of the (Preliminary) Plan: "The Bureau plans to continue to improve and upgrade these roads . . . etc." These Seboomook lands are rare and unique when compared with public lands in the lower 48 states. The water is drinkable, there are wild native trout populations and wildlife is abundant. Though the woods have been harvested heavily, they are still visually pleasing from the water. Places like this are extremely rare in the U.S. • The quickest way to change the atmosphere and character of this place is to upgrade roads and develop campgrounds and motorboat access ramps for this only attracts the least responsible type of user and eliminates the eco-tourists that are generally responsible, low impact, and prefer quiet undeveloped camping areas. The day or weekend high impact user already has the majority of Maine's public reserved lands and state parks to use, let alone all of KOA and America to drive, car camp and motor around in. • So why are we, the state of Maine, even contemplating improving access and roads when we know from experience that it will lead to more public pressure for facilities and ultimately create more management problems? All of these "improvements" cost money and in the long run degrade the Seboomook lands to a level of use that can be found almost anywhere in America. • Why aren't we protecting and promoting what is unique in Maine? Do we want Seboomook to become Sebago Lake? Why would anyone drive as far as Seboomook to arrive at a place that delivers an outdoor experience that can much more easily be gotten in even central Maine? • <u>Recommendations</u>: Abandon the S. Seboomook road (\$17,000m proposed '05 cost) and the Cut-Off Road (\$5,000). <u>Reasoning</u>: It is duplicatory. The Golden Road on the North and its two spur roads – one to Seboomook Dam and the other to both Canada Falls Dam and Kings High Landing provide ample access to the Seboomook Unit. 	<p>This letter articulates a case for discontinuing the Seboomook Road and making the area between Pittston Farm and Seboomook Campground essentially a non-motorized roadless area. The Bureau chose not to accept this proposal, for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Seboomook Road, which has existed since the mid 1800's, is key to the Bureau's ability to achieve a number of management goals for this Unit, including provision guaranteed access and free day use, and the ability to manage the forest for wildlife, recreation, and timber values. • Because \$19 million of the approximately \$20 million used to purchase the Seboomook Unit was contributed by the federal Forest Legacy program, timber management must be a significant part of the management of this Unit. This program is aimed at preventing the conversion of forest to non-forest uses, and thereby protecting an array of traditional forest uses, including timber management. The Seboomook Road is necessary for management of timber on the Unit. • Discontinuing the Seboomook Road would require visitors to Seboomook Campground, to the West Branch, and to camps along the northern shore of Moosehead Lake, to travel over the Golden Road to reach these destinations. The Golden Road is a road where logging trucks travel at often considerable speed and have the right-of-way. Many of the visitors to Seboomook Campground travel in or tow recreational motor homes. Visitors to the West Branch include anglers towing small boats and recreational boaters sporting a canoe or kayak atop their cars. Putting this kind of traffic out onto the Golden Road, when the Seboomook Road provides a safer and shorter route, is not a responsible policy. • The Bureau is currently considering options for accomplishing its objective of free day use for the Unit. Having this road system, which departs from the NMW gated system just after the 20-Mile gate, is important to this objective as it avoids the use of NMW roads, whereas the option of using the Golden Road to gain access to the eastern end of the Seboomook parcel

Result: Focused (versus scattered) specific access points which make management easier and problems fewer. The Department of Conservation saves \$22,000.

would most likely subject users to NMW fees.

- The roadless area created by discontinuing the Seboomook Road could only be truly non-motorized backcountry if the Moosehead Loop snowmobile trail, one of the busiest snowmobile trails in the state, was relocated off the Unit, a move that would seriously impair its functionality and negatively impact the regional snowmobile trail network and the businesses it supports, particularly Pittston Farm.
- There is no evidence supporting the statement that motor vehicle recreationists are the "least responsible type of user." The Bureau rejects this unfair characterization.

From: Jennifer Mills, Pittston Farm (July 31, 2005)

The following are my opinions and comments regarding horseback riding and trails in the Seboomook Unit. After reviewing the Integrated Resource Policy established for parks and land use I give the following comments:

- It was clear after reviewing the policy that dispersed activity includes horseback riding, snowshoeing, nature observation and snowmobiling:
 1. Sec. 4A Policy. Sec. 23 Trail Establishment Policy: A variety of land trail opportunities will be provided on Bureau-managed land including trails for horseback riding, historic interpretation, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and canoe portage.
 2. On page 63 Sec. 25 of the plan Horseback riding shall be permitted on bureau-managed land where guide-lines are established to ensure safety, control erosion and variety of riding opportunities.
- It is our intent to develop, hopefully along with the Bureau of Parks and Lands' assistance, bridle trails from the current discontinued wood roads near the farm. We have tentatively reviewed the area, and one road called "Windy Pitch" just down from the original "Pittston Y", across the Seboomook thoroughfare, is a nice area for riding. There are also many other wood logging roads with a few miles of the farm that will offer a variety of rides for enjoying the surrounding area. The trails include streams and a variety of terrains, flat and hilly. We have the necessary facilities for this new recreational opportunity and will be making modifications as necessary for improvements and establishment of this beginning in hopefully the 2006 summer or early fall season.
- We have done quite a lot of marketing work with various horse associations throughout Maine, New England and on the internet as well. All associations contacted have been very positive about the new recreational opportunity for horseback riding in the North Maine Woods. They have indicated their current places for riding in the southern part of the state are becoming closed or limited to them. They have told us to let them know as soon as possible when we are ready to open the riding and they will be there. Our research since last winter indicates, the opportunities are very limited for this type of horseback riding and accommodations (food and lodging for both) in our state. We discovered two or three, including Acadia

- The IRP does address horseback riding trails as an opportunity to be provided on public reserved lands "where the activity does not conflict with other uses allowed by the Resource Allocation System."
- The Bureau is interested in working with Historic Pittston Farm to establish horse trails, subject to a comprehensive review of the road system on the Unit and determination of appropriate recreation uses, to be developed in consultation with the Seboomook Unit Management Plan Advisory Committee.

<p>National Park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will be developing packages, for this activity and that will include all the necessary provisions for customers. Our barn is on the National Historic Register and we will be increasing and improving our current stalls into boxed stalls to house the horses. We also will have in residence at least one team of work horses for conducting cultural log twitching demonstrations for the farm, as well as other activities involving their traditional use. We will also have our own pleasure riding horses. • We will be developing, marking trails and producing a map for distribution to horseback riding customers on the 44 plus acres of Pittston Farm as well as utilizing the Seboomook unit adjacent to us. • We feel honored, and anxious to work with the State of Maine in bringing horseback riding back to this area after a long absence. It is a natural fit for Historic Pittston Farm, since historically it was the place where the “Teamsters lived, and where they cared for the horses that hauled the logs out of the woods.” This lumbering occupation established Great Northern Paper Co. and our great state of Maine as a lumbering giant in the world in the 1920’s. What a great opportunity to mold historic, cultural, and participatory tourism recreational activity into a great vacation of learning for our citizens and all other visitors as well. 	
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From: Doug Kane, Wildlife Biologist, IF&W Greenville (September 7, 2005)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overriding wildlife issue in the Seboomook Unit is deer wintering area (DWA) management concerns. Much of the mature softwood cover type left in this unit has deer wintering activity. We have both mapped areas and areas that still need to be fleshed out and mapped. • In addition, there is an extensive old burn site with residual birch/aspen where we hope the Bureau will move fairly soon to do some fairly heavy handed cutting to improve the area for grouse/woodcock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan recommends review of current deer yard designations and expansion of these where appropriate. As staff and budgets allow, the Bureau will coordinate with MDIF&W on aerial and ground surveys of deer wintering areas on the Unit. • The Plan recommends establishing a ruffed grouse management area in the area of over-mature aspen in the Carry Brook drainage, consistent with this recommendation from IF&W.
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From: Sandra Neily, Greenville (Sept 29, 2005)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could we use “people powered” in the planning document instead of non-motorized? • <u>Winter Remote Areas</u>: If the intent is to “manage Canada Falls and the South Branch for a remote non-motorized winter experience,” the issue of the Canada Falls Road (not owned by the state) is an important one. This might take a cooperative agreement between the state and the landowner to close or post the road during the winter (except when the road is plowed to support logging operations.) A remote-feeling and fairly quiet winter experience in this area cannot be had when sled traffic is on the Canada Falls Road . . . even if users are on a trail near the river. Sled traffic, in general, will need to be carefully managed onto a focused trail system and “people powered” recreation areas clearly marked and facilitated (roads closed and gated; parking available) in order to accommodate diverse users. (This would also apply to winter use in the St. John Ponds Parcel). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bureau has used the term “non-motorized” in all of its Planning documents to date and feels it encompasses a broader range of recreation activities than “people-powered,” including, for example, horseback riding and dogsledding. • <u>Winter Remote Areas</u>: The Bureau will work with the snowmobile clubs to ensure that the Canada Falls Road is not groomed for snowmobiles. In addition, the Bureau will develop informational materials to advise the recreating public about remote areas to be set aside for non-motorized uses, and will distribute these through a variety of means, including making them available at Pittston Farm and through the local snowmobile clubs. The Bureau recognizes that it will take time to establish new patterns of use in this area, and will work to avoid conflicts by providing ample and attractive opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized winter recreationists. The Bureau will assess the effectiveness of this approach over time and will take additional measures as needed and appropriate.
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Currently winter sled traffic spreads out into the entire parcel so there will be the challenge of changing some use patterns anyway.

- South Seboomook Road: I suggest that (DOC) explore the idea of putting the road south of Seboomook Lake “to bed” and reserving it as a people powered trail. This option would save significant for repair and upkeep and since we’ve had several seasons without it being a useful road, we know that traffic users can access the resources here as well as Seboomook Wilderness campground without the road. Closing the road would allow the lake to offer a more remote wild-feeling experience, rather than trying to squeeze the remote land experience between two heavily used roads (Golden Road and Seboomook Road). We have an important opportunity to return this area to a more remote experience and enhance the quality of its wildlife habitat by not repairing the road where there are alternatives for access to the southern portions of Seboomok Lake and the north shores of Moosehead Lake.
- Creating a wilderness and trail matrix that supports the addition of the Big W lands: There is significant potential for a large contiguous block of wilderness lands and trail systems in this region if the Big W area can be conserved during the Plum Creek Concept Plan “opportunity.” There seems to be a consensus forming that the last remaining undeveloped shorelines on the northwest shore of Moosehead be conserved. The “line” above which future intense development will be considered unacceptable “sprawl” is very clearly drawn below these lands by all interested stakeholders at this time. Several camp owners in the region are also interested in beginning the discussion of a trail system that would offer “people powered” campsites on the lake (as well as motorized ones), a hiking/ biking trail that followed the edge of the lake (where possible) and trails that used the elevations in Big W Township for their value as remote experiences. There are ridges and views in this area that allow for varied terrain and stunning visual experiences.
- Lakeside trail: The Moosehead Region lacks a lakeside trail that connects up to remote feeling (wild feeling) experiences. The Northern Forest Canoe Trail is lacking campsites in this important leg of its trail. The entire region is lacking a high quality, destination bike trail system and by combining the Big W lands to the Seboomook lands we could achieve both high quality large landscape wildlife habitat conservation and a wilderness-type experience (a novel one that would also host the alternative snowmobile trail at the same time as that section has high value as a remote sled trail). Bike trails could access the region below the current gate and that would solve the problem of how to get “bikes” into NMW territory. This option might also reduce pressure at the gate as access to the Seboomook lands could also come through the Big W region.
- Seboomook Wilderness Campground shuttle: When I think of the campground I think of Rick (Sylvester) perhaps offering a shuttle for his campers across the cove

- South Seboomook Road: See previous response to Alexandra Connover’s July 27, 2005 comments.

- Creating a wilderness and trail matrix: The Bureau understands that a regional trail system may be developed in the future as is evidenced by two current proposals, including the Plum Creek Concept Plan and the Western Mountains Foundation all-season trail initiative. The Bureau will evaluate opportunities to establish connections to trails on adjoining lands as they arise, and in the context of the Bureau’s management objectives and current allocations. In addition, this is a Plan for the next ten years. When the Plan is revised, changes in the surrounding lands and new recreational opportunities will be assessed, and allocations will be revisited. The Bureau’s current management allocation for lands abutting Big W township is Timber Management. The Bureau manages its timber resources to produce a multi-aged forest that includes large trees, supports wildlife and creates an attractive environment for recreation. This area would be a compatible adjunct to any future wilderness area.
- Lakeside trail: The Plan recommends re-establishing the historic Carry Brook canoe portage connecting Moosehead Lake to Seboomook Lake, and establishing a campsite on the portage route if a suitable site can be located. This would enhance the Northern Forest Canoe Trail. The Plan also recommends evaluating the suitability and need for additional water-access campsites on Moosehead Lake. BPL will work to resolve issues with NMW that limit recreation options on the Seboomook lands.
- Seboomook Wilderness Campground shuttle: As noted in the Plan, one of the unique aspects of this Unit is the opportunity for public-private partnerships that enhance the value of the state lands to the public. This Unit has

<p>to hike, bike, or kayak into this remote system and I see a shuttle operation that would daily drop people (and their canoes, kayaks or bikes) either at the southern end of Seboomook Lake to explore it for the day or across the cove to explore the Big W lands and trails. This is the kind of experience that gets written up in Outside and Backpacker magazines because the experience is so unusual and high quality.</p>	<p>both Seboomook Campground and Pittston Farm as embedded enterprises that both depend on good management and can contribute value to the public using these lands.</p>
<p>From: Dan Legere, Guide, Greenville (Oct 8, 2005)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am pleased with your Proposed Vision for the Management of the Seboomook Unit. I didn't see anything about allowing mountain bikes or ATVs through the gate onto state lands. Has this been addressed? • I'm fine with the Big Spencer Mountain draft allocations. It would be nice if there was a snowmobile trail developed to a vista on the parcel if allowed at all. What are the unauthorized structures on the southern edge of the property? • I am definitely in favor of pursuing the possibility of more remote water access camp sites on Canada Falls. It's a beautiful place well suited for remote recreational use. • I have serious concerns about developing a large campsite for extensive ATV use on the Seboomook Unit. While driving to the East Outlet of the Kennebec River each day to guide fishermen I get a chance to view the ATV trail, governed by a club, that goes along Route 6 for a stretch before the river. It is truly nothing more than a muddy rutted mess that can't be healthy for the land around it. If it was state land it would be shut down. I can only assume that if ATV use is allowed off the established road system problems will surface. • One final note of appreciation for you and your dedicated staff professionals. If I had a large tract of land I could only hope that I would care for that as well as the Bureau of Parks and Lands watches over our public lands for us and the next generation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vision speaks to having mountain bike and ATV trails on the Unit; and the management recommendations include examining alternatives to the present arrangement with NMW that will enable the Bureau to manage this Unit according to its mission. See also Part V. of this appendix, which elaborates further on this issue. • See Part I of this appendix for the Bureau's response to concerns about the snowmobile trail on Big Spencer Mountain. The unauthorized structures are some old buildings that are part of a camp that is not authorized by the Bureau. • The Plan recommends that if a regional ATV trail network extends to the Unit, that the Bureau consider establishing dedicated camping areas for ATV users. The Plan does not suggest that these would be "large;" and does not envision an "extensive" ATV system on the Unit. Any ATV trails and facilities would be developed with due consideration to other users and sensitive natural resources on the Unit. See also the Bureau response regarding ATV use on the Unit in Part I of this appendix. Regarding the trail along Route 6, that trail has since been repaired and stabilized. • Appreciation noted and appreciated!
<p>From: Jym St. Pierre, RESTORE (Oct 8, 2005)</p>	
<p>There appear to be many good aspects to the 9/13/05 draft resource allocations. However, I am concerned that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are only two areas totaling 465 acres in the Seboomook Lake Parcel where Special Protection would be the dominant use. • There are no areas in the Canada Falls-South Branch Parcel where Special Protection would be the dominant use. • The size of the area in the Baker Lake Parcel where Special Protection would be the dominant use is not specified. • There are no areas listed for ecological reserves in the Seboomook Lake, Canada Falls-South Branch, and Baker Lake Parcels. Would the areas identified for Special Protection officially become ecoreserves? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Final Plan includes a table that summarizes the allocations across the entire Unit, and a narrative description of each allocation and the specific areas designated for each across the Unit (See Section VI of the Plan, Resource Allocations). • Allocations for Special Protection are determined based on the natural resource characteristics of the land. The Maine Natural Areas Program conducted field investigations of each parcel in the Unit, and identified those areas that qualified for Special Protection. This is a science-based allocation; it is not determined as a policy decision. All areas appropriate for Special Protection have been so designated, barring any future research that may find species or plant communities missed in the initial survey. • Ecological reserves are a type of Special Protection area; however, special protection areas are not also ecological

	reserves. See our previous response regarding ecological reserves under John Rust's comments of November 3, 2006.
From: Sherwin Start, Sanford (Oct 15, 2005)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have reviewed your proposed draft of the Seboomook Management Plan. It is a very well thought out Plan except for one area-ATVS ! ATVS are going to literally the destroy the Wilderness aspect for both wildlife and humans!! Allowing ATVS, and enforcing their compliance will cost the DOC a great deal of money and manpower and WILL require that a Ranger be on duty YEAR-ROUND !!! Also allowing ATVS is going to create a problem with our neighbor, namely NMWand other land owners such as Plum Creek!! My wife is a Wildlife Conservationist and I am a Natural Resource Conservationist. If ATVS are going to be allowed in Seboomook,we WILL NOT be visiting that Area!! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Part I of this appendix.
From: Christopher Silsbee, Caribou (Oct 26, 2005)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have read the plan and found it to be very informative and well organized. I was glad to see some of the suggestions that were made by the general public in the plan and appreciate how the State has taken the time to hear public comments and listen to concerns at the public meetings that were held. I believe this plan is a good foundation for the management of this area. I just hope that as the unit is developed some of the expressed interest in new recreational facilities is reviewed. The plan really addresses the recreation and visual consideration of the unit but with a strong support of special protection with the help of the designated wildlife management areas. With a unit this size, the multi-use concept will be successful if this plan is carried out. I'm pleased that the state is continuing to acquire new lands as they come available and is dedicated to promote recreational activities while at the same time manage these lands correctly for the enjoyment of future generations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments and support appreciated. The Bureau manages its lands for the public, and values public input in the development of its management plans. This is especially important for new acquisitions, like the Seboomook Unit.
From: Alan Hutchinson, Forest Society of Maine (Oct 31, 2005)	
<p>The Forest Society of Maine extends its compliments to the Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands for its work in developing the management plan for the Seboomook Unit, which includes Big Spencer Mountain. The Forest Society of Maine (FSM) made substantial investments of funds, time, and other resources in conserving these lands as part of the West Branch Campaign, in partnership with the state, and have a long-term commitment to ensuring appropriate management and stewardship of these lands. We feel that the draft plan captures the intent of the West Branch project, addresses the key ecological and recreational issues, and balances the various uses (ecological, recreational, cultural, and sustainable forestry) in a manner that fits FSM's understanding and view of this parcel and the region. Within the draft plan, however, there are several specific questions, issues, or observations that FSM wishes to submit for</p>	

consideration as you work on the final draft that will be presented at public meetings. They are as follows:

- **Introductory Statements:** It seems that some form of introductory paragraph would be appropriate explaining the origins of this parcel as part of the larger West Branch project and the significant role the Forest Society of Maine played in conserving these lands. For example, Big Spencer Mountain was conserved by a \$3 million private fundraising campaign done by FSM. We then gave the mountain to the state as an ecological reserve. Mention could also be made that the West Branch project protected 329,000 acres in total: 282,000 acres under FSM easement and 47,000 as state fee lands, and that they are linked geographically and via the state's recreational access easement that FSM donated.
- **The 240-acre Mud Cove Bog:** It is appropriately identified in the plan as a Special Protection area. This area was acquired earlier and separate from the larger parcel. At that time there was some thought that it should be larger than 240 acres we were able to buy at that time, to include some additional older stands of timber (primarily spruce, I think). Your staff has probably already done so, but the boundaries as shown on the map should be verified to insure that the older timber was adequately considered, and that it is not focused solely on the rare plant wetlands.
- **Jet Ski ban on Baker Lake:** The draft plan recommends that BPL pursue a ban on personal watercraft use on Seboomook Lake, primarily due to the nesting loon population and their special status due to the North Cape funding. Pursuing a similar ban for Baker Lake was proposed by some at the September advisory group meeting due to a general sense that they would be inappropriate in that North Woods setting. FSM urges BPL to pursue it due to nesting loons and the North Cape funding, as well. Baker Lake was one of the identified loon nesting lakes in the surveys.
- **Forestry and wildlife management:** The draft plan states one of the forestry goals for wildlife was to manage for ruffed grouse and woodcock habitat, with a special focus within some of the old aspen stands – especially in the Carry Brook region. FSM expresses our support for that management goal.
- **Socatean Pond:** Is Socatean Pond a designated Remote Pond (if not, does it warrant that level of recognition), and have local fisheries biologists been asked if the draft management recommendations adequately address the fisheries values?
- **Big Spencer Mountain:** FSM has a couple of concerns/questions:
 1. BPL is recommending that snowmobiling be discontinued from the trail to the Ranger's cabin. The draft plan recommends the state pursue an alternative, high-vista destination trail if the Big Spencer trail is eliminated. FSM adds its support to the goal of DOC securing an alternative if the Big Spencer trail is discontinued.
 2. The plan recommends that the Ranger's Cabin be

- Acknowledgement of the key role of the Forest Society of Maine (FSM) in the acquisition of the Seboomook Unit and the importance of the surrounding West Branch easement held by the FSM, is included in the Plan in Section III. The Planning Context, under *Acquisition History*.
- **The 240-acre Mud Cove Bog:** The existing protection area is mostly shrub-scrub wetlands. At the time MNAP did the initial field work in this area (2000), there were several hundred acres of old spruce flats immediately west of this bog. These were cut prior to the acquisition. There are still some mature spruce flats east of the wetland, with occasional gaps caused by blowdown, which the Bureau will evaluate during its prescription process to determine if any of it should be added to the adjacent Mud Cove Special Protection area.
- **Jet Ski ban on Baker Lake:** The Plan now includes a recommendation to pursue a ban on personal watercraft on Baker Lake.
- **Socatean Pond:** Socatean Pond is a LURC designated remote pond; accordingly motorized access will be prohibited (except for snowmobiles). The Bureau has also designated a 330-foot wildlife management zone around the pond.
- **Big Spencer Mountain:**
 1. Snowmobile trail: See the response provided in Part I of this appendix.
 2. Cabin: The Plan now allows a two-year window for the Forest Society or another organization to find the funds and remove the cabin to another location. The cabin is not compatible with the purposes of the reserve. An interpretive panel will be prepared to be placed at the trailhead to the Mountain, however, to acknowledge the history of this mountain as an important fire watch

“removed” – we assume meaning torn down or burned. FSM supports the recommendation to remove the ancillary shed, but we are strongly opposed to removing the Ranger’s cabin. The cabin is of historic significance and adds to the cultural history and experience of Big Spencer. We strongly urge DOC to not remove the cabin, at least not at this time. During the analysis of Big Spencer Mountain as an ecological reserve that led to the FSM capital campaign to acquire the mountain and give it to the people of the state of Maine, the cabin was viewed as compatible with the ecological values to be protected, and in fact was viewed as a positive attribute to the property and worthy of protection. It should not be removed and alternatives should be explored to maintain it and to use its potential as a historic way station along the trail. Consideration should also be given to allowing some vegetation management nearby the cabin for the purpose of maintaining the view from the cabin.

3. The fire tower. This is not mentioned in the plan since it is not on the state property, but perhaps we need to be paying attention to its future as well. Like the Ranger’s cabin it provides a window to the historic past of Maine’s North Woods and a unique destination viewing opportunity.

station. The site of the cabin will be kept open to maintain the scenic views.

3. The fire tower. The Plan does not address the fire tower as it is not on Bureau land. However, given the likelihood that the out-parcel at the top of the mountain will remain an important site for communications infrastructure, and the attractiveness of the views from the summit, maintaining the tower would add little to impacts already present from uses at the summit, and the Bureau supports efforts to retain the tower.

From: Suzanne AuClair, Rockwood (Oct 31, 2005)

Below are comments submitted for the Seboomook Unit:

- Canoe/Small boat launch/Campsites: Establish some other public campsites and a primitive boat/canoe launch site along the piece of the south shore of Seboomook Lake that extends from Pittston Farm to Seboomook Dam. We're not sure how it is currently being used.
- Horse trails: We oppose the establishment of horse trails on public trust lands. Allow private business to conduct private business and profit off their own land.
- In-holdings: Future Unit plans should include the elimination of private in-holdings within the public trust unit.

- Canoe/Small boat launch/Campsites: The Final Plan does not recommend any additional canoe/boat launches. It does recommend establishing some additional water access campsites, with the expectation that this area will increasingly be popular as the start of the Penobscot River Corridor trip, and will attract those seeking a lakeside remote camping experience.

Horse Trails: The Bureau manages its lands for a wide range of public recreational opportunities including horseback riding, where it does not conflict with other allowed uses. This Unit may be uniquely situated, with the stable facilities available at Pittston Farm, to provide a backcountry horseback riding opportunity. This opportunity, which depends on a public-private partnership, is uncommon in the region and does not exist elsewhere on state reserved lands. The Bureau anticipates these trails will be multi-use trails (especially in the winter), and will work out a collaborative arrangement with Pittston Farm for the cost and maintenance of these trails. It is our view that collaborations of this kind will increase, not diminish the value of the public lands for public recreation, and will, at the same time, support the local economy.

- In-holdings: There are very few in-holdings in the Seboomook Unit. They include seven small camplots on Seboomook Lake, three small camplots on Canada Falls Lake, the dam lots retained by Great Lakes Hydro America, a number of small camplots on Moosehead Lake, and a commercial campground on Seboomook Lake which is leased. The Bureau intends to acquire the

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Kings High Landing</u>: The current number of campsites at Kings Landing is more than sufficient. It is not a good site to designate for group camping. It absolutely should not be considered as a dedicated camping area for ATV groups. It is a wildlife sensitive area, especially known for waterfowl and eagles. Large group camping would negatively impact the wildlife by its proximity to high/loud human use. We use this area every year, at different times of the seasons, so have observed the kind of human and animal traffic this area receives. Each time, we have either been the sole people there or there have been perhaps two campsites being used. To date, the number of campsites are very suitable to the amount of use and requires no change. The sites are also well appointed and well maintained. It is an excellent spot to promote a remote camping experience. Designated group sites would fare better located close to or at already established busy sites, such as at Canada Falls, Seboomook and Roll Dams. Kings Landing would be better suited to be managed with some protection and the continued wise use of its natural resources. • We very much appreciate the thoughtful manner by which the Seboomook Unit vision is being treated. It is, and hopefully will continue to be, quite an unencumbered area, a prime part of traditional Maine. 	<p>lands associated with the Seboomook Campground lease; the Bureau's approach to small in-holdings is to consider them on a case-by-case basis; and to acquire only if the property contains significant public values and there is a willing seller.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Kings High Landing</u>: The Bureau respects the views expressed about the potential impacts to wildlife from any expansion of the camping area, and its present low use. It already includes six campsites; we will monitor use and consider carefully whether this is an appropriate site for more drive-to campsites. The Plan has been amended to more generally recommend that any additional drive-to campsites be located in proximity to existing drive-to campsites.
<p>From: Diano Circo, Natural Resources Council of Maine (Oct 31, 2005)</p>	
<p>The Natural Resources Council of Maine (Council) supports many of the recommendations and prescriptions proposed in the draft Plan. There are some areas where we would like to clarify our support and offer additional comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council supports the draft proposal's management recommendations for the Big Spencer Mountain Parcel. Specifically, we strongly support discontinuing the snowmobile trail up Big Spencer Mountain and the removal of the warden's cabin. As was mentioned at the Advisory Committee meeting, motorized use of this trail is not in keeping with the spirit of Spencer Mountain's Ecological Reserve status. • We are also supportive of the recommendation to pursue a ban on personal watercraft for Seboomook Lake and Canada Falls Lake. Considering the specific emphasis on loon protection we think is also makes sense to pursue a personal watercraft ban on Baker Lake. Baker is relatively easily accessible by road and an important starting point for the St. John paddle trip. In time Baker could see increased pressure from personal watercraft. Pursuing a ban now may prevent future conflicts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See response to this issue in Part I of this appendix. • The Plan recommends that the Bureau pursue a ban on personal watercraft on Baker, Seboomook, and Canada Falls lakes.
<p>From: Alexandra Conover, Guide, Willimantic (Nov 4, 2005)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Seboomook Unit can be readily managed through default (whatever happens, happens, and we'll manage the Unit accordingly) or through careful considered thoughts as to what we want Seboomook to be 50 years from now. Will Seboomook be more like Baxter Park (People powered access and high quality wilderness experience) or more like the lower (below Rip Dam) West 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bureau has articulated a Vision for the Seboomook Unit that retains it remote character along the waterways and provides a wide range of recreational opportunities elsewhere. This vision has been carefully considered and debated in a thorough, public process, in keeping with the publicly-owned character of these lands.

<p>Branch Project (motor accessible and roadside, theme park feeling)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maine, and in particular, this Seboomook region, is one of the last places in this part of the world with a relatively wild area that can currently support multi-day water/woods based adventure tourism. • If we let Seboomook go the way of most of the other 34 state parks and 29 public reserved lands, we will continue to manage for everyone and therefore no one. Use of remoter parcels such as this one will continue to fall off. • To increase use of an area we have to have something clearly defined to the market of users. Is this a hunting game park? A remote flyfishing paradise? A family friendly remote North Woods heritage camping destination? An ATV theme park? If we encourage all of the above, Seboomook will never be known for anything in particular and therefore marketing the Unit will be difficult. • As a wilderness guide, having brought people canoeing and snowshoeing in the Maine woods for over thirty years, I cannot fail to notice that our guests have sought out Maine as a destination precisely because of its remote woodlands and waterways, not because of easy access to these places. Why? Because the world, not just New England or the lower 48 states, is rapidly running out of this globally valued commodity. And so is Maine. • <u>Recommendation:</u> Manage the Seboomook Unit waterways for quiet and heritage-based recreation: wildlife viewing, whitewater sports, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, hunting, trapping, snowshoeing, etc. This would mean no motorized vehicles on any of the waterways (frozen or open) within the unit: no ATVs, snowmobiles, boats, vehicles, jet skis, etc. <u>Reasoning:</u> We need Seboomook to stand out from all other state managed units. Right now it has the capacity to be unique in its remoteness and undeveloped character. For much of the year it can presently deliver to eco-tourists. However, nearly every other state managed unit in Maine can only deliver motorized or road-edge camping. Another reason for managing Seboomook for people-powered eco-tourism activities is we wilderness guides do not have even one multi-day use area free of motors for our guests. People-powered recreation and motorized waterway recreation do not mix. • I believe we have a golden opportunity to respond to the global eco-tourism market. This would put Seboomook in the forefront of what could become the first of many backcountry remote units managed for family heritage camping and remote heritage hunting, trapping, and fishing activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple-use does not mean all uses, for everyone, on all acres. Rather, it implies an allocation of uses best suited to each land area. See the Integrated Resource Policy. • The Plan recommends that the Bureau pursue a motor-size limit on Seboomook Lake, and on Canada Falls Lake if other landowners are in agreement. The Bureau chose not pursue a ban on all motors, since use of small motors on these lakes has had a long tradition that is compatible with a remote experience. This Unit has remote qualities that are significant and important to protect; but it is not a wilderness. See also the response provided to comments provided by Alexandra Conover dated July 27, 2005, suggesting the Seboomook Road be discontinued.
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From: Tim Obrey, Regional Fisheries Biologist, IF&W Greenville (Dec 2, 2005)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IF&W supports the draft plan and vision distributed by DOC in 9/05. We support the concept (and legislative mandate) of managing State lands for multiple use recreation. • IF&W would oppose making Seboomook and Canada Falls a non-motorized zone in the summer. These are large lakes that can sustain both motorized and non- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan does not call for a ban on motors on these lakes; it does recommend a motor size limit, however.
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motorized recreation. In the next several years we expect that GLHA will improve the existing boat launch facilities at the dam site on Canada Falls Lake and at Kings High Landing and the dam site on Seboomook as part of the relicensing agreement.

- The concept of making the South Branch/Canada Falls area a non-motorized zone in the winter months makes good sense. This will not impact existing, traditional uses as long as the snowmobile trail can be relocated.
- IF&W would like to maintain 2wd vehicle access to Kings High Landing, Seboomook Dam, Roll Dam, and the Burbank Campsites. The West Branch below Seboomook Dam has a very important wild salmon and trout fishery. Access has traditionally been via walk-in trails from the Seboomook Rd (section above Roll Dam) and drive to campsites at Roll Dam and Burbank. Blocking access to these sites would virtually eliminate fishing opportunity. It is unrealistic to expect recreational anglers to paddle from Seboomook Dam downstream to fishing sites through this very rugged/steep section. Roll Dam is also a put-in location for canoers who prefer flat water paddling and are traveling down the West Branch to Chesuncook Lake. Roll Dam is also a take-out for recreational whitewater canoers/ kayakers who prefer the upper reaches of the river. Anglers also motor up to the Burbank area from Lobster Trip and from the Foxhole during the fall to fish.
- The road along the south side of the river has been in rough shape for the passed few years. This represents lost opportunities for recreational use in the Unit and it should be rectified as funds become available.
- I would also like to express our support for the concept of a multi-use trail (motorized and non-motorized) that could possibly connect Greenville -Kokadjo-Seboomook-Rockwood. Clearly, there is a current demand for this type of opportunity in this region.

- The Bureau will work with the snowmobile community to implement the remote non-motorized zone along the South Branch and at Canada Falls Lake during the winter.
- The Plan calls for continued drive-to access to these campsites.

- The Roll-Dam Road has been a priority for Bureau road improvements over the last two years and is now much improved.

From: Dan Legere, Guide, Greenville (Dec 16, 2005)

- (Regarding the letter from Sandra Neily dated Sept 29, 2005) I have to disagree with shutting down the road to Seboomook because of very possible negative effects it might have on the (Seboomook Wilderness) campground. I as well as anyone appreciate the need to protect remote areas, but I could only support the closing of the road if Seboomook Campground supported it. These points are valid but not at someone else's expense. That access has been there since I was a kid in the 60's if not before. Being a business person myself I find it hard to swallow efforts of people who want my life to change because they think they know what is best for me. If they want things to be their way let them buy it and run it the way they think it should be.
- The Conover letter (Nov 4, 2005) also has great merit and a wonderful vision but I too use the West Branch Waterway quite a bit, especially in the fall during the spawning run of salmon. In my lifetime small motors have been very much a part of tradition. As in the Allagash, the canoe with a small motor has allowed outfitters to get people and gear in and out in a timely fashion. There are many folks who are not physically able

- The Bureau will not close the Seboomook Road. See previous response to Alexandra Conover comments of July 27, 2005.

- The Bureau agrees that small motors are part of the fishing tradition in this area, and will propose a limit on motor size for Seboomook and Canada Falls Lakes, but not the West Branch.

to paddle long distances. If all the folks who motor in and out for the traditional fall salmon fishery below Lobster Lake in September had to paddle in and out it would end the trip for most who have been going there their entire lives. They would be crushed. These people are having their ashes spread there. I have been doing trips there for 22 years and the canoe with a small motor is as much a tradition as the paddle and pole. I understand the Lobster Lake issue and have always supported a limited horsepower on the waterway. There are camps on Lobster who need boats and motors to get provisions and gear in to their places. The decision was made not to change things because of hardships it would cause. It is unfortunate that everyone is not as courteous as they should or could be.

- I guess all of my feelings in regards to these issues stem from my belief of not intentionally depriving folks of ways of life they have become custom to. If there are real environmental issues that's different. This is about the people of the State of Maine, many of which may not agree with the wishes of special interests who believe their ways are the best for everyone. In the total package there is a lot of land set aside for people power that has been traditionally remote and desires to stay that way.

From: Kevin Bernier, Great Lakes Hydro – Brookfield Power (May 24, 2006)

- In addition to ownership of the dam lots and retention of flowage rights, in general GLHA owns the islands, lake beds, and a 10-foot shoreline area above the high water mark at both Seboomook and Canada Falls lakes. Although GLHA agrees that these lands should be described within the Plan (since they are embedded within the Seboomook Unit), these areas are subject to state (LURC) and federal (FERC) regulation, and thus, should not be included as areas to be managed by the Plan. For example, GLHA does not believe that the Plan can prevent boat launch construction (on GLHA land) if it is within a certain distance of a loon nest (which would also be on GLHA land). Such restrictions should only pertain to the State's Seboomook Unit land.
- GLHA has retained, through deeded rights, perpetual access easements for passage over and across all roads and paths as they currently exist (or as they may exist) within the Seboomook Unit. Management of the Seboomook Unit must recognize these deeded access rights.
- North Maine Woods has operated and maintained GLHA's campgrounds within and near the Seboomook Unit for a number of years at no cost to GLHA. Should the State take over this campground oversight, GLHA would request a similar agreement.
- Since Canada Falls and Seboomook are regulated by FERC, public access must be retained to the projects.
- Boat launches and portage trail upgrades embedded within the Seboomook Unit are currently being designed as required by the Storage Project FERC license. Any

- The Plan has been amended to clarify the issues raised concerning GLHA ownership of the 10-foot shoreline and islands.
- The Bureau recognizes the deeded rights that GLHA has to access its dams and hydropower-related lands and facilities located within the unit.
- The Plan recommends that the Bureau pursue a cooperative agreement with Great Lakes Hydro America for the maintenance and management of the existing drive-to campsites located on GLHA lands. The Bureau will pursue this after it resolves the NMW issues (See Part V of this appendix).
- The Plan assures public access across Bureau roads to GLHA's project (Seboomook Lake, West Branch). Public access rights are also assured across the South Branch Road to Canada Falls Lake through a public access easement granted to the Bureau.
- The Plan states the Bureau's objective of keeping boat access facilities appropriate to a remote waters experience. The Bureau has also offered its comments

<p>comments or revisions to these designs must be made through the appropriate FERC approval and LURC permitting processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to the comments provided above, GLHA supports the vision, goals, and recommendations for the Seboomook Unit. 	<p>in writing to GLHA on the specific design for these facilities as part of the FERC licensing process.</p>
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From: Sandra Neily, Greenville (June 1, 2006)

<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on what is already fine work: more detailed and thoughtful recreation planning compared to previous management plans. I'm sure that reflects the increased demands on our public lands and your willingness to respond to this challenge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly we need to plan in detail for ski and backcountry people-powered areas, and I want to highlight what you told me after the meeting as it made everything very clear to me and suggested the direction we might pursue. You said that the planning for parks (re; signage, trail use, detailed designations of various recreation areas) has always reflected intense use in a smaller area. Planning for larger public lands parcels has not, in the past, been subject to this kind of planning but it may be time to do just that on this parcel. In other words, use your department's expertise on park recreation and management and apply it to this plan, clearly designating (and creating signage) for various defined uses. Perhaps some public lands units coming into the system need to be managed like parks. This is a good time to think of this region as a large park and manage it as such as it does sustain (and will attract) significant use • Dave mentioned that few skiers used the area now and that without that demand we might just see what develops. I explained that (especially for winter use) skiers would not venture into areas already staked out by current and intense snowmobile use. (Bob Guethlen spoke up and also supported that observation.) Once you designate areas that will be reserved only for people powered use and sign (and protect) these areas appropriately (as in current Park management), skiing and snowshoeing users will find and use these areas. It really is a chicken and egg thing; you make room and "quiet space" for these activities and users will use them. Backcountry users will not seek out and push their way into an area already staked out by machine users and then ask for special consideration. And in the spirit of balanced opportunity (not numbers), even if only several hundred skiers or snowshoe users are counted on these trails in a season, that would not be enough rationale to exclude their trail needs from the planning process. • I repeat my request to have Parks and Land work out a cooperative road agreement with the landowner of the Canada Falls road so that access to the lake can be reserved for people powered use in the winter (except when the landowner needs to plow the road for timber operations). This road use should be signed at all access locations, notifying users that the road is reserved for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan defines an approach to recreation management for this Unit that is a blend of the "Parks" and "Reserved Lands" traditional approaches. It recognizes that this area is likely to become more actively used in all seasons; that it has enough land base to provide a range of experiences from water-access remote to drive-to camping and fishing; and envisions a more active Bureau presence on the Unit than on traditional reserved lands. Because the use is still low relative to the facilities and opportunities available, the Plan spells out the vision in some detail, but specifies how we get there in less concrete terms in order to allow the Bureau to develop approaches that grow with the need. • BPL will designate the waterways and manage the shorelands within the Seboomook and Canada Falls parcels as part of the Penobscot River Corridor, which is a Parks unit. As budget allows, a PRC ranger may be assigned to the Unit. The Bureau will work with the various user groups, including the snowmobile clubs, to increase awareness and acceptance of areas set aside for winter remote non-motorized uses (BPL encourages cross-country ski/snowshoeing interests to organize and work with BPL as well). The Plan calls for the development of an informational brochure. The Bureau will work to distribute this at the NMW gate, at Pittston Farm and Seboomook Campground, and other recreation-related businesses and organizations in the region. As at other Parks and Reserved Lands, any parking areas or trailheads developed would include an information kiosk or signboard displaying maps showing the recreation areas defined by the allocations, and posting Bureau policies for recreational uses. Brochures would also be available here. These measures will be evaluated over time to see if additional approaches are needed. Signage will also be provided at the Baker Lake drive-to campsite and boat access area. • The Bureau will work to ensure that the road is not groomed for snowmobiles, and otherwise will take a soft approach to managing the uses, as described above.
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<p>people powered use. Skiers should be able to ski from Pittston Farm to Canada Falls without sled traffic, ruts (road is not groomed), and noise. Sled traffic can easily access the lake at other points. It may be time to get creative and create signs that are not negative, like “Road (Trail) Reserved for Quiet Winter Sports of Skiing and Snowshoeing. Snowmobiles, Please Use Alternative Routes. Thank you for Supporting Various Uses of Our Public Lands.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This same kind of signage should be used for the St. John Ponds...but add hiking to create an all season sign. Please create summer and winter parking at the St. John trail head and block the road with boulders or other barriers so that it is clearly not accessible to sled traffic. • I also suggest that the network of woods roads and trails directly across the river confluence and east from Pittston Farm be reserved for people powered use. Access and parking can be just north of the bridge that crosses the North Branch. (Unofficially, people can cross the ice to find the trails.) This is a fine network of trails and could easily be signed from the current access points at the bridge, Golden Road and at the lake where sleds now access the trails. • What other areas should receive the same degree of careful management? How can we use the woods roads designation process to also support these recreational activities...rather than just let the scene up there evolve? I would like to see the same careful consideration given to people powered recreation that I see in the thoughtful consideration to the snowmobile community. I am suggesting that planning here be very cognizant of how market driven motorized use is and how that creates an imbalance of focus and planning resources. With attention, designation and signage, we can easily respond to the needs of people powered users. • I also wish to support Diano Circo’s suggestion that we create a time limit for continuing to allow sleds on the Spencer Mountain reserve. • The west shore of Moosehead could use hand carry boat access but we should be very careful that it is extremely limited (to small boats and small impact) and that it does not introduce new uses to the area, increase traffic substantially, or create a situation that can be used as a rationale to extend development further into lands adjacent to the Seboomook parcel. Please work with the Northern Forest Canoe Trail and other stakeholders to locate this kind of opportunity so that it does not degrade the current remote feeling qualities of this area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses at the St. Johns Ponds parcel will be monitored to determine appropriate measures. This area is set aside as the least developed of all the parcels in this Unit, with no trails or facilities provided. The Bureau will evaluate whether signs would be appropriate in this area. The road is already gated near the Golden Road. • Much of the area adjacent to the North Branch is a designated deer wintering area and would not be appropriate for skiers and snowshoers. The Plan does not designate this area for Remote Recreation. However, the area of the lake opposite Pittston Farm is designated for Remote Recreation. The Bureau encourages the skiers and other non-motorized winter sports interests to develop proposals for the Bureau to consider for parking and trailhead areas that would access this area. • As above, the Bureau encourages the skiers and other non-motorized winter sports interests to develop proposals for the Bureau to consider as part of the woods roads designation process. • See response in Part I of this appendix. • The Plan recommends that the Bureau investigate possible locations for a boat launch facility on the western shore of Moosehead lake via Carry Brook or through a public-private partnership with Seboomook Campground.
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<p>From: Bob and Diane Guethlen, Rockwood (August 3, 2006)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are deeply concerned with the possible snowmobile trail that will be allowed in the Big Spencer Mountain ecological reserve from the perimeter road up to the warden’s cabin. The language in the current draft (4.28/06, page 25) leaves too much ambiguity about when, if ever, and how the trail would be disallowed in the future. We feel that the DOC should not allow this snowmobile trail at all. The cabin should be removed and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the response to this issue in Part I of this appendix.

<p>the trail rebuilt to a hiking trail standard, one that is compatible with the ecological reserve standards. If an ecological reserve is to have the highest protection, then this precedent for a temporary trail will start us down the road to a permanent trail that will become impossible to remove at a future date. The prudent course is to disallow it now. The motor vs non-motor debate will continue. It is important that DOC delineate which uses are appropriate for each use. As you know all places are not appropriate for all uses.</p>	
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From: Paul Napolitano, North Yarmouth (May 12, 2006)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the overall Seboomook plan, generally I think you have a good plan in place. With a little fine tuning, the plan will work for the majority of the Maine people. • On the remote sites, basically I think they will take care of themselves as long as there are no facilities for people to get gas and food. The parcels are so remote that people will not be able to get to them without motors. • On the Spencer Mountain parcel, particularly the rangers cabin and snowmobile trail, I understand that in an eco reserve there can be no motorized vehicles and buildings. I attended the very first meeting between the Forest Society of Maine and invited guests. At that time, Alan Hutchinson's representative expressed their views to keep the cabin and the snowmobile trail as it is today. I know saving the cabin is a high priority for Alan and I would recommend removing a small parcel from the eco reserve so that this could happen. This would allow the snowmobilers and the hikers to rebuild a suitable trail to the cabin and allow the Forest Society of Maine to rebuild the ranger's cabin. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bureau appreciates the support. • The Plan was designed to create a wide range of remote to semi-remote experiences. In some cases, as pointed out, ease of access will limit use and maintain the remote experience for those who are able to get to these lands. • The Plan allows a two-year window for the Forest Society or another organization to find the funds and remove the cabin to another location. The Bureau has determined that the cabin is not compatible with the purposes of the reserve. An interpretive panel will be prepared to be placed at the trailhead to the Mountain, however, to acknowledge the history of this mountain as an important fire watch station. |
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**IV. Summary of Written Comments
from Scoping Sessions and Issue Focus Meetings**

(AUGUST 31, 2004, OCTOBER 12, 2004, DECEMBER 6, 2004, MARCH 23, 2005)

(Not including comments related to the North Maine Woods Gate and Gate Fees; see part V. for these.)

(Comments excerpted or summarized. Typographical, grammatical, or formatting errors have been corrected where possible.)

Comment	Response
From: Gary and Joyce Day, Pittston Academy Grant (August 20, September 8, November 22, 2004)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This would be an area to restrict ATVs. Please don't let this area go the way the Spring Lake-Dead River area did years ago. My parents used to go there but soon the rowdiness and lack of respect took over and that is why we are in this lovely region. I live on the east end of the Cut-Off Road. This road has a history of bad washouts every spring. I think your money could be better spent maintaining the Seboomook Road and Roll Dam Road through to Northeast Carry. It was mentioned that the intersection of the 20-Mile Road and the South Seboomook Road is unsafe, especially if there is any wood being hauled on these roads. I'm sure the corner could be widened cheaper than maintaining the Cut-Off Road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See response to this concern in Part I of this Appendix. Improvement of this road is not a high priority except in association with Bureau forest management.
From: Norm Poirier, Ragged Riders Snowmobile Club (Sept. 16, 2004)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It has come to the attention of the snowmobile club that the Spencer Mountain area has recently been designated as an ecological sanctuary, with the possibility of snowmobile access being denied. We must stress that the Spencer Mountain trail system is a very crucial link to everyone who snowmobiles anywhere in the surrounding area, from Kokadjo to Pittston Farms, Northeast Carry, Chesuncook, and Caribou Lakes. Campowners, cross country skiers as well as snowmobiles use these trails to gain access to otherwise inaccessible areas. The old ranger's cabin on the mountain is often a fun destination for families wanting to share the history and beauty with their children. Our club has expressed an interest in helping to maintain the historical cabin and keep the trail open for everyone to enjoy year round. We are therefore requesting that the State of Maine not refuse access to a very crucial part of the State, and let it remain open to all types of recreation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The only trail that will be discontinued is the spur trail up the mountain; others that may cross over a portion of the reserve would be relocated if feasible, but not discontinued. See also our response to this issue in Part I of this Appendix. The Plan allows a two-year window for the Forest Society or another organization to find the funds and remove the cabin to another location. The Bureau has determined that the cabin is not compatible with the purposes of the reserve. An interpretive panel will be prepared to be placed at the trailhead to the Mountain, however, to acknowledge the history of this mountain as an important fire watch station.
From: Shirley A. Raymond, Raymond's Store, North East Carry (Oct.15, 2004)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The old original road between North East Carry and Seboomook needs maintenance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Bureau made significant improvements to this road in 2005 and 2006.
From: Rick and Jeanine Sylvester, Seboomook Wilderness Campground and Store (Oct.12, 2004)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If one of the goals of the Department of Conservation is to promote people coming to the Seboomook Unit, then the roads must be kept up. The Short Cut Road was closed two years ago because of poor maintenance. This short cut road has been the main mode of travel for customers and camp owners to Seboomook for over 40 years. For short term planning we urge the Department to give this road a high priority. Also for the short term, meaning before freeze up this fall, it is imperative that some work be done on the Seboomook Road. There are about a dozen culverts that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Bureau has made significant improvements to the roads in the Seboomook parcel during 2005 and 2006, and will continue to upgrade the roads over time to Bureau standards. Improvement of this road is not a high priority except in association with Bureau forest management. Access is available using the 20-Mile Road and the Seboomook Road.

<p>are not working and must be replaced before winter. If they are not replaced, next spring the road will disappear costing the Department and taxpayers dearly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gate on the Gulliver Brook Road I'm told is 5 or 6 miles from the resource protection area it is supposed to protect. One can only assume it was put there for the convenience of the landowner. This gate is now part of the Seboomook Unit and should be removed and put closer to the area it is supposed to protect. Maine people have paid dearly for this Seboomook Unit and close attention should be paid to ensure their access is not restricted in any way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We understand that this gate was installed many years ago to create a backcountry area that was not easily accessed by car. The St. John Ponds parcel, now designated as an ecological reserve, can be accessed from the west to within one-half mile of Upper First St. John Pond. The Plan recommends investigating the feasibility of moving the gate on the Gulliver Brook Road and providing a parking area on or near to the parcel boundary.
<p>From: Greg Shute, Chewonki Foundation (Dec. 7, 2004)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to Chewonki, Outward Bound also regularly travels through Seboomook. Currently all the campsites have road access and although they are wonderful sites they don't work well from the perspective of the canoe tripper who is seeking a more remote experience. The North Branch of the Penobscot is another place that water access campsites might be explored from Big Bog to Seboomook. Currently all the campsites in that area are road access. • Chewonki's whitewater kayaking groups that are based at our Big Eddy Campground during the summer regularly visit the Seboomook rapids below the lake and beginning next summer will spend time on the South Branch of the Penobscot on the recreational whitewater releases from Canada Falls Dam. Again I think that some campsites on the South Branch might be interesting to consider. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan calls for additional water access campsites on the North Branch, Seboomook Lake, Canada Falls Lake, and the West Branch. • Because of the technical nature of the South Branch, and its limited length, we are not recommending water access sites on this river. There are presently 22 drive-to campsites at the Canada Falls Dam and along the South Branch.
<p>From: Bob and Diane Guethlen, Rockwood (Mar 7, 2005)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding recreational uses of these lands, it is important to reach a fair balance of uses. • All uses are not compatible on all lands. Areas should be set aside for people powered trails. • I suggest a pamphlet be generated by the state that identifies rare plants and gives general information on them. This will enhance the knowledge of locals and visitors alike, and will help enhance softer tourism. • The Maine Natural Areas biologist should coordinate with the snowmobile coordinator to ensure trails (particularly the Carry Brook Trail) do not adversely impact the health of these plants. • Access to First and Second St. John Ponds, being in an ecological reserve, should be by foot only, with parking areas located off-site. • Build or improve on fishing trails to create a path along the South Branch, from Canada Falls to Pittston Farm, and the West Branch, from Seboomook Dam to Roll Dam campsite. • We suggest that the existing trail (up Big Spencer Mountain) from the logging road be maintained (or rebuilt if necessary) as a hiking trail to the cabin. A parking area should be located at the bottom of the trail for car parking in the summer and snowmobile parking in the winter. From this parking area people could hike in the summer and snowshoe in the winter to the cabin or mountain top. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan strives to achieve this. • The Plan designates a number of areas for remote recreation, which is an allocation that is intended primarily for non-motorized uses. • The Plan calls for an information packet to be prepared for the Unit. This could include information about the natural resources of the Unit, including rare plants. • The Bureau will consider impacts to rare plants in siting any trails on the Unit. The Special Protection area defined for wetlands along Carry Brook is not presently crossed by the snowmobile trail. • The Plan recommends letting existing roads on the St. John parcel revert back to forest, and roads leading to the parcel are by law required to be gated to limit vehicular access within ¼ mile. • The plan incorporates this suggestion. • The Plan calls for closing the trail to snowmobiles and stabilizing or relocating the trail as a hiking only trail. A parking area at the trailhead is also recommended. The cabin is to be removed.

From: Sandra Neily, Greenville (March 25 and 29, 2005)

- There has been an imbalance for many years (I and many others feel this way) with thousands of roads changing the interior character of the forest, shorelines being developed, snowsleds and ATVs and jetskis able to go everywhere. We need to address the past gaps in planning and have some catch-up with people powered backcountry recreation as an officially planned for sector.
- It's important to hear the Conovers when they testify that they have to take clients to Canada to find trips where they can pursue traditional environments that are motor free. They also can witness this gradual but serious loss of experience over time....and it is a loss. We have to really look for places to have quiet recreation where the sounds and smells...the experienceare not affected by motors.
- In the case of ATVs it is not just the experience, but also the resources, that are being damaged. Unregulated but market driven ATV use can totally destroy a recreation resource (example cited Roach River).
- Since snowsleds are encountered everywhere in this area, not just on groomed trails, there will have to be marked and signed people powered areas (trails and old roads) reserved for skiing and snowshoeing, just as there will need to be areas like that in the summer.
- Perhaps the St. John Ponds area and the north end of the North Branch below the bridge and the north side of the lake and Seboomook Lake itself could be people powered. Seboomook Lake should be snowsled free as the noise affects the skiing on the north side. One could ski from Pittston (or the bridge over the North Branch) all over the lands and shores on the north side of the lake.
- There needs to be winter parking off the Golden Road for skiers to access the St. Johns pond.

- The St. John Ponds area could be ungroomed, but other trails could be groomed. The regular trail groomer up there could easily groom out some ski trails, don't need "set" tracks for that to work. Would be ski skate heaven I'm sure.
- On Canada Falls, in the winter machines could have the west shore, the road up to the campground could be people powered, and the lake itself could be open to all use. That's a great ski up from Pittston but it is now a sled highway.

- In summer Seboomook Lake is an ideal canoe and recreational kayak haven. Perfect for that as the lake is mostly inhospitable to motors of any size. Remote campsites could also be on the north shore, not just on islands near the west end that have more road noise. Put in off the road right across from Nulhedus Stream. Hand carry only, please.

- The Plan includes significant areas designated for Remote Recreation, an allocation that is primarily for non-motorized recreation.

- See response to Alexandra Conover's comments of July 27, 2005 and November 4, 2005 (Part III of this Appendix).

- See response to this issue in Part I of this Appendix.

- See response to June 1, 2006 comments from Sandra Neily (Part III of this Appendix).

- The Plan designates much of the shorelands surrounding Seboomook Lake as Remote Recreation, an allocation intended primarily for non-motorized recreation. The Bureau will work with the snowmobiling community to establish trails and backcountry snowmobiling opportunities that do not utilize the lakes on the Unit.

- The Plan recommends investigating the need and feasibility of establishing one or more parking areas serving potential walk-in routes to the St. John Ponds parcel.
- The Plan envisions back-country skiing rather than groomed trails. However, if there is enough interest, and funds and resources could be generated to cover the costs, the Bureau would support having some trails enhanced for skiers.
- The South Branch and the Canada Falls Lake parcel are designated as Remote Recreation areas for the winter. The Bureau will work with the snowmobiling community to establish trails and backcountry snowmobiling opportunities that do not utilize the lakes on the Unit.
- The Plan recommends pursuing a motor-size limit for Seboomook Lake, and establishing water access campsites.

From: Roger and Suzanne AuClair, Rockwood (March 31, 2005)

- We would like to see continuation of traditional Maine recreational uses at Seboomook, including small, discrete campsites for camping, hunting, fishing, canoeing, hiking,

- The Plan includes this same vision, except that it recognizes the need for one or more group campsites, with increased use of the West Branch by groups such as

<p>and wildlife watching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Unit may need more water access. • In general, we want to see the Seboomook reserve remain simple, quiet and natural for all persons to enjoy, as well as to conserve the important natural wildlife habitat and high quality of the resources. • We do not want to see ATVs, personal watercraft, increased signage and “groomed” landscape, proliferation of large, motorized sport vehicles and motor homes (RVs), more services, such as attendants and long parking areas, bicycles, or more, wider, or paved roads. • We are opposed to the introduction of ATV use because ATVs are destructive to land, waters and habitat; create loud noise and pollution; erode trails and create high maintenance needs; and will throw off the balance between motorized and non-motorized use of the woods. The constant whine of machines will occur at the busiest times of the year, when the reserve is being used by the highest number of people. Wide use/groups of ATV users will disrupt wildlife, especially in summer, when young are being raised and wildlife are roaming territory. It may result in young being separated from adults, becoming vulnerable to predation. In general, in the spring, summer and fall the woods are more fully used by more people and more animal activity than in the winter. If bands of ATVs are allowed in the public reserve, it will cost exponentially – in erosion, maintenance, balance, use, wildlife and plant habitat, quality of experience, the numbers of people who come to use the reserve, and financially. 	<p>Outward Bound, Chewonki, and others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan recommends establishing a boat access on the western shore of Moosehead Lake, perhaps in collaboration with Seboomook Campground. • The Vision statement for the Unit is consistent with this view, as expressed in this statement : “The recreation and wildlife values of the Unit are maintained with a minimum of trails, roads or improvements, such as parking areas. Any recreational improvements are located in proximity to existing roads and facilities, or in areas that minimize impacts to wildlife and other sensitive resources.” • See previous response and the response to ATV use provided in Part I of this Appendix. While we have no intention of paving roads, they will be improved to Bureau standards to provide adequate drainage. Overall Bureau roads are designed to minimize width such that two cars may pass each other safely with due care (i.e. at slow speed). The Bureau has concluded that the Unit is large enough to accommodate a range of uses, including bicycling and ATVs on designated roads and trails, without degrading the environment or backwoods experience.
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From: Christopher Silsbee, Caribou (Mar 29, 2005)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I’m a firm believer of the multi-use concept for managing lands. Recreation has changed dramatically and will continue to do so. We as a state need to supply the demand of what the people are looking for. • Seboomook Lake and down to Canada Falls should be added on to the PRC. • Campsites should be provided on Seboomook Lake. • Hiking trails should be made to allow people to walk along the South Branch. In the winter months the same trail could be used for cross-country skiers. • There should be a trail system created that will accommodate cross-country skiers in the winter and hikers/bikers in the summer months. • It would be a good idea to create one ATV trail through the Seboomook Unit to connect Rockwood, Kokadjo, and Greenville. Campsites should be designed along this trail for these users. • To help enforce rules and regulations on this stretch of the PRC a ranger should be added to this area, stationed right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bureau is mandated to manage for multiple uses, as stated and reflected in the Plan. • The Plan recommends that all waterways in the Canada Falls and Seboomook Parcels, which are part of the Penobscot River drainage, be added to the PRC. • The Plan recommends additional water access campsites on Seboomok, as well as additional campsites on the West Branch to meet a growing need arising from increased flows on the West Branch and a new interest in this area for whitewater boating. • The Plan envisions trails along the rivers, and use of woods roads to serve these needs. • The Plan recommends accommodating an ATV trail as an extension of a regional ATV touring network, and providing camping opportunities to support a multi-day ATV touring trip. • The Bureau will provide staff resources to manage the Unit in response to need and as budget and staff
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<p>at Seboomook Lake, and work year round to help maintain a presence for the state, groom trails for winter use, educate users, and assist where problems arise.</p>	<p>resources allow.</p>
<p>From: Paul A. Fichtner, Penobscot Lake Lodge (April 1, 2005)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If ATVs are allowed in these woods, there will be consequences. I am a motor sports dealer in Greenville. I gave up selling Arctic Cat ATVs years ago because of the sensitive ecological areas of this region. In the Seboomook Unit, there is a tremendous amount of wetland that will be permanently altered if access by ATV is allowed. I have never known any operator of an ATV to stay on a designated trail. They will travel off to explore and the very nature of these machines is destructive to sensitive soils and vegetation. I fly over this country almost every day in the non-winter months and can tell you with a large degree of certainty that there is standing water covering the majority of earth all over the region. Snowmobiles are a different story. They travel off trail and if behaved, clues of their presence are few. • I feel strongly that given the state of the State, we don't have the funds to develop ATV trails and then be in a position to enforce the regulations. If the gates are opened and ATVs are allowed, the face of the area will be changed forever. • In closing, I would opt for extremely restricted use of ATVs, if at all, and the continuation of the gates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See response to this issue in Part I of this Appendix.
<p>From: Sherwin and Carolyn Start, Sanford (April 21 and 24 2005)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are very much in favor of keeping ATVs out of the area completely. ATVs have and are continuing to cause catastrophic destruction to ALL land in S.W. Maine. In doing so they've managed to close 95% of all privately owned land TO ALL USERS. Even though a new law went into effect last year, the destruction continues unabated. Please do not let this happen to any of our state lands. • We would like to see a year-round BPL Officer stationed in the area to enforce all state regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See response to this issue in Part I of this Appendix. • The Bureau will provide staff resources to manage the Unit in response to need and as budget and staff resources allow.
<p>From: William Barker, Presque Isle (April 21, 2005)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be honest I'm not sure if it would be good or bad to allow the use of ATVs. One thing you need to look at is how ATV use is affecting other public lands where there is permitted use. Seboomook is fairly remote and it would be hard to regulate where ATVs are going, and there is no way to keep them off private lands surrounding the unit. Even if the Unit is removed from North Maine Woods (which I am 100% against) ATVs could still access the private roads adjacent to the unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See response to this issue in Part I of this Appendix.
<p>From: Ralph Cleale, Limington (April 29, 2005)</p>	
<p>The following comments are from me and my partners, land and campowners on Seboomook Lake and longstanding leaseholders since the mid-1940's. Our camp is almost entirely used for hunting and some fishing and snowsledding, and little canoeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATVs are a nuisance and they do damage. We oppose them. You can't control them as they are made to go around obstacles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See response to this issue in Part I of this Appendix.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snowmobiles do little if any harm. We support the continued use by snowmobiles. • We encourage more areas to be accessible by snowmobile, including Spencer and Seboomook mountains. • Traditional access for hunting is of utmost importance, except in areas of active harvesting. • Preservation of deer wintering areas is crucial. Moose can survive in clearcuts, deer cannot. • We want the Seboomook South Shore Road, the Dam Road, the Roll Dam Road, and others that now exist to be kept passable to pickups. We are not interested in having new roads, but we'd also like to see some of the woods roads left open, like the new road off 7-Mile Hill to the south side of Carry Brook and the Gulliver Brook Road to Seboomook Mountain and Third St. John Pond for hunting and fishing. It's too far to hike in or drag a deer out. • We don't object to the South Shore Road being used as a snowsled trail so long as the (Seboomook) Campground is accessible from the dam side. • The spring near the former Forest Service camp and the Seboomook Ledge camping spot by the dam is vital to us. It is the sole source of potable water since the spring at 7-Mile Hill's camping spot was allowed to deteriorate. I've used this water since 1945. • We suggest that a way to portage around the ledges and the bridge on the North Branch be cleared. I am 70 this year and cannot climb the bank dragging a canoe even with help and it's not safe to run the canoe down the river at this spot even in good conditions. • If harvesting will be going on we'd like to know when and where it will happen, perhaps by checking a map on a computer web site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan supports continued use snowmobiles on the existing trails and in designated areas. The accommodate non-motorized winter sports, some areas of the Unit are defined as Remote Recreation areas where snowmobiles are not allowed. • The State does not own Seboomook Mountain. See Part I of this Appendix for a response to the Big Spencer Mountain snowmobile trail issue. • Hunting is allowed in all areas subject to restrictions for safety reasons (such as near campsites). • The Plan recognizes the need for additional deer wintering areas in the region; the Bureau will work with IF&W to manage and expand these. • The Seboomook South Shore Road, the Dam Road, and the Roll Dam Road will be kept as vehicle access roads. The Plan calls for development of a detailed use plan for the woods road network on the Unit, which will determine which of these roads will be open to vehicular use and when. This plan is to be completed within 2 years of the adoption of the Management Plan. On an interim basis, any road on the Unit that is possible is open to vehicular use. • The Plan recommends relocating this trail off the Seboomook Road to avoid conflicts with use of the road for timber management and to reduce heaving of culverts caused by snow compaction. • The Plan recommends evaluating this spring and protecting it from contamination. • The Plan recommends exploring a new carry-in boat access to the North Branch below the ledges at the bridge crossing near Leadbetter Falls, and pursuing agreements with Wagner/Merriweather to create a portage trail around the ledges.
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From: Jym St. Pierre, RESTORE (May 1, 2005)

<p>I support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a category (in the Integrated Management Policy allocation system) for high value areas apart from ecological reserves. • Constructing a hiking trail along the South and West Branches of the Penobscot. • Developing trailhead parking for Big Spencer Mountain, and limiting the Big Spencer Mountain trail to pedestrian use. • Keeping parking out of the St. John Ponds area. • Preparing a brochure for the Seboomook Unit/Penobscot Corridor with information about rare plants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This requires amending the IRP, which is a separate planning process from this management plan. • The Plan recommends evaluating the feasibility and cost of a nature trail along the rivers, and pursuing this as resources allow. • The Plan recommends developing a trailhead parking area for Big Spencer Mountain, discontinuing use of the old jeep trail by snowmobiles, and stabilizing the trail as for hiking and snowshoeing use only. • The Plan recommends looking into the feasibility of moving the gate and providing a parking area on or closer to the parcel. • The Plan calls for an information packet to be prepared for the Unit. This could include information about the natural resources of the Unit, including rare plants.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designating separate winter areas for non-motorized and motorized uses. • Restricting ATV use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan creates a significant area for Remote Recreation which is intended primarily for non-motorized uses. • ATV use on the Unit will be limited to designated trails.
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From: Stanley Hallett, Windsor (May 2, 2005)

<p>I have been a lessee and now a landowner on Seboomook Lake for 38 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although I know that Seboomook campground is not part of the Seboomook Unit, some arrangement should be made for public use of the launch facilities that have existed there since Moosehead Lake was invented. It is the only launch site on Moosehead Lake on that side of the lake between Rockwood and Northeast Carry. After paying the gate fee at 20 mile and then to get charged a daily fee by Seboomook Campground is unacceptable. It has always been available to the public until 5 years ago. This has been brought by several people to the attention of the Department of Conservation, IF&W, and Wagner Forest Management. For some unknown reason no one wants to discuss the issue. It is a shame and something should be done for the public to have access to Moosehead Lake. • The new minimum flows at Seboomook dam will be a disaster for landowners on Seboomook Lake. This will severely limit launching a boat on Seboomook Lake. • Traditional existing North Wood uses should continue as is. No ATVs should ever be allowed. The so called loop trail around Moosehead lake goes within 300 yards of my camp and I can see them coming down my driveway if they are allowed. There is simply no way you can restrict them to a given trail. It would not happen. It would just be another problem for campowners with break-ins and vandalism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan recommends that the Bureau investigate possible locations for a motorized boat launch facility on the western shore of Moosehead Lake via Carry Brook or through a public-private partnership at Seboomook Campground; and that it implement this access as resources allow. • The Bureau does not control water management on Seboomook Lake or the West Branch. Great Lakes Hydro America owns and operates the dams, which are regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. • See response to the ATV issue in Part I of this Appendix.
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**V. Summary of Written Comments
Related to the North Maine Woods Gate, Rules, and Fees**

(August 31, 2004 – November 3, 2006)

(Comments excerpted or summarized. Typographical, grammatical, or formatting errors have been corrected where possible.)

Comments	Response
<p>This section provides a synthesis of all the comments received, which are provided in the following section.</p>	<p>These responses cover the range of individual written comments listed following this section.</p>
<p>Concerns about User Fees: Many people were concerned about the level of fees charged by NMW and stated they are a deterrent to visits to the NMW and Seboomook lands. Some objected to paying for use of State lands, while others believed the users ought to pay the full cost of their use of the public lands.</p> <p>Support for the NMW Checkpoint Gate: Many of the comments below express concern that some sort of gated checkpoint system be maintained, whether operated by NMW or the State. A few thought a gate was unnecessary.</p> <p>Interest in Recreational Activities Not Allowed in the NMW System: There is interest and public support for use of the Seboomook lands for mountain biking and bicycling, horseback riding, and ATV riding, activities that are not allowed within the NMW system. However, apart from the issue of NMW rules, many people wrote to argue against allowing ATVs in the Unit (see Section I of these comments). In addition, some people were not in favor of allowing horseback riding trails on public lands (see Sections II and III).</p>	<p>Concerns about User Fees: The Bureau agrees that fees charged by the NMW system have become a deterrent to visits to the NMW system and the Seboomook lands. Consistent with the Bureau's statutory directives, over the course of the 2-year planning process, the Bureau negotiated with the NMW Administrative Committee to provide free day use to the Seboomook Unit. Discussions were far-ranging, and several specific proposals were reviewed. The Bureau sought to cover the costs of the NMW gate system for visitors to the Seboomook lands with revenues it receives from timber management, as it does on its other public reserved lands. The Bureau's proposals aimed to secure NMW's present income stream from day use fees at the Unit, in return for allowing free day use to Seboomook visitors. Unfortunately, despite these good faith discussions and considerable detailed work, the North Maine Woods Board voted, in its March 2006 annual meeting, not to accept the proposal the Bureau had worked out with the NMW Administrative Committee, but instead, to continue the status quo. However, it directed its Executive Committee and a representative from Wagner Paper to continue to work with the Bureau to arrive at a resolution to address NMW concerns related to administrative changes and potential leakage of revenues from abuse of a free day use policy for the Seboomook lands. The Bureau will continue to explore options with North Maine Woods to allow the Bureau to cover the day use costs for visitors to the Unit. In addition, the Bureau will designate waters within the Seboomook and Canada Falls parcels as an extension of the Penobscot River Corridor (PRC), which is subject to lower fees under the current NMW fee schedule. The Bureau values its relationship with North Maine Woods very highly, and is seeking to develop a partnership with North Maine Woods that would enable it to manage the Seboomook lands in accordance with the Bureau's mission and statutory mandates, and continue to be part of the North Maine Woods system. However, the Bureau will be examining all alternatives, including withdrawing from the NMW system if necessary to achieve flexibility it needs to fulfill its mission and mandates, including free day use and reasonable camping fees.</p> <p>Support for the NMW Checkpoint Gate: The Bureau agrees that a gate provides not only security but also is important for informing visitors about the Seboomook Unit and the North Maine Woods System. The Bureau will be exploring ways to work cooperatively with NMW to take advantage of technological advances and to provide gate services that support both NMW's and the Bureau's objectives.</p> <p>Interest in Recreational Activities Not Allowed in the NMW System: The Seboomook Unit is positioned to provide a wide range of high quality recreation opportunities, several of which are unusual or unique in the Moosehead region, and even the</p>

state. These include opportunities for horseback riding in a backcountry area with Historic Pittston Farm providing the support facilities;
 an extended ATV touring and camping opportunity with refueling and other services available at Historic Pittston Farm; and mountain biking as an adjunct activity to camping, and potentially connecting to a broader regional multi-purpose trail. These activities are not normally allowed within the North Maine Woods system. However, NMW has already agreed to allow horse trailers into Pittston Farm, and the Bureau will be negotiating with NMW to allow an exception for horses, ATVs and bicycles for use on its Seboomook lands.

From: Gary and Joyce Day, Pittston Academy Grant (August 20, September 8, November 22, 2004)

- This is such a large area and could still be called one of the last frontiers; we would love to see it remain as much a wilderness as it is today. One way to help accomplish this is to maintain some form of a checkpoint system, and require a persons name, address, and license plate number to control vandalism.
- To maintain the many campsites and picnic areas that are available costs many dollars. Let the people who enjoy it pay for maintaining it.
- Please don't let this area go the way the Spring Lake-Dead River area did years ago. My parents used to go there but soon the rowdiness and lack of respect took over and that is why we are in this lovely region.
- NMW has plenty of experience maintaining campsites and overseeing the check gate system; let them continue. I'm sure they can maintain these services much more economically than the State. Please remember that there are still many of us who are very happy with the present operations.

From: Paul Fichtner, Penobscot Lake Lodge (September 17, 2004)

As a landowner behind the gates, I am very interested in finding a suitable resolution to the NMW gate issue, which is a very hot item.

From: Bruce Pratt, Eddington (October 12, 2004)

- Maine has a historical (social) contract with all of our citizens regarding access to state owned lands. Or those lands over which the state has been granted easements. What is the state doing charging a toll, actually a head tax, for access to the West Branch Region? Why must I pay to get to my own property when passing over state lands? Fees have discouraged my brother and many like him from coming to Maine to visit us. Maine loses tourism dollars as a result. This is costing our state real revenue.

From: Bruce Marcoux (October 12, 2004)

- Each year I pay 7% tax of \$87.50 to the State of Maine for my rental site at Seboomook Campground. I feel this tax is more than enough for me and my family and guests to have to pay for the right to cross, hunt, fish or recreate on State owned land.
- Pay gates should have no place on land of participating tree growth landowners. I ask the Department of Conservation to be a leader in this access issue and help Maine people gain access they are already paying for.

From: Rick and Jeanine Sylvester, Seboomook Wilderness Campground and Store (Oct.12, 2004)

- If there are to be checkpoints at the entrances to the Seboomook Unit then the Department of Conservation should be the gatekeepers.
- There should be no fee for landowners, their guests, and customers visiting the businesses within the Seboomook Unit. The present system treats the businesses and small landowners within the Seboomook Unit unfairly.
- Fewer people are coming (to our business) each year because of NMW's high fees. Their response is to raise prices every year. This cannot be sustained.
- Not only are the fees unfair but the service at the gates is confused and inconsistent due to a high turnover of gate attendants. People are overcharged, and gate attendants give out wrong information about our business, such as saying we are closed when we are not.
- There are only two businesses within the Seboomook Unit, and we provide numerous services that are vital to the region. Most cell phones won't work in the region, so we installed special Yagi antennas for our cell phones that enable us to call 911 when there are emergencies. Seboomook and Pittston have both helped people needing emergency assistance in the past and will continue to do so. When people visiting or living in the region are in need of supplies or if their vehicles break down, they come to our businesses for help. We provide gas, propane, ice, food, lodging, groceries, some hardware, automotive, plumbing and electrical supplies, etc. Given the fact that our two businesses provide these needed services, it is crucial that the 20 mile gate and all the negativity it projects be removed.
- There are many policies of the North Maine Woods that need to be addressed. Some are bicycles, ATVs, so-called over

length campers, horses, to name a few. How many times have you seen a camper or motorhome with a bicycle or two strapped to it? At the (NMW) gate they confiscate them or refuse our customers entry. This is old paper company policy and has no place in the West Branch Project or Seboomook Unit. Horses are another issue. We see no reason why horses should not be allowed. Horses were an important part of history throughout the North Maine Woods. The Seboomook Unit would be a great place for folks to come and enjoy riding.

From: Paul Johnson, (retired) IF&W Regional Fisheries Biologist, Greenville (Oct 13, 2004)

- I am an advocate for gates at the access points to the Seboomook Unit as a means to manage recreation. The cost issue can be worked out.

From: Sandra Neily, Greenville (Oct 12 and 19, 2004)

- NMW is a failing business by any business measure, despite their good intentions and hard work. It's losing money, suppressing demand (and therefore reducing its income stream), and cannot fulfill all the traditional and especially the newly developing functions needed for this region.
- Because it is suppressing demand (and fees are preventing access to public lands....and to public water and the public's wildlife) the current system does not serve Maine people well. People come and go without learning how to behave in the backcountry, fully appreciate private landowners' needs, resources, and contributions, and they certainly come and go ignorant of Maine's unique conservation lands and how they as users can support that process in the future.
- And there are further costs; the current gate and fee system is, at best, a public relations void (missed opportunities to "tell the story") and, at worst, a public relations disaster for land owners and now potentially, for the state. The quality of a visitor's experience will be as much determined by his or her reception and education as it will be by the actual experience itself. This entire function is missing from the current gate and access system.
- NMW is however, a wonderful model of a cooperative landowner process that has strong value. Its most successful functions are its value for collecting, organizing and educating new landowners as lands continue to change hands here and become even more fragmented (and I think we should support that process in every way that we can.) I am suggesting that this landowner model work in partnership with gateway communities that surround the entire NMW partnership territory. Enlarge the partnership.
- Gateway communities could provide the information and recreation management function (with the state) while at the same time being good locations for people to get fire permits, have boats checked for invasives, get licenses, get information on campsites, destinations, local recreation providers and businesses. For this to work it will need a professional recreation manager (s) who is in charge of hiring the staff for gateway welcome centers and gates, designing the training courses and on-site followups and supervision of welcome staffers, and working with towns on welcome center functions and information systems.
- We might be able to have a vastly simplified gate system, managed very cheaply.... and still have permits sold in the gateway communities. We could even come up with a Transpass kind of system that reduces the need to have multiple workers at remote gates. NMW could have fewer "minders" of the system and permit numbers could still be logged into a system so we know where folks are any given time.

Users should pay by car and there needs to be a careful process to evaluate how access fees combine with camping fees to make some trips unaffordable for many people.

From: John Banks, Bangor (October 19, 2004)

- It is clear to me, especially after the meeting on Tues., that the concerns go beyond just the fees. Many are concerned about the hassle of the check-in and check-out process and the attitude of the gatekeepers. My experiences of passing through the gates many, many times are consistent with these concerns.
- As a seasonal resident of Seboomook campground I would gladly pay \$50 or even \$100 a year to pass thru the gates in a manner that is at least disruptive as possible to my use and enjoyment of the region.
- A solution to the problem as it relates to Seboomook(and perhaps Pittston Farm) may be to have a sticker system which authorizes unencumbered passage thru the gates. Stickers, like the ones needed to go to the town dump, could be purchased by seasonal residents and other campowners in the region and displayed on one's vehicle, thereby saving a lot of hassle and lots of paperwork as well.
- I would love to see the gates gone. I do not think they are necessary.

From: William Barker, Presque Isle (February 22, 2005)

- I've traveled that area since I was a teenager and I'm happy with the checkpoint where it is. I know the argument of the people who want free access is "my tax dollars are paying for this, and I shouldn't have to pay to use the land." My argument is "my tax dollars are paying for the land, and even more of my tax dollars are paying to allow free use of the land." I feel the tax burden in this state would be less if more fees were charged on the state owned lands.

From: Ralph Cleale, Limington (April 29, 2005)

I have never understood why horses are banned. I would like to be able to truck our ponies to camp so my wife and I could drive our carts there.

From: Christopher Silsbee, Caribou (Mar 29, 2005)
There should be a gate system at 20 mile but be controlled by the park system and use park receptionists to collect fees, record users and educate users coming in during peak season. Fees should be collected as they are for any park systems in the state.
From: Paul Fichtner, Penobscot Lake Lodge (April 1, 2005)
I am very interested in keeping gates. I have lived in the woods since 1975 and have seen it both ways, with and without gates. Please keep the gates. Move them and adjust the fees if necessary, but please do not remove the gates. There is accountability when someone passes through the gates.
From: William Barker, Presque Isle (April 21, 2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am 100% against removing the Unit from NMW. ATV use should be discussed with North Maine Woods to see what could be arranged. Suggested an approach where we allow ATVs to enter the Unit on designated trails, but not allow them to be brought onto the Unit in a vehicle over the roads. Then people could not haul an ATV through the Unit into surrounding NMW territory.
From: Sherwin Start, Sanford (June 14, 2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although In principle agree with them (NMW) in trying to control the number of people on their lands with gates and by using fees, this system isn't going to work for the general publics right of access to state lands, unless you classify these lands as State Parks. This is a problem that will have to either worked out or call upon the State Legislature/Governor to resolve it. It looks to me that NMW and others have pretty much priced out the lower, middle and retired class of the population, and their lands are reserved for the very wealthiest of the population.
From: Jeff Bagley, IF&W Greenville (June 20, 2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We would recommend that reasonable access fees be put in place, which will not deter or restrict anglers from fishing waters in the Seboomook Unit.
From: Rick Sylvester, Seboomook Wilderness Campground (May 10, 2006)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am very pleased with the Department's Vision statement and also the revised management recommendations for the Seboomook Unit. The only major problem left to deal with is access. I feel that the NMW is going to move their 20-mile checkpoint to a point north of the Canada Falls access road. If they choose to do this they must take into consideration two other access roads traditionally used by visitors to the Seboomook Unit. The Seboomook Dam road and Seboomook Road from the dam to the easterly border of the Seboomook Unit and on to Northeast Carry. These two roads must not be blocked off. If checkpoints must be installed on these two essential access points then so be it. Thousands of people access these roads each year. Businesses located at both ends in an out of the Unit depend on customers being able to get to them on these roads. Visitors to Roll Dam coming from the Millinocket, Baxter Park area would have to travel about 40 additional miles to get there. Visitors traveling out of the Unit to Lobster Lake area would have to travel an even greater distance. Blocking off these two access roads would make no sense and would be very detrimental to the overall accessibility and to the management of the Seboomook Unit. If access is to be managed on these tow roads, then it is my feeling that it must be accomplished with manned checkpoints or at the very least some kind of solar powered entrance system that would let people in and out as long as they have the proper codes or passes.
From: Sherwin Start (June 14, 2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>User Fees:</u> Just like the US Forest Service does, charge a fee for overnight use of primitive camp sites i.e. \$5.00 per person or so. That will raise a little revenue. Have a universal State Lands Access fee much like that of the State Park System and/ or a Yearly Pass.
From: Dan Legere, Guide, Greenville (Oct 8, 2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although I was in favor of the North Maine Woods gate being moved beyond the Pittston Farm, (one of my main concerns was free and easy access for the public to the unit), I believe the proposed arrangement you outlined allowing free access to the unit is great and keeping the North Maine Woods gate at 20 mile could work very well. The voucher system will be a good way to inform the public they are getting something for their tax dollars. It would appear that the concerns from the private businesses have been taken into account. They should be pleased.
From: Dawn Sipos (Nov 1, 2006)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think the 20 mile gate is a must. It's nice to feel like there is some security. Fees for owners and there guest could be lower.
From: John Rust, Vice President, Maine Professional Guides Association (November 3, 2006)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>NMW Gate System:</u> MPGA supports retaining the existing NMW gate on the Twenty Mile Road. The NMW gate system provides a significant level of security and safety, while allowing the State to share operating costs for monitoring visitors and collecting user fees.

Appendix D

Deed Restrictions and Agreements

1. Deed restriction for Big Spencer Mountain Ecological Reserve
2. Deed restriction for all shorelines related to loon nest sites
3. Letter from The Nature Conservancy (12/11/2003) agreeing to provide funds for acquisition of the St. John Ponds parcel and Baker Lake parcel subject to management requirements.

Appendix D-1

Deed Restrictions on Big Spencer Mountain

1. Portions of a Quitclaim Deed from Great Northwoods, LLC to the State of Maine, including the Spencer Mountain parcel; and including Exhibit D in which the State agrees to be bound by the terms of an easement granted to the Forest Society of Maine requiring the parcel to be managed as an ecological reserve.
2. Portions of the Conservation Easement granted by Great Northwoods, LLC to the Forest Society of Maine requiring the parcel to be managed as an ecological reserve.

QUITCLAIM DEED WITH COVENANT

Great Northwoods, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company having a place of business in Birmingham, Alabama, for consideration paid, grants to the **State of Maine**, acting by and through the Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands, 22 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333 (acting under its authority pursuant to Title 12, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, Section 1850(1)), with quitclaim covenant, certain lots or parcels of land in **Township 3, Range 15 (Burbank), Township 2, Range 13 WELS, and Township X, Range 14 WELS**, Piscataquis County, Maine, being described in Exhibit A attached hereto, together with all appurtenant rights and all standing trees and any improvements presently thereon, including but not limited to those rights set forth in Exhibit A, subject to those matters set forth in Exhibit D attached hereto.

For Grantor's source of title, reference may be had to the deed from Great Northern Paper, Inc. dated March 30, 1999 and recorded in the Piscataquis County Registry of Deeds at Book 1191, Page 326.

In witness whereof, Great Northwoods, LLC has caused the foregoing instrument to be signed and sealed by its duly authorized manager, McDonald Investment Company, Inc., by its duly authorized undersigned officer, this 9th day of April, 2002.

ME REAL ESTATE TRANSFER
TAX PAID

Witness:

Great Northwoods, LLC
By McDonald Investment Company, Inc.,
its manager

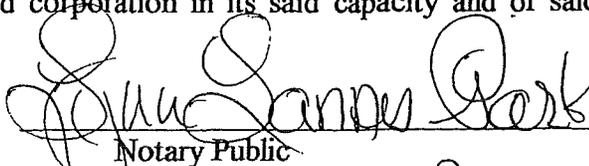


By William W McDonald Jr
William W. McDonald, Jr.
Its Vice President

State of Alabama
Jefferson County

April 9, 2002

Personally appeared the above named William W. McDonald, Jr., in his capacity as Vice President of McDonald Investment Company, Inc. as manager aforesaid, and acknowledged before me the foregoing instrument to be his free act and deed in his said capacity and the free act and deed of said corporation in its said capacity and of said limited liability company.


Notary Public

Bynn Wannes Parks
Print or type name as signed

N.P.
SEAL

recorded at the Piscataquis Registry of Deeds in Cabinet M, Pages 190 – 199; Thence running in a southerly direction by and along the normal high water line of said Moosehead Lake a distance of 8,065 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning.

The above described lot or parcel of land is a strip of land that is approximately 500 feet in width, said parcel contains 90.4 acres, more or less, and is a portion of land of Great Northwoods, LLC.

Also, included herewith is all the Grantor's right, title, and interest to the land between the low water and high water lines of Moosehead Lake adjacent to the above conveyed parcel.

Bearings referenced in the above description were computed from a traverse established for a survey of the above-described parcel that was oriented to grid north, Maine State Plane Coordinate System, East Zone, NAD83. Distances referenced herein are grid distances. The connection to the Maine State Plane Coordinate System East Zone, NAD83, is based upon a control monument designated GRANT which has published coordinates of N: 769,849.794 feet, E: 770,197.385 feet which are based on the 1996 re-adjustment. Reference may be had to the survey prepared by Plisga & Day, Land Surveyors, dated January 29, 2002 to be recorded herewith.

PARCEL FOUR: A certain lot or parcel of land containing Big Spencer Mountain situated in T2 R13 WELS and TX R14 WELS, Piscataquis County, State of Maine, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a 6 inch by 6 inch yellow wood post found at the southwesterly corner of T2 R13 WELS, said wood post inscribed with "T2R13 TXR14 T1R13 TL95JH"; thence S 2 deg. 19' 25" E, along the town line between T1 R13 WELS and TX R14 WELS, a distance of 2589 feet to a 4 inch yellow wood post found at the northeasterly corner of Spencer Bay TWP (T1 R14 WELS); thence N 89 deg. 46' 35" W, along the town line between TX R14 WELS and Spencer Bay TWP, a distance of 7255 feet to a 6 inch by 6 inch yellow wood post found at the southwesterly corner of TX R14 WELS, said wood post inscribed with "T1R14 EMCG MOC99"; thence N 13 deg. 14' 29" W, along the town line between East Middlesex Canal Grant and TX R14 WELS, a distance of 8639 feet to a #5 rebar set, with a yellow cap inscribed "WEBBER PLS2308", at the base of a yellow 6 inch by 6 inch wood post set inscribed "EAST MIDDLESEX TXR14 GREAT NORTHWOODS"; thence N 45 deg. 01' 44" E a distance of 11210.1 feet to a #5 rebar set with a yellow cap inscribed "WEBBER PLS2308" at the base of a yellow 6 inch by 6 inch wood post set inscribed "GREAT NORTHWOODS", said rebar set being 33 feet southerly from the center of a gravel road leading between the Sias Hill Road and Lobster Lake; thence easterly by the following bearings and distances and being approximately 33 feet southerly of the center line of said road: S 68 deg. 44' 10" E a distance of 391.01 feet to the town line between TX R14 WELS and T2 R13 WELS as marked by an existing spotted line; thence S 73 deg. 34' 33" E a distance of 527.26 feet; thence S 85 deg. 37' 42" E a distance of 146.34 feet; thence N 84 deg. 33' 15" E a distance of 276.60 feet; thence S 89 deg. 00' 26" E a distance of 425.27 feet; thence S 66 deg. 09' 36" E a

EXHIBIT D

1. Rights reserved in the deed from Great Northern Paper, Inc. to Great Northwoods, LLC dated March 30, 1999 and recorded in Book 1191, Page 326 of the Piscataquis County Registry of Deeds.

2. Rights to cross and recross reserved in the deed from Barbara A. Cassidy, et al., to Great Northern Nekoosa Corporation dated December 29, 1988 and recorded in Book 708, Page 162.

3. Rights reserved by the Grantor herein and granted or to be granted by the Grantor in favor of owners of those lots at Northeast Carry and Norcross Brook depicted on the plans entitled Final Survey Plan of Lots on Old Northeast Carry Road & North Shore Road, dated September 21, 2001, and recorded in the Piscataquis County Registry of Deeds in Cabinet M, Pages 168 through 171 and plans entitled Final Survey Plan of Lots on Norcross Brook Road, dated December 12, 2001, and recorded in the Piscataquis County Registry of Deeds in Cabinet M, Pages 190 through 199, in and to the Old Northeast Carry Road, Norcross Brook Road, and North Shore Road, which rights of said lot owners are more fully set forth in the Declaration of Covenants for the Northeast Carry Homeowners Association and the North Bay Road Association recorded in Book 1353, Page 112 and Book 1360, Page 221, respectively, of said Registry.

4. Terms and Conditions of a Conservation Easement given by this Grantor to the Forest Society of Maine of substantially even date to be recorded. By acceptance of this deed, the Grantee agrees to be bound by and assume all obligations of the Grantor therein.

**CONSERVATION EASEMENT on BIG SPENCER MOUNTAIN
Township 2, Range 13 WELS and Township X, Range 14 WELS,
Piscataquis County, Maine**

THIS INDENTURE is made this 9th day of April, 2002, by and between:

GREAT NORTHWOODS, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company with a mailing address of Attn: Vaughn Stough, McDonald Investment Company, One Office Park Circle, Suite 300, Birmingham, Alabama 35223 (hereinafter referred to as the "Grantor," which word is intended to include and bind, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the above-named Grantor, its successors and assigns) and

FOREST SOCIETY OF MAINE, a non-profit corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Maine, and qualified to hold conservation easements pursuant to Title 33 M.R.S.A. Sections 476, et seq., as amended, with a mailing address of P. O. Box 775, Bangor, Maine 04402 (hereinafter referred to as the "Holder," which word shall, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, include the Holder's successors and assigns).

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Grantor is the sole owner of approximately 4,242 acres of land encompassing a significant portion of Big Spencer Mountain, located in Township 2, Range 13, WELS and Township X, Range 14 WELS, Piscataquis County, Maine (the "Protected Property");

WHEREAS, Big Spencer Mountain, based upon the results of detailed natural resource inventories of the 656,000-acre West Branch area conducted by the Maine Natural Areas Program and Manomet Center for Conservation, was ranked as a top priority for ecological protection due to the expansive, unroaded and unfragmented mature hardwood stands ringing the lower slopes of the mountain, which stands are one of the largest, most intact, and best examples of mature northern hardwood forest in this part of northern Maine, as well as the softwood upper slopes, and the more barren, Krummholz summit;

WHEREAS, the high-elevation habitat on Big Spencer Mountain is ideal for Bicknell's thrush, a species of high concern, and Big Spencer Mountain is one of just a few sites in Maine and the Northeast providing nesting habitat for this species and that this habitat also supports unusually high densities of other boreal species such as blackpoll warblers, boreal chickadees, and ruby-crowned kinglets;

WHEREAS, the large, unroaded and unfragmented mature hardwood and mixed wood stands on the lower slopes of Big Spencer provide ideal habitat for the black-throated blue warbler, a neotropical migrant species that is considered one of Maine's highest global conservation priorities due to its restricted habitat needs and the fact that about 20% of the global population of this species breeds in Maine--the highest percentage of any songbird in the state;

WHEREAS, Big Spencer Mountain is a prominent landmark that defines the character and beauty of the Moosehead Lake area and a popular destination for hikers who climb a two-mile

trail to its 3230' summit which provides outstanding views of the Moosehead/Katahdin/West Branch region;

WHEREAS, in 1999, the Maine Legislature passed legislation providing for the designation of Ecological Reserves to maintain representative examples of natural communities and native ecosystems in a natural condition to protect Maine's biological diversity, to serve as benchmarks against which environmental change can be measured, to protect sufficient habitat for species whose habitat needs are unlikely to be met on lands managed for other purposes, and to provide sites for scientific research, long-term environmental monitoring and education;

WHEREAS, the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, in its Integrated Resource Policy (adopted December 18, 2000), established policies to implement the legislative mandate for Ecological Reserves on public lands managed by the Bureau;

WHEREAS, the Protected Property is to be conveyed as, and accepted as, an Ecological Reserve by the State of Maine through its Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands, Department of Conservation and pursuant to Title 12 Maine Revised Statutes Annotated Section 1805;

WHEREAS, preservation of the Big Spencer Mountain property as an Ecological Reserve will ensure that its ecological, scenic and recreation values are protected for future generations;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Grantor, in consideration of the foregoing and of the agreement of the Holder to accept the rights herein granted and enforce in perpetuity the restrictions contained herein, and in consideration of the payment of one dollar and other valuable consideration paid by the Holder, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, does hereby **GRANT** with **QUITCLAIM COVENANT**, in perpetuity, a perpetual easement over the Protected Property, being the same premises described in **Exhibit A** and depicted on the survey plan of Webber Surveying, Inc., entitled "Boundary Survey of Big Spencer Mountain" dated January 21, 2002, to be recorded herewith, Exhibit A being attached hereto and made a part hereof by reference, as follows:

1. PURPOSE. This Conservation Easement on the Protected Property is granted exclusively for the following conservation purposes:

It is the purpose of this conservation easement to assure that the Protected Property will be retained forever predominantly in its unroaded, unfragmented, natural condition to protect the native flora and fauna and to allow natural ecological processes to proceed with minimal interference or manipulation from human activity. It is intended that the Protected Property be managed as an Ecological Reserve to maintain the Protected Property in its natural condition to serve as a benchmark against which biological and environmental change can be measured, to protect habitat for those species whose habitat needs are unlikely to be met on lands managed for other purposes, to serve as a site for ongoing scientific research, long-term environmental monitoring, and education, and to allow for non-motorized recreation opportunities that do not adversely impact the ecological values of the Protected Property.

2. GRANTOR'S RIGHT, TITLE AND INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY. Except for the rights specifically conveyed to the Holder, and except for the restrictions expressly created by this Conservation Easement, the Grantor reserves and retains all ownership rights in the

Appendix D-2

Deed Restrictions for Loon Nest Protections

Quitclaim Deed from Merriweather, LLC to the State of Maine for the Seboomook Unit parcels including lands around Seboomook and Canada Falls lakes, Baker Lake, and the St. John Ponds, with Exhibit D of that Deed related to loon protections, and Exhibit A of Exhibit D providing specific management standards.



TRANSFER TAX PAID

QUITCLAIM DEED WITH COVENANT

Merriweather, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company with a mailing address c/o Wagner Forest Management, Ltd., P.O. Box 160, Lyme, NH 03768, for consideration paid, grants to the **State of Maine**, acting by and through the Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands, 22 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333 (acting under its authority pursuant to Title 12, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, Section 1850(1)), with quitclaim covenant, certain lots or parcels of land in Somerset County located in **Township 2 Range 4 NBKP (Pittston Academy Grant), Township 4 Range 18 WELS (Comstock), Township 4 Range 17 WELS, Township 1 Range 4 NBKP (Plymouth or Boyd Township), Seboomook Township, Township 1 Range 3 NBKP (West Middlesex Canal Grant), and Little W Township**, being the Seboomook Block, so called; in **Township 4 Range 17 WELS and Township 4 Range 18 WELS (Comstock)**, being the Headwaters Block, so called; in **Township 7 Range 17 WELS**, being the Baker Lake Block, so called; and in **Township 2 Range 4 NBKP (Pittston Academy Grant) and Township 2 Range 3 NBKP (Soldiertown)**, being the Canada Falls Block, so called; all such lots and parcels being described in Exhibit A attached hereto and made a part hereof, subject to those matters, exceptions and reservations set forth herein.

The Premises herein conveyed are being acquired by Grantee with funds from the Land for Maine's Future Fund in accordance with the Land for Maine's Future Act, as Title 5, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, Chapter 353, as amended, for administration by the Maine Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands, as a natural area important for recreation, hunting and fishing, conservation, wildlife habitat and scenic beauty.

The Premises are acquired for the conservation of natural resources, including, but not limited to, the preservation and protection of loon habitat and nesting areas, North Atlantic salmon habitat, public recreation and sustainable forestry, as appropriate, and in accordance with Exhibit D attached herewith and incorporated herein by reference.

The Premises herein are acquired, in part, with federal funds from the Forest Legacy Program in accordance with the provisions of Title XII of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (16 United States Code ("U.S.C.") Section 2103c), as amended, which was enacted to protect environmentally important private forest areas threatened by conversion to non-forest uses and for promoting forest land protection and other conservation opportunities. In the event that these lands acquired with Federal funds under the Forest Legacy Program (16 USC Section 2103c) are ever sold, exchanged or otherwise disposed, the United States shall be reimbursed the fair market value at the time of disposal in proportion to the original Federal investment. Provided, however, the Secretary of Agriculture may exercise discretion to consent to such sale, exchange, or disposition upon the State's tender of equal valued consideration acceptable to the Secretary.

Notice is hereby made to the sketch attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit E depicting the location on the Premises of the Seboomook Landfill, so called. By acceptance of this deed, Grantee covenants not to use the site of the Seboomook Landfill for any purpose.

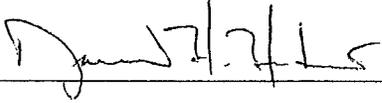
For Grantor's source of title, reference may be had to the deed from Great Northern Paper, Inc. to Somerset Woodlands LLC dated March 30, 1999 and recorded in Book 2541, Page 221 of the Somerset County Registry of Deeds. Reference may also be had to the deed from Yankee Forest Limited Liability Company, as successor by merger to Somerset Woodlands, LLC, to Kiev, LLC, dated May 15, 2002, and recorded in the Somerset County Registry of Deeds in Book 2949, Page 263 and to the Certificate of Merger between Kiev, LLC and Merriweather, LLC recorded at Book 2952, Page 194 of said Registry. Reference may also be had to the confirmatory deeds from Great Northern Paper, Inc. to Yankee Forest Limited Liability Company dated September 6, 2001 recorded in Book 2851, Page 6 and from Yankee Forest Limited Liability Company to Great Northern Paper, Inc. dated October 10, 2001 and recorded in Book 2862, Page 176.

[SIGNATURE APPEARS ON FOLLOWING PAGE]

In witness whereof, Merriweather, LLC has caused the foregoing instrument to be signed and sealed by Wagner Forest Management, Ltd., its duly authorized manager, this 18th day of December, 2003.

Witness:

Merriweather, LLC
By Wagner Forest Management, Ltd.
Its Manager

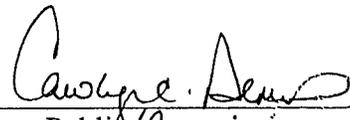


By 
Thomas J. Colgan, President

State of New Hampshire
Grafton County

December 18, 2003

Personally appeared the above named Thomas J. Colgan, President of Wagner Forest Management, Ltd., and acknowledged before me the foregoing instrument to be his free act and deed in his said capacity and the free act and deed of said corporation in its said capacity and of said limited liability company.



Notary Public / *Commissioner of Deeds* **SEAL**
CAROLYN C. DEMERS, Commissioner of Deeds
My Commission Expires October 4, 2005

Print or type name as signed

CONSENT OF COMMISSIONER

Pursuant to Title 12 M.R.S.A. Section 1850(1), the Commissioner of the Department of Conservation hereby gives his consent to the above and foregoing Quitclaim Deed. Executed this 19th day of December, 2003.

STATE OF MAINE
Department of Conservation

By: *Patrick K. McGowan*
Patrick K. McGowan, Its Commissioner

STATE OF MAINE
County of Kennebec, ss.

Date: Dec 19, 2003

Then personally appeared the above-named Patrick K. McGowan, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Conservation and acknowledged the execution of the within Consent of Commissioner as his free act and deed in his said capacity and the free act and deed of the State of Maine.

Before me,

SEAL

Gale Ross
Notary Public/Attorney at Law
Print Name: Gale Ross
My commission expires:
Seal: Dec, 2010

EXHIBIT D

To Deed from Merriweather, LLC to the State of Maine, Bureau of Parks and Lands

Notice of Grant Agreement and Conditions of Conveyance

The State of Maine, Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands and its successors and assigns (hereinafter the "Department") acknowledges that the property, as more particularly described in Exhibit A of the deed from Merriweather LLC to said State of Maine, to which this Exhibit D is attached, (hereinafter the "Property") is acquired in part with funds received from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (hereinafter the "Service") acting for and on behalf of the Trustees of the North Cape Oil Spill pursuant to a consent decree entered in United States of America and the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations v. EW Holding Corp. and K-Sea Transportation Corp., C.A. 003325, U.S. District Court, District of Rhode Island, entered on October 6, 2000 (hereinafter "Trustee Funds").

The Department further acknowledges that the Property is acquired in part with funds received from the Forest Legacy Grant Program administered by the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, and that the property is subject to all the terms and conditions of the Forest Legacy Program (hereinafter the "Grant Agreement") between the Forest Service and the Department. A copy of the Grant Agreement is kept on file at the offices of the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands, Department of Conservation, 22 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0022. The Department further acknowledges that the Property is acquired in part with funds from several other non-federal funding sources available from the State of Maine.

The Department acknowledges that the Property, which is the subject of this Grant Agreement and acquisition, is acquired for the conservation of natural resources, including, but not limited to, the protection of loon habitat conservation and restoration, public recreation and sustainable forestry, as appropriate. Those recreational and forestry activities will be planned and implemented in a manner that gives priority to conserving the property's nesting habitat for loons, thereby preserving and protecting in perpetuity its value as habitat and nesting areas for loons and further assuring that future uses of the Property will not impair or interfere with these habitat values. The Department shall give priority consideration to maintaining and ensuring loon habitat conservation and maximum loon reproductive success in all management decisions, and in accordance with Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein. The Department, as the Grant Recipient and landowner, shall be responsible for exercising sufficient control and management over the Property to ensure that the Property is used and will continue to be used for the approved purposes for which it is acquired in perpetuity, as set forth herein. In consideration of the Trustee Funds received from the Service, the Department further agrees that the Property may not be conveyed or encumbered, in whole or in part, to any other party or for any other purpose or use, whatsoever without the express written consent of the Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and any such transfer or conveyance shall be subject to the provisions set forth herein and in the deed. The Department covenants that the Property will be managed for maintenance of loon nesting habitat and other uses as provided for in this Exhibit D.

USFWS shall at all times have the right to enter the Property, to inspect the property and to monitor loon productivity. USFWS and the State of Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department shall cooperate in the development and, as necessary, updating of a monitoring protocol to be carried out to measure loon productivity (the "Loon Monitoring Protocol"). Any information collected by any party pursuant to the Loon Monitoring Protocol shall be shared with the other parties.

The Department shall at all times enforce the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement and Conditions of Conveyance. Should the Department in the opinion of USFWS fail to enforce the terms and conditions, USFWS shall have authority to act, at its election as agent for and on behalf of the Department, or as an assignee of the Department, to enforce said terms and conditions. In the event that the Department fails to enforce the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement and Conditions of Conveyance or if a violation of the Grant Agreement and Conditions of Conveyance is threatened and the Department does not respond to the threatened violations, USFWS may bring an action at law or in equity in a court of competent jurisdiction to enforce the terms of the Grant Agreement and Conditions of Conveyance. Upon the request of USFWS, the Department shall provide all necessary authorizations and documentation to affirm the status of USFWS as agent for, or at the election of USFWS, as assignee of the Department, for the purposes of enforcement of the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement and Conditions of Conveyance.

If the Service determines that the Department is in violation of any terms or conditions of Exhibit A and does not cease the violation within 30 days of written notice from the Service, the Service, at its option, may seek to demonstrate in a court of competent jurisdiction that there is violation of the terms and conditions of this Agreement that has not ceased after notice and may seek a judicial order requiring compliance with such terms and conditions. If the Department fails to comply after such judicial determination or if specific performance is an inadequate remedy, the Court may require the Department; either (1) to acquire title to another parcel of real property of equal value that serves the same approved purpose as the original Property and to manage the newly acquired real property for same purposes specified in the original Grant Agreement, or (2) to repay the Service, in cash, the proportionate share of the Trustees' funds invested in the Department's purchase price, and such funds shall be used by U.S. Fish and Wildlife to acquire fee title or conservation easements to protect loon habitat and nesting areas.

The Department, in consideration of the Trustee Funds paid by the Service and as Grant Recipient, hereby assents to the terms, conditions, obligations and responsibilities set forth in this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the State of Maine, acting by and through its Department of Conservation, has caused these presents to be signed and sealed by Patrick K. McGowan, its Commissioner hereunto duly authorized this 10th day of December, 2003.

State of Maine, Department of Conservation

Patrick K. McGowan

By: Patrick K. McGowan
Its: Commissioner

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

By: *James G. Geiger*
Its: James G. Geiger
Regional Director ACTING

State of Maine)
County of Kennebec)

On this 19th day of December, 2003, before me personally appeared Patrick K. McGowan, to me personally known, who, being by me duly sworn, did say that this is his free act and deed in his said capacity and the free act and deed of the State of Maine Department of Conservation.

SEAL

(SEAL)

Notary Public *Gale Ross*
Printed Name: Gale Ross

My Commission Expires: Dec, 2010

State of Massachusetts)
County of Hampshire)

On this 13 day of November, 2003, before me personally appeared *James G. Geiger*, to me personally known, who, being by me duly sworn, did say personally and under his authority as Acting Reg. Director that this is his/her free act and deed and the free act and deed of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

SEAL

(SEAL)

Notary Public *Edward A. Knish*
Printed Name: Edward A. Knish
My Commission Expires:

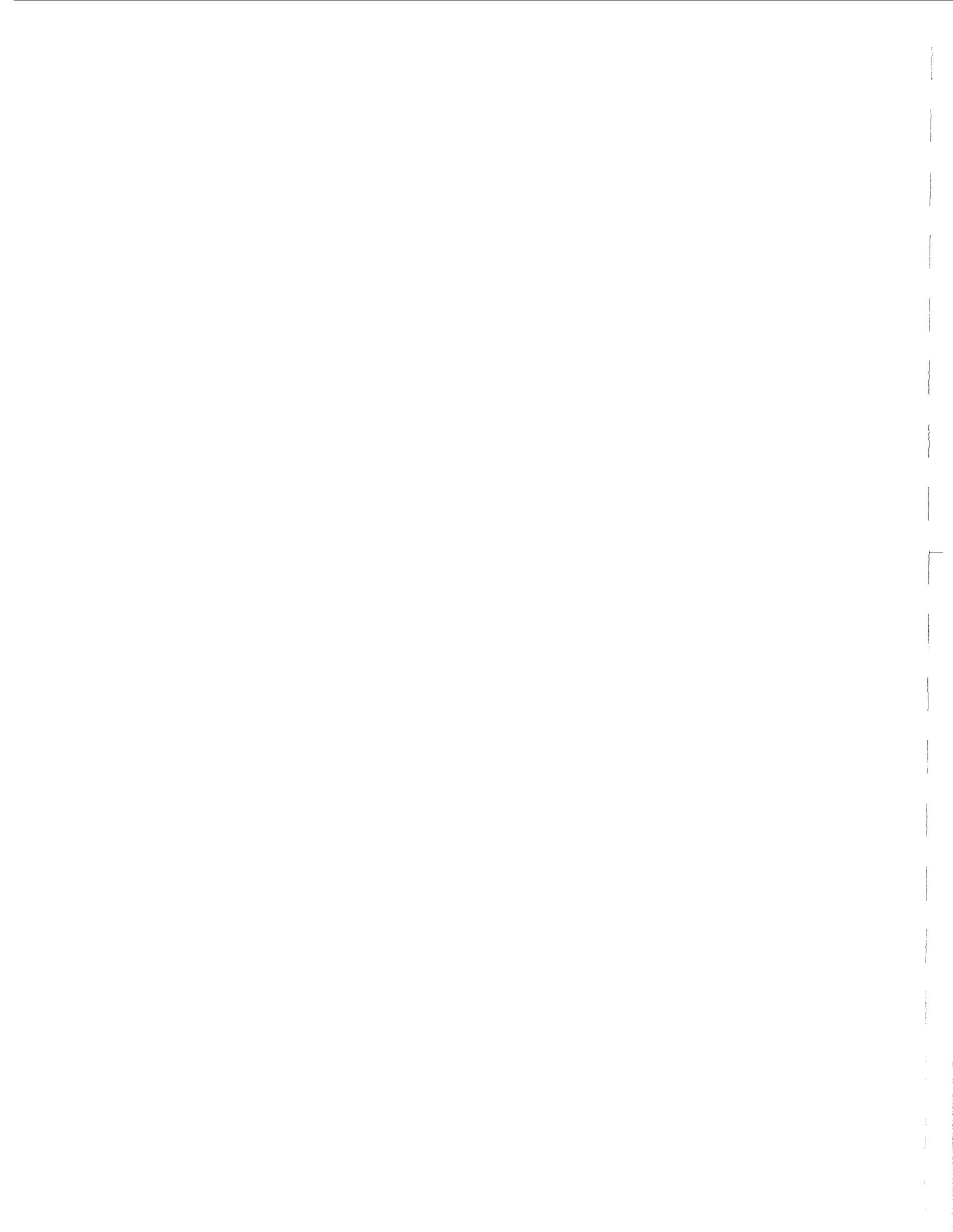
NOTARY PUBLIC
Expires July 21, 2004

Exhibit A

Loon Nest Site Management Standards and Designation of Loon Nest Site Management Areas

1. Loon nesting sites and nesting loons will be recognized as natural resources of special consideration in the development and implementation of the State of Maine, Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands' management plans for the property. As such, their conservation will be a priority in planning for recreational or forest management use of the property.
2. There shall be no additional residential or commercial development of the property. The state will, however, have the discretion to continue charging user-fees for the traditional low impact recreational use of the property allowed under the Bureau of Parks and Lands policies. Those recreational activities will be planned and implemented in a manner that gives priority to conserving the property's nesting habitat for loons.
3. Within 1,000 feet from a Loon Nest Site shown on Exhibit B attached hereto and incorporated herein (which is a reduced copy of a map entitled "Map of Loon Nest Lakes and Loon Nest Sites" prepared by BioDiversity Research Institute, a copy of which is on file with the Forest Society of Maine and with the State of Maine, Department of Conservation, Bureau of Public Land in their respective West Branch Project Files), there shall be no new recreational improvements, and within the next 1,000 feet there will be none without consent of the USFWS, or the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife acting as its agent, confirming that the improvement will not be detrimental to the loon nest site;
4. There shall be no Forest Management Activities within 250 feet of a Loon Nest Site shown on Exhibit B during the nesting season (May 1st to July 31st); and
5. All Forest Management Activities taking place within 250 feet of a Loon Nest Site shown on Exhibit B shall be conducted in a manner that protects the integrity of such Loon Nest Site.





Appendix D-3

**Management Agreement between
the Nature Conservancy and the Bureau of Parks and Lands
related to**

Baker Lake and the St. John Ponds Parcels



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*Hans P. Birle; Extension 218
hbirle@tnc.org*

December 11, 2003

Alan Hutchinson, Executive Director
Forest Society of Maine
P.O. Box 775, 115 Franklin Street
Bangor, ME 04402

David Soucy
Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands
286 Water Street
Key Bank Plaza
Augusta, ME 04330

Re: Upper St. John River (Merriweather), ME

Dear Alan and David:

As you know, The Nature Conservancy's Board of Governors at its meeting on August 29, 2003 approved assisting the Forest Society of Maine and the Bureau of Parks and Lands with the acquisition of a conservation easement over approximately 56,904 acres and fee title to approximately 5,294 acres in the Upper St. John River Watershed in Somerset County, Maine by contributing \$3 million towards the project.

Please consider this letter the formal agreement between the parties of the conditions under which these funds are made available. After your review, kindly sign the enclosed copies of this letter in your respective capacities indicating acceptance of the terms and return them to me.

Of these funds, \$1.5 million will be made available at closing in December of 2003. The remaining \$1.5 million will be made available in three equal installments of \$500,000. each in December 2004, 2005 and 2006. The entire amount is to be used as follows:

1. For the acquisition of a conservation easement over approximately 56,904 acres of the project within the Upper St. John River Watershed to be held by the Forest Society of Maine. Please provide me with a copy of the conservation easement and with a recorded copy after closing.
2. For the acquisition of 3,498 acres of lands at First, Second and Third Upper St. John Ponds by the Maine Bureau of Parks of Lands. This acreage is to be managed as an ecological reserve. Please send me written conformation upon acceptance of this

property into the ecological reserve program. Please send me a copy of the recorded deed in to the State of Maine.

3. For the acquisition of approximately 1,196 acres of land surrounding Baker Lake, including some frontage on the upper reaches of the Baker Branch of the St. John River. This acreage is to be managed as Public Reserve land for remote recreation and in a manner that preserves its important conservation and scenic values. Please send me a copy of the recorded deed in to the State of Maine.
4. It is my understanding that the attorney for the state Jane Surran Pyne has reviewed and concluded that the title to the properties is good, clear and marketable and that there are no encumbrances that would prevent the intended protection of the property.
5. The initial \$1.5 million will be deposited into escrow with Monument Title Company as Escrow Agent. The subsequent payments will be made directly to the Forest Society of Maine on the dates indicated.

We are very pleased to be able to help the Forest Society of Maine and the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands and be part of this joint effort to protect additional land in the Upper St, John Watershed.

Sincerely,

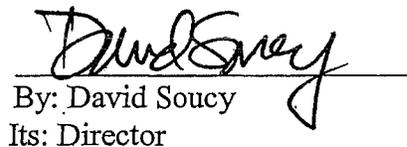


Hans P. Birle
Legal Counsel
Atlantic Conservation Region

FOREST SOCIETY OF MAINE

By: Alan Hutchinson
Its: Executive Director

STATE OF MAINE, BUREAU OF
PARKS AND LANDS



By: David Soucy
Its: Director

Cc: Tom Rumpf/Kent Wommack
Surran Pyne



Appendix E Guiding Statutes MRSA Title 12

§1846. Access to public reserved lands

1. Legislative policy. The Legislature declares that it is the policy of the State to keep the public reserved lands as a public trust and that full and free public access to the public reserved lands to the extent permitted by law, together with the right to reasonable use of those lands, is the privilege of every citizen of the State. The Legislature further declares that it recognizes that such free and reasonable public access may be restricted to ensure the optimum value of such lands as a public trust but that such restrictions, if and when imposed, must be in strict accordance with the requirements set out in this section. [1997, c. 678, §13 (new).]

2. Establishment of restrictions on public access. [2001, c. 604, §10 (rp).]

3. Unlawful entry onto public reserved lands. [2001, c. 604, §10 (rp).]

4. Development of public facilities. The bureau may construct and maintain overnight campsites and other camping and recreation facilities. [1997, c. 678, §13 (new).]

5. User fees. The bureau may charge reasonable fees to defray the cost of constructing and maintaining overnight campsites and other camping and recreation facilities. [1997, c. 678, §13 (new).]

Appendix F

Glossary

“Age Class”: the biological age of a stand of timber; in single-aged stands, age classes are generally separated by 10-year intervals.

“ATV Trails”: designated trails of varying length with a variety of trail surfaces and grades, designed primarily for the use of all-terrain vehicles.

“All-Terrain Vehicles”: motor driven, off-road recreational vehicles capable of cross-country travel on land, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain. For the purposes of this document an all-terrain vehicle includes a multi-track, multi-wheel or low pressure tire vehicle; a motorcycle or related 2-wheel vehicle; and 3- or 4-wheel or belt-driven vehicles. It does not include an automobile or motor truck; a snowmobile; an airmobile; a construction or logging vehicle used in performance of its common functions; a farm vehicle used for farming purposes; or a vehicle used exclusively for emergency, military, law enforcement, or fire control purposes (Title 12, Chapter 715, Section 7851.2).

“Bicycling/ Recreation Biking Trails”: designated trails of short to moderate length located on hard-packed or paved trail surfaces with slight to moderate grades, designed primarily for the use of groups or individuals seeking a more leisurely experience.

“Boat Access - Improved”: vehicle-accessible hard-surfaced launch sites with gravel or hard-surface parking areas. May also contain one or more picnic tables, an outhouse, and floats or docks.

“Boat Access - Unimproved”: vehicle-accessible launch sites with dirt or gravel ramps to the water and parking areas, and where no other facilities are normally provided.

“Campgrounds”: areas designed for transient occupancy by camping in tents, camp trailers, travel trailers, motor homes, or similar facilities or vehicles designed for temporary shelter. Developed campgrounds usually provide toilet buildings, drinking water, picnic tables, and fireplaces, and may provide disposal areas for RVs, showers, boat access to water, walking trails, and swimming opportunities.

“Carry-In Boat Access”: dirt or gravel launch sites accessible by foot over a short to moderate length trail, that generally accommodates the use of only small watercraft. Includes a trailhead with parking and a designated trail to the access site.

“Clear-cut”: an single-age harvesting method in which all trees or all merchantable trees are removed from a site in a single operation.

“Commercial Forest Land”: the portion of the landbase that is both available and capable of producing at least 20 cubic feet of wood or fiber per acre per year.

“Commercial Harvest”: any harvest from which forest products are sold. By contrast, in a pre-commercial harvest, no products are sold, and it is designed principally to improve stand quality and conditions.

“Community”: an assemblage of interacting plants and animals and their common environment, recurring across the landscape, in which the effects of recent human intervention are minimal (“Natural Landscapes Of Maine: A Classification Of Ecosystems and Natural Communities” Maine Natural Heritage Program. April, 1991).

“Cross-Country Ski Trails”: designated winter-use trails primarily available for the activity of cross-country skiing. Trails may be short to long for day or overnight use.

“Ecosystem Type”: a group of communities and their environment, occurring together over a particular portion of the landscape, and held together by some common physical or biotic feature. (“Natural Landscapes Of Maine: A Classification Of Ecosystems and Natural Communities.” Maine Natural Heritage Program, April, 1991).

“Folist Site”: areas where thick mats of organic matter overlay bedrock, commonly found at high elevations.

“Forest Certification”: A process in which a third party “independent” entity audits the policies and practices of a forest management organization against a set of standards or principles related to sustainable management. It may be limited to either land/forest management or product chain-of-custody, or may include both.

“Forest Condition (or condition of the forest)”: the state of the forest, including the age, size, height, species, and spatial arrangement of plants, and the functioning as an ecosystem of the combined plant and animal life of the forest.

“Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification”: A third-party sustainable forestry certification program that was developed by the Forest Stewardship Council, an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization founded in 1993. The FSC is comprised of representatives from environmental and conservation groups, the timber industry, the forestry profession, indigenous peoples’ organizations, community forestry groups, and forest product certification organizations from 25 countries. For information about FSC standards see http://www.fscus.org/standards_criteria/ and www.fsc.org.

“Forest Type”: a descriptive title for an area of forest growth based on similarities of species and size characteristics.

“Group Camping Areas”: vehicle or foot-accessible areas designated for overnight camping by large groups. These may include one or more outhouses, several fire rings or fire grills, a minimum of one water source, and several picnic tables.

“Horseback Ride/Pack Stock Trails”: generally moderate to long-distance trails designated for use by horses, other ride, or pack stock.

“Invasive Species”: generally nonnative species which invade native ecosystems and successfully compete with and displace native species due to the absence of natural controls. Examples are purple loosestrife and the zebra mussel.

“Late successional”: The condition in the natural progression of forest ecosystems where long-lived tree species dominate, large stems or trunks are common, and the rate of ecosystem change becomes much more gradual. Late successional forest are also mature forests that, because of their age and stand characteristics, harbor certain habitat not found elsewhere in the landscape.

“Log Landings”: areas, generally close to haul roads, where forest products may be hauled to and stored prior to being trucked to markets.

“Management Roads”: roads designed for timber management and/or administrative use that may be used by the public as long as they remain in service. Management roads may be closed in areas containing special resources, where there are issues of public safety or environmental protection.

“Mature Tree”: a tree which has reached the age at which its height growth has significantly slowed or ceased, though its diameter growth may still be substantial. When its annual growth no longer exceeds its internal decay and/or crown loss (net growth is negative), the tree is over-mature.

“Motorized”: a mode of travel across the landbase which utilizes internal combustion or electric powered conveyances; which in itself constitutes a recreational activity, or facilitates participation in a recreational activity.

“Mountain Bike Trails”: designated trails generally located on rough trail surfaces with moderate to steep grades, designed primarily for the use of mountain bicycles with all-terrain tires by individuals seeking a challenging experience.

“Multi-aged Management”: management which is designed to retain two or more age classes and canopy layers at all times. Its harvest methods imitate natural disturbance regimes which cause partial stand replacement (shelterwood with reserves) or small gap disturbances (selection).

“Natural Resource Values”: described in Maine’s Natural Resource Protection Act to include coastal sand dunes, coastal wetlands, significant wildlife habitat, fragile mountain areas, freshwater wetlands, great ponds and rivers, streams, and brooks. For the purposes of this plan they also include unique or unusual plant communities.

“Non-motorized”: a mode of travel across the landbase which does not utilize internal combustion, or electric powered conveyances; which in itself constitutes a recreational activity, or facilitates participation in a recreational activity.

“Non-native (Exotic)”: a species that enters or is deliberately introduced into an ecosystem beyond its historic range, except through natural expansion, including organisms transferred from other countries into the state, unnaturally occurring hybrids, cultivars, genetically altered or engineered species or strains, or species or subspecies with nonnative genetic lineage.

“Old Growth Stand”: a stand in which the majority of the main crown canopy consists of long-lived or late successional species usually 150 to 200 years old or older, often with characteristics such as large snags, large downed woody material, and multiple age classes, and in which evidence of human-caused disturbance is absent or old and faint.

“Old Growth Tree”: for the purposes of this document, a tree which is in the latter stages of maturity or is over-mature.

“Pesticide”: a chemical agent or substance employed to kill or suppress pests (such as insects, weeds, fungi, rodents, nematodes, or other organism) or intended for use as a plant regulator, defoliant, or desiccant. (from LURC Regulations, Ch. 10)

“Primitive Campsites”: campsites that are rustic in nature, have one outhouse, and may include tent pads, Adirondack-type shelters, and rustic picnic tables. Campsites may be accessed by vehicle, foot, or water.

“Public Road or Roadway”: any roadway which is owned, leased, or otherwise operated by a government body or public entity. (from LURC Regulations, Ch. 10)

“Public Use Roads”: all-weather gravel or paved roads designed for two-way travel to facilitate both public and administrative access to recreation facilities. Includes parking facilities provided for the public. Management will include roadside aesthetic values normally associated with travel influenced zones.

“Recreation Values”: the values associated with participation in outdoor recreation activities.

“Regeneration”: both the process of establishing new growth and the new growth itself, occurring naturally through seeding or sprouting, and artificially by planting seeds or seedlings.

“Remote Ponds”: As defined by the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission: ponds having no existing road access by two-wheel drive motor vehicles during summer months within ½ mile of the normal high water mark of the body of water with no more than one noncommercial remote camp and its accessory structures within ½ mile of the normal high water mark of the body of water, that support cold water game fisheries.

“Riparian”: an area of land or water that includes stream channels, lakes, floodplains and wetlands, and their adjacent upland ecosystems.

“Salvage”: a harvest operation designed to remove dead and dying timber in order to remove whatever value the stand may have before it becomes unmerchantable.

“Selection”: related to multi-aged management, the cutting of individual or small groups of trees; generally limited in area to patches of one acre or less.

“Service Roads”: summer or winter roads located to provide access to Bureau-owned lodging, maintenance structures, and utilities. Some service roads will be gated or plugged to prevent public access for safety, security, and other management objectives.

“Silviculture”: the branch of forestry which deals with the application of forest management principles to achieve specific objectives with respect to the production of forest products and services.

“Single-aged Management”: management which is designed to manage single age, single canopy layer stands. Its harvest methods imitate natural disturbance regimes which result in full stand replacement. A simple two-step (seed cut/removal cut) shelterwood is an example of a single-aged system.

“Snowmobile Trails”: designated winter-use trails of varying length located on a groomed trail surfaces with flat to moderate grades, designed primarily for the use of snowmobiles.

“Stand”: a group of trees, the characteristics of which are sufficiently alike to allow uniform classification.

“Succession/ successional”: progressive changes in species composition and forest community structure caused by natural processes over time.

“Sustainable Forestry/ Harvest”: that level of timber harvesting, expressed as treated acres and/or volume removals, which can be conducted on a perpetual basis while providing for non-forest values. Ideally this harvest level would be “even-flow,” that is, the same quantity each year. In practice, the current condition of the different properties under Bureau timber management, and the ever-changing situation in markets, will dictate a somewhat cyclical harvest which will approach even-flow only over time periods of a decade or more.

“Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)”: A third party sustainable forestry certification program that was developed in 1994 by the American Forest and Paper Association, which defines its program as “a comprehensive system of principles, objectives and performance measures that integrates the perpetual growing and harvesting of trees with the protection of wildlife, plants, soil and water quality.” To review SFI standards see http://www.afandpa.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Environment_and_Recycling/SFI/The_SFI_Standard/The_SFI_Standard.htm.

Appendix G

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