

# Eastern Interior Region Management Plan



*Gassabias Stream*

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



**July 1, 2009**



**ADOPTION CITATION**

In accordance with the provisions of 12 M.R.S.A. § 1847(2) 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 and amended March 7, 2007), this Management Plan for the **Eastern Interior Region** is hereby adopted.

RECOMMENDED: Willard R. Harris DATE: July 1, 2009

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APPROVED: Patrick K. McGowan DATE: July 1, 2009

Patrick K. McGowan  
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## *Acknowledgments*

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

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Information about archaeological and historic resources was provided by Art Spiess at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

The Bureau also acknowledges the helpful participation of the Eastern Interior Region Management Plan Advisory Committee (Appendix A), and the members of the public who participated in public meetings held during the preparation of this Plan.

## I. Introduction

### *About This Document*

This document constitutes a fifteen-year management plan (the Plan) for over 57,000 acres of public reserved land in the Eastern Interior region of Maine managed by the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (the Bureau). The Plan summarizes the planning process and character of the plan area, but its primary function is to 1) provide a description of the resources found on the properties addressed, 2) describe management issues identified by members of the public and Bureau staff, and 3) put forth management recommendations and resource allocations to be implemented over the next fifteen-year period.

One objective of the Plan is to provide a balanced spectrum of opportunities in keeping with the opportunities and resources available in the region as a whole. In developing the management recommendations for each parcel, the Bureau has considered this broader perspective. The region is unique in that the state conservation ownership represents only a portion of the large-scale conservation efforts on private lands that have occurred in recent years; for many of these the Bureau is either a partner or is an abutter. Management of the Bureau's lands now and in the future will need to consider the context of these projects and similar efforts anticipated in the near future.

The Plan is also a commitment to the public that these properties will be managed within prescribed legislative mandates and in accordance with the Bureau's *Integrated Resource Policy* and its stated mission and goals. Future revisions to these commitments will occur only after providing opportunities for public comment. The Plan provides guidance to Bureau staff with responsibility for managing these properties, including a degree of flexibility in achieving the stated objectives. This document is not, however, a plan of operations.

An important aspect of the management of public lands is monitoring and evaluation of proposed management activities in terms of stated objectives. This Plan describes monitoring and evaluation procedures for recreational use, wildlife management, management of ecological reserves, and timber management.

The Eastern Interior Management Plan will be in effect for the next 15 years. At five-year intervals, the Bureau will report to the Advisory Committee on accomplishments and changing conditions that may warrant amendments to the Plan. At the end of 15 years, a full revision will be undertaken. It is recognized all recommendations may not be accomplished within the Plan period.

*What is the Eastern Interior Region?*

**Eastern Interior Plan Lands**

<b>Property Name</b>	<b>Fee Acres</b>	<b>Easement Acres</b>
Bradley Unit	9,277	0
Bradley Kittridge Lot	229	0
Cary – Border Lot	230	0
Cary - Southwest Lot	105	0
Codyville - Tomah Mountain Lot	940	0
Codyville – Southeast Lot	175	0
Codyville - Northeast Lot	135	0
Duck Lake Unit (includes portions of Machias Phase II)	30,624	0
Grand Falls Schoolhouse	1	0
Grand Lake Stream Lot	915	0
Great Pond Lake Lot	450	0
Great Pond Outlet Lot	40	0
Hardwood Island (West Grand Lake)	49	0
Lakeville - Duck/Keg Lake Lot	890	0
Lakeville - Upper Dobsis Lot	610	0
Lakeville – Magoon Pond Lot	265	0
Machias River Unit	8,651	11,746
Macwahoc Lot	555	0
Mattawamkeag Lake	190	3,026
Molunkus Lot	485	0
Nicatous Lake	162	20,260
Reed -Thompson Deadwater Lot	995	0
Reed –Wytovitlock Lot	540	0
Webster Lot	790	0
<b>Pending Acquisitions</b>		
Lower Penobscot I (Amherst Fee)	Pending	
Lower Penobscot II (Great Pond Easement)		Pending
Machias River Phase III (Working Forest Easement)		Pending
Wabassus Lake (Bureau easement on DLLT land)		Pending
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57,303</b>	<b>35,032</b>

Other public or private conservation properties within or near the Plan area are mentioned in the Planning Context section, but are not the principal focus of this management plan. These properties include other lands managed by the Bureau including the Saint Croix River (managed as a state park) and Bible Point (a state historic site), certain boat launching facilities managed by the Boating Facilities Division, and trails managed by the Bureau's Off-road Vehicle Division. Also mentioned in the Regional Context section are conservation lands managed by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W), the Bureau of Sea Run Fisheries and Habitat (formally the Atlantic Salmon Commission), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Downeast Lakes Land Trust (DLLT).

## II. The Planning Process and Guidance

This section describes the Bureau's planning process for development of its management plans and the statutes and policies that guide its management decisions. The planning process includes a robust public participation effort, intended to provide input to the Bureau's management. In addition, the Bureau is guided by statutes requiring and directing the Bureau to develop management plans, and authority directing the Bureau to also create a system of ecological reserves. Overall, management of Bureau lands is guided by the Integrated Resource Policy (IRP), which itself was developed with a significant public process. Finally, the Bureau's forest management, where allowed under the multiple purpose management system defined by the IRP, is conducted sustainably, and is third party certified under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) programs. The following describes these important influences guiding the development of this Plan in further detail.

### *The Planning Process*

Overall, the Bureau's management planning process includes a series of steps, each involving interdisciplinary review and extensive efforts to solicit and consider public comment, in order to achieve a plan that integrates various perspectives and needs while protecting and conserving the resources of Bureau lands. At a minimum this involves three public meetings including a public scoping session, an advisory committee meeting to review a draft plan, and a general public meeting on the final plan. The following describes the plan process for the Eastern Interior Region Management Plan.

*Resource Assessments:* The first phase of the planning process included an examination of resources, issues and opportunities available on the Eastern Interior region properties. Beginning in the winter of 2007, Bureau staff undertook an intensive review of the natural and geological, historic and cultural, fisheries and wildlife, recreation, and timber resources on these properties. Much of this information was obtained by Department of Conservation (DOC) professionals conducting formal inventories of specific resources. Staff also participated in several reconnaissance field trips to parcels within the region, including a winter snowmobile tour in February 2008, and a spring tour in June 2008.

*Issue Identification/Discussion through Public Meetings:* Meetings to identify issues of concern to the public about these properties included:

- A Public Scoping Session held in Bangor on March 4, 2008 to hear from various members of the public regarding their concerns for the future management of these properties.
- A Focus Group (working group) meeting with landowners was held in Brewer on May 8, 2008 to exchange information and ideas on land management objectives.

*Advisory Committee Formation and Review of First Draft:* A Public Advisory Committee was formed in the spring of 2008 to review and discuss formally a first draft of the Plan. Members of this committee were selected on the basis of their resource expertise and regional and local

knowledge. An Advisory Committee meeting was held in Bangor on October 15, 2008 to discuss and receive comment on the first draft of the Management Plan.

*Public Meeting on Final Draft Plan:* Comments on the first draft from the Advisory Committee, general public, and resource professionals were considered in developing a final draft of the Plan. The final draft was presented at a general public meeting on March 24, 2009 in Brewer. A 30 day written comment period was provided following this public meeting to receive additional comments from the general public.

*Commissioner's Review and Adoption:* Following the final public meeting on the final draft plan, the Bureau considered all comments received, made decisions and revised the final draft. The Plan was reviewed by the Department of Conservation's Commissioner and adopted by the Commissioner and the Bureau of Parks and Lands Director.

### ***Statutory Guidance***

The Eastern Interior Region 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. Title 12 MRSA 1847 (2) requires the Bureau to develop multiple use management plans for public reserved lands and contains the following mandates (among others):

#### *Multiple Use Management*

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

#### *Recreational Uses*

- The Unit provides a wide range of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities (IRP); including provision of remote, undeveloped areas (Title 12, Section 1847).
- 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).

Management guidance used in preparing this Plan is provided by the Integrated Resource Policy (IRP), adopted by the Bureau in 2000 after an extensive public process. The IRP is designed to be a planning and decision making tool for the Bureau. Its policies are consistent with statutory requirements mentioned above, with much greater detail provided for management and planning.

### ***Summary of the Resource Allocation System***

The Resource Allocation System is a land management-planning tool developed in the 1980s, and formalized in the *Integrated Resource Policy* (IRP), adopted in December 2000. The Resource Allocation System, which assigns 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 sensitive): 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.

### ***Designation Criteria for Special Protection Areas***

- 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 the areas for this allocation. Because of their sensitivity, these areas can seldom accommodate active manipulation or intensive use of the resource. Recreation as a secondary use is allowed with emphasis on non-motorized, dispersed activities. 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.

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.

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.

### ***Designation Criteria for Backcountry Recreation Areas***

Relatively large areas (usually 1,000 acres or more) are allocated for backcountry recreational use where a special combination of features is present, including:

**Superior scenic quality**

**Remoteness**

**Wild and pristine character**

**Capacity to impart a sense of solitude**

Backcountry areas are comprised of two types:

**Non-mechanized Backcountry Areas** – roadless areas with outstanding opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of dispersed recreation where trails for non-mechanized travel are provided and no timber harvesting occurs.

**Motorized Backcountry Areas** – multi-use areas with significant opportunities for dispersed recreation where trails for motorized activities and timber harvesting are allowed.

### ***Management Direction***

*Trail facilities and campsites in all backcountry areas will be rustic in design and accessible from trailheads located outside the area, adjacent to management roads, or by water. All trails must be well designed and constructed, situated in safe locations, and have minimal adverse impact on the backcountry values.*

*Management roads and service roads will be allowed as a secondary use in those backcountry areas where timber harvesting is allowed.*

*Timber management in motorized backcountry areas will be an allowed secondary use, and will be designed to enhance vegetative and wildlife diversity. Salvage harvesting is allowed in motorized backcountry areas only.*

*Wildlife management in non-mechanized backcountry areas will be non-extractive in nature.*

### ***Designation Criteria for Wildlife Dominant Areas***

- 1. Essential habitats** are those regulated by law and currently consist of bald eagle, piping plover, and least tern nest sites (these will 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.

### ***Designation Criteria for Remote Recreation Areas***

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
- (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.

### ***Designation Criteria for Visual 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 may directly affect enjoyment of the viewer. Applied throughout the system to all shorelines, designated trails, and designated public use roads.

**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 designated trail or public use 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.

***Designation Criteria for Developed Recreation Areas***

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.

***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 are often designated in a buffer area surrounding the developed recreation area.

### ***Designation Criteria for Timber Management Areas***

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 respect to recreational opportunities. It may, through its decisions related to roads, provide varying recreational experiences. Opportunities for hiking, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing, horseback riding, bicycling, vehicle touring and sightseeing, snowmobiling, 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. Off-road yarding may be preferable along all gravel roads, but the visual intrusion of roadside yarding must be balanced with the increased soil disturbance and loss of timber producing acres resulting from off-road spurs and access spurs. 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 need.

The following is a summary of the total acres applied to each resource allocation in the Bureau lands of the Eastern Interior Region.

**Eastern Interior Region Dominant Resource Allocations Acreages**

<b>Dominant Allocation</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Special Protection	8,613
Backcountry Recreation	0
Wildlife	22,143
Remote Recreation	307
Developed Recreation Class I	98
Timber Management	25,160

### ***Forest Certification***

In 1999 the Bureau made the decision to demonstrate exemplary forest management through participation in two nationally recognized sustainable forestry certification programs. The Bureau was awarded certification of its forestlands under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) programs in 2002. These third-party audits were conducted to determine if these lands were being managed on a sustainable basis. Successful completion of the FSC/SFI systems also qualified the Bureau to enter into the “chain of custody” program to market its “green-certified” wood. The process for enrollment in this program was completed in 2003, with certified wood now being marketed from Bureau managed lands.

The process for conducting the SFI and FSC audits was rigorous and unique in that the Bureau underwent the two audit programs simultaneously. The audit was comprised of a field analysis of forest management practices at selected sites around the state, and an analysis of the Bureau's financial, personnel, policy development, and record-keeping systems. A Bureau-wide certification team was implemented to address “conditions” and “minor non-conformances” stipulated in the audit reports, including: significant enhancements to forest inventory data, development of a computerized forest-modeling program, a timeline for updating management plans for the entire land base, improvements in the use of Best Management Practices to protect water quality, and new commitments to public outreach and education programs. The Bureau is required to meet these conditions within certain timeframes in order to keep its certification status in good standing over the five-year certification period.

In 2006, the Bureau hosted its first full recertification by FSC, concurrently undergoing its first surveillance audit by SFI, the latter now required under SFI's updated standards. The Duck Lake Unit, Bradley Unit, and several small lots within the Eastern Interior Region were host to various components of the certification field audits between 2001 and 2006. Although the field portion took place during and immediately after a heavy November rainstorm, Best Management Practices implemented on Bureau lands were working well, and certifiers for both systems were very pleased with Bureau silviculture at all sites visited. As is usually the case, there were several conditions (now called Corrective Action Requests, or CARs) made by each certification system, which the Bureau will need to satisfy as it continues to improve its forest management which has already been certified as being exemplary. Subsequent compliance audits took place in the summer of 2007 and 2008. The outcome of those compliance audits was to award unconditional certification to the Bureau, with no CARs indicated.

### ***Ecological Reserves***

The Maine Forest Biodiversity Project (MFBP) was formed in 1994 to explore and develop strategies to help maintain Maine's existing native species and the ecosystems that contain them. The MFBP was a consensus-based collaborative effort involving approximately one hundred individuals representing a diverse spectrum of interests and opinions: landowners, sportsmen, educators, advocates for property rights, foresters, wildlife and land conservation professionals, and representatives of the scientific community, state and federal agencies, and the business community. The inventory of potential ecological reserves conducted by the MFBP took place between January 1995 and October 1997, with guidance from a twenty-member scientific advisory panel.

To fulfill the legislative intent, these ecological reserves were established as 1) benchmarks against which biological and environmental change could be measured; 2) habitats adequate to maintain viable populations of species whose habitat needs are unlikely to be met on other lands; and 3) sites for scientific research, long-term environmental monitoring, and education. In addition, public access, hunting, and fishing are among the allowed uses on ecological reserves. The ecological reserves include many of Maine's best examples of alpine meadows, lakes and streams, and old growth forests.

Beginning in 2002, the Department of Conservation worked with a multi-disciplinary committee to draft an *Ecological Reserve Monitoring Plan* to guide periodic data collection at the landscape, stand, and species levels. The monitoring program is tied closely to other statewide and nationwide forest monitoring programs that use U.S. Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) methods. To date, 387 permanent monitoring plots have been established on 12 Ecological Reserves, with ongoing monitoring work increasing the number of plots each year. The long-term monitoring program and the value of ecological reserves to this program have been recognized as models for public lands throughout the northeast.

Based on the work by the MFBP the Maine Legislature in 2000 authorized the designation of ecological reserves on Department of Conservation lands, and 68,974 acres were designated by the Bureau of Parks and Lands Director at that time. In the Eastern Interior region, 3,870 acres of Public Reserved lands were designated as ecological reserves by the Director on the Duck Lake Unit. Two other ecological reserve areas (totaling 2,780 acres) were subsequently deeded to the state as part of the Machias River acquisition project and have since been added to the existing Duck Lake Unit between Fourth and Fifth Machias Lakes. These ecological reserve areas will be described in more detail in the Duck Lake Unit section of this Plan.

### III. The Planning Context

#### *Eastern Interior Region Plan Area - Overview*

This management plan region is interior to the Bureau's Downeast Management Plan region. Its western boundary is roughly the Penobscot River, and it extends east to the Canadian border. The region's southern boundary is roughly Route 9 and it extends northward to include the southern portion of Aroostook County. The region is well known for its abundance of lakes, rivers and extensive wetlands, as well as large blocks of un-fragmented forested areas. The region's economy is tied to these natural resources.

Most of the Plan area is within the Eastern Lowlands biophysical region. The landscape is one of low relief, with elevations ranging from 200 to 600 feet - with the exception of a few taller hills, especially near West Grand Lake. Its many lakes, rivers and associated wetlands are the hallmark features that characterize the region. The region contains the largest concentration of peatlands, marshes, and swamps in Maine, with ten percent of the state-owned lands categorized as wetlands. Of significance are the large peatlands found in the Bradley Unit and a substantial sedge meadow on the Codyville Public Lot. Forest types in this region range from dry pine and intolerant hardwood communities to semi-rich hardwoods (MNAP, 2007).



*Gassabias Lake and adjoining swamp*

The climate is transitional, between that of coastal areas and the more continental climate of regions to the north and west. Mean maximum July temperature is 79° F and mean minimum January temperature is 3° F. Average annual precipitation is 46 inches, slightly higher than the state average. Precipitation decreases and snowfall increases from east to west. Snowfall varies from an annual average of 70 inches in the east to 100 inches in the west (MNAP, 2007).

### ***Geology and Soils within the Region***

According to Bob Marvinney, Maine State Geologist, the geological history of the region extends from Precambrian through Triassic times and the initiation of spreading of the modern Atlantic Ocean. Several terranes (small continents) of older rocks with largely independent histories are now coalesced in eastern coastal Maine and partially obscured by sedimentary rocks deposited in younger basins. The older rocks (Cambrian-Ordovician; 543-443 million years ago) consist largely of feldspar-rich schist and volcanically derived rock.

Obscuring the bedrock geology throughout the region is a thick sequence of glacial units, deposited during both the advance and melting of the last great ice sheet. Much of the landscape is covered in till dating from this time. Other glacial features include eskers, such as those running through the Duck Lake Unit, which were formed by water flowing through tunnels in the glacier, depositing coarse sediment. Scouring of thick glacial ice is responsible for rounding hills and carving lake basins throughout the region. Soils in the region are heavily influenced by this glacial history and tend to be coarse, and well drained. The water bodies on state lands within the region drain to the Downeast rivers, including the St. Croix, Machias, and Penobscot Rivers.

### ***The Forest Landscape within the Region***

The Eastern Interior region is characterized by relatively young mixed wood forests with a history of fire, budworm damage, and timber harvesting. Forests on the state-owned parcels are 50% softwood, 31% mixed-wood, and 19% hardwood. These percentages are similar to the forests in the Eastern Lowlands biophysical region in general. Statewide, Maine's forests tend to be more balanced between the three forest categories. The prevalence of softwood in the Eastern Interior region can be explained in part by its relatively poor, acidic soils, the prevalence of forested wetlands, and the history of disturbance in the region. Forest types on the state-owned lands range from the dry pine and intolerant hardwood communities at Duck Lake to pockets of semi-rich hardwoods in Codyville and Molunkus.

Fire, often started by lightning strikes, continues to be a significant influence on the natural communities in this region. Fire adapted systems, such as red pine forests, occur on thin soils, eskers, and glacial outwash sands in the region. Red pine cones can withstand high heat, and the seeds germinate on the newly exposed mineral soil, creating even-aged, uniform stands of red pine. As the trees mature, a thick layer of dry duff accumulates on the forest floor, priming the area for another fire. Examples of this community type can be found on the Duck Lake Unit and along Fifth Lake Stream.

The region also experienced heavy spruce budworm damage during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The Eastern Lowlands biophysical region is 44% spruce/fir forest compared with a statewide average of 32%, and this area was disproportionately affected by the budworm outbreak. Throughout eastern Maine, salvage harvests took place in response to this outbreak (MNAP, 2007).

### ***Fisheries and Wildlife Resources within the Region***

The presence of numerous sporting lodges and private camps attest to the area's long-standing four-season popularity for fishing, hunting, trapping, and boating – and more recently snowmobiling and ATVing. The Grand Lake Stream region and St. Croix watershed boasts the most concentrated number of Registered Maine Guides in the state. Abundant in the watershed are landlocked salmon, square-tailed trout, lake trout and some of the best small-mouthed bass fishing in Maine. As soon as the ice is out in the spring, trolling is occurs on waters such as West Grand Lake, Big Lake, and Pocumcus Lake. Grand Lake Stream itself is one of the most renowned fly fishing streams for landlocked salmon in the country (GLSGA, 2008). The importance and uniqueness of certain fisheries and wildlife habitat in the Eastern Interior region has led to various conservation initiatives and land acquisition projects involving a variety of local, non-profit, state, and federal interests and partners, described below.

*Atlantic Salmon Habitat Protection (Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR), Bureau of Sea Run Fisheries and Habitat (BSRFH))*. In and abutting the Eastern Interior region are a number of rivers which have been the focus of Atlantic salmon restoration and protection efforts. Atlantic salmon within the Machias River are part of the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment (DPS) that is listed as Endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act. The “Final Recovery Plan for the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)” is the current management guidance document (see [http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/salmon/pic's/E-Library\\_keydocuments/Final\\_ATS\\_plan.pdf](http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/salmon/pic's/E-Library_keydocuments/Final_ATS_plan.pdf)). On an annual basis, staff perform redd counts to assess returning adults, stocking fry, conduct electrofishing surveys to monitor abundance of Atlantic salmon juveniles, perform habitat surveys, and monitor temperatures at six locations throughout the drainage. Additional special projects include evaluating the effectiveness of stocking sexually mature adults into predefined reaches including Mopang Stream, using leaf processing to compare productivity between higher and lower juvenile salmon producing locations in two streams in the Machias River drainage, evaluating upstream movement of stocked fry, working with project partners such as Project SHARE to replace failing culverts with bottomless structures, and adding large woody debris to a 400 meter-long reach of Dead Stream to increase complexity.

A major conservation initiative along the Machias River has resulted in part due to the river's importance to the endangered Atlantic salmon. The Bureau has participated in this conservation initiative along with the BSRFH, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Downeast Lakes Land Trust (DLLT), and many federal, state and private funders. The project has been implemented in three phases, with Phases I and II resulting in significant additions to the Bureau's Duck Lake Unit, and a brand new unit along the Machias River. These will be discussed in the Duck Lake and Machias River Unit specific sections of this Plan. The Machias River project has also resulted in a conservation easement along most of the Machias River corridor from Third Machias Lake to the ocean. The entire project, when complete, will protect 86 percent of the Atlantic salmon habitat within the Machias River system, which covers 20 percent of the entire wild Atlantic salmon in the United States. Phase III of the project, which will include a Bureau held conservation easement on the land area between Fifth and Second Lakes, and a fee ownership of the Wabassus Lake Forest by DLLT (with a Bureau held easement), is still pending.

The BSRFH and the Bureau of Parks and Lands have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding for management of fee and easement lands along the shores of the Machias River Corridor (see Appendix E).

#### *Operational Plan for the Penobscot River*

As part of ongoing planning effort for the Penobscot River, Blackman Stream and Chemo Pond have been identified as Phase 1 lakes for alewife restoration. The project includes exploring options to get passage for alewives both up and downstream. The Passadumkeag River, (which flows into the Penobscot River) to which Nicatous Lake and Stream are tributaries, is identified as a low priority for Atlantic salmon as it has multiple non-native species. However, as part of the operational plan, its potential for other diadromous species will be assessed (see <http://mainegov-images.informe.org/dmr/searunfish/reports/PenobscotPlanMarch2008.pdf>). The operational plan should be completed by March 2009.

#### *State Wildlife Management Areas (WMA)*

Within the Eastern Interior region, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) operates three wildlife management areas. The primary objective for each IF&W owned wildlife management area is to maintain or create the highest quality upland or wetland wildlife habitats possible. This is accomplished by employing management techniques designed to utilize existing habitat types either to benefit the greatest variety of wildlife, or to provide an important habitat for a specific or "featured" species.

*Dwinal Flowage WMA* (1,985 acres) is located in Lee and Winn and consists mainly of impounded freshwater wetlands which support a seasonal brook trout fishery. The flowage is accessible by canoe and is open to trapping and hunting for all legal species.

Clayton's copper butterfly is a highly restricted subspecies of butterfly, which is a state listed endangered species. Shrubby cinquefoil, the host plant for the caterpillar, is abundant on the flowage. Dwinal Pond is the largest of 11 known locations with populations of Clayton's coppers in Maine.

*Forest City WMA* (650 acres) is also known as the Booming Ground Wildlife Management Area. It is located in the northeastern part of Forest City Township, Washington County, Maine, and is composed primarily of a peninsula formed by the dammed waters of the St. Croix River. It is bounded on the east by Spednik Lake and on the west by Mud Lake. An additional tract of wetland south of Mud Lake forms the remainder of the 650-acre wildlife management area. This WMA is mostly upland with some wetland bordering Spednik Lake. There is no water access on the property. Recreational use is limited to hunting, trapping, and wildlife watching. This area is also productive for eagles and moose. The upland portion of the WMA is a candidate ecological reserve.

*Mattawamkeag River System WMA* (6,625 acres) is within Drew Plantation, Webster Plantation and Kingman Township and closely borders the Mattawamkeag River. Recent acquisitions connected three contiguous parcels which now comprise this WMA. It contains a mix of wetlands, lowland conifer, shrub and peatland habitats. It's accessible by boat for its warm and cold water fisheries. Ice fishing and wildlife watching are also popular here. The former

Mattagodus Meadows WMA is now part of this larger WMA and consists of forested uplands and various wetland types. Some of these wetland areas include rare calcareous fens.

There are six federal or state listed threatened or endangered species inhabiting or associated with the Mattawamkeag River System WMA. IF&W has documented the occurrence of the sedge wren, a state listed endangered species; Tomah mayfly, a state listed threatened species; Clayton's copper butterfly, a state listed endangered butterfly; the bald eagle, a state and federally listed threatened species; the yellow lamp mussel, a state listed threatened mussel; and Atlantic salmon.

A portion of this WMA is a candidate ecological reserve.

### *National Wildlife Refuges*

The *Sunkhaze Meadows National Wildlife Refuge* is located in the Town of Milford, approximately fourteen miles north of Bangor. The Refuge was established in 1988 to ensure the ecological integrity of the Sunkhaze Meadows peat bog and the continued availability of its wetland, stream, forest and wildlife resources to the citizens of the United States. The purpose of acquisition, under the authority of the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 was "... for the development, advancement, management, conservation, and protection of fish and wildlife resources ..." and "... for the benefit of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, in performing its activities and services. Such acceptance may be subject to the terms of any restrictive or affirmative covenant, or condition of servitude . . . ." The Land and Water Conservation Fund was the source of funding for the purchase.

The Refuge protects the second-largest and most unique peatland in Maine. It contains several raised bogs or domes, separated from each other by extensive areas of streamside meadows. Sunkhaze Stream bisects the Refuge along a northeast to southwest orientation and with its six tributaries, creates a diversity of wetland communities. The bog and stream wetlands, along with the adjacent uplands and associated transition zones, provide important habitat for many wildlife species. The wetland complex consists primarily of wet meadows, shrub thickets, cedar swamps, extensive red and silver maple floodplain forests and open freshwater stream habitats, along with those plant communities associated with peatlands such as shrub heaths and cedar and spruce bogs.

Sunkhaze Meadows National Wildlife Refuge provides habitat for three plants, seven birds, two mollusks and three invertebrates listed as endangered or threatened by the state of Maine.

### ***Historic and Cultural Resources within the Region***

The lands of the Eastern Interior region have long been prized for their recreation and timber values. Most of the area has an extensive history of timber harvesting. Historically, softwoods have been favored, including hemlock which was heavily harvested for its bark to supply local tanneries beginning in the mid-1800s. Lumber was moved down the Machias River, the St. Croix River and others in the famous log drives that ended in the 1960s. Lumber was moved down river to Machas, Jonesboro, and other coastal towns to be shipped to Boston, New York and other ports. Sporting camps and guiding are a significant part of the history (and present) of this region. Today, the Grand Lake Stream area contains the highest concentration of Registered Maine Guides in the state. The guiding tradition began as early as the 1850s with fishermen

staying in tents along the stream and employing Native American guides. Over the years, people opened their homes periodically for sportsmen visitors, and boarding houses and sporting camps were built. Some of the original sporting camps are still in operation. Landlocked salmon and smallmouth bass fishing as well as hunting attracted visitors in large numbers by railroad and steamer. The “square stern canoe” known as the “Grand Laker” was invented in Grand Lakes Stream in 1923. (Weatherby’s, 2009)

Periodic finds of arrowheads and spearheads indicate pre-historic Native American land use along major ponds and river corridors in the region. Archeological findings have discovered people of the Laurentian Tradition may have inhabited the region as early as 6,000 BP (Judd et al., 1995). The region includes lands in both the Penobscot and St. Croix river drainages, which include the ancestral lands of the Penobscot Indian Nation and the Passamaquoddy Tribe. The Penobscot and Passamaquoddy people, though populations were severely diminished by war and disease following European arrival, still hold a strong presence and in the Eastern Interior region today. Both the Penobscots and Passamaquoddies hold land in the region today, with the Passamaquoddy Reservation in Oqiton Township abutting the Bureau’s Duck Lake Unit to the north.

Of more recent origin, old cellar holes are common in the Eastern Interior region, especially on many of the smaller state-owned parcels, many of which were treated as “poor farms” for destitute residents. Farming conditions on these lots were typically challenging due to the rocky, sandy, or wetland soil types and their subsequent low nutrient values.

Within this region, the Bureau manages one State Historic Site owned by the Bureau of Parks and Lands - *Bible Point*. This 27-acre property is located at the south end of Mattawamkeag Lake. The site was made famous by Teddy Roosevelt who visited the area beginning in 1878. As a young man under the guidance of his lifelong friend and guide Bill Sewall, Roosevelt camped at the southern end of Mattawamkeag Lake and hunted and fished throughout the area. It was reported that each day, Roosevelt would hike to a beautiful point of land at the confluence of the West Branch of the Mattawamkeag River and First Brook where he would read the bible. A plaque at the site commemorates Roosevelt's love for the area. It was erected in 1921 by Roosevelt biographer Hermann Hagedorn and it reads:

*“This place, to which a great man in his youth liked to come to commune with God and with the wonder and beauty of the visible world, is dedicated to the happy memory of THEODORE ROOSEVELT. Stranger, rest here and consider what one man, having faith in the right and love for his fellow man was able to do for his country.”*

### ***Recreation Resources within the Region***

#### ***Spednic Lake-St. Croix River Waterway***

This spectacular corridor is located on the U.S./Canada border between the State of Maine and Province of New Brunswick. The Upper St. Croix was recognized as one of state’s twenty outstanding rivers in the 1982 Maine Rivers Study. As one of the most undeveloped major river corridors in the northeastern United States, it is a favorite destination for families and outdoor groups seeking a near -wilderness setting and wildlife viewing opportunities. Nearly 5,000

people paddle it each year, though the river feels un-crowded because of its constant turns through an unspoiled landscape. Recreation on this waterway is managed by the St. Croix International Waterway Commission. The Bureau manages river access points at Vanceboro, Little Falls from the Salmon Brook Road, and Loon Bay near the southern end of the corridor. Limited facilities are available at these locations for hand carry boat launching, day use, and camping.

Spednic Lake was identified as Maine's third largest undeveloped lake in the 1987 Maine Wildland Lakes Assessment. Its stunning landscape, created by retreating glaciers, attracts naturalists and canoeists. The lake supports one of Maine's last remaining native landlocked salmon fisheries and some of the best smallmouth bass habitat in the North America. The St. Croix also supports a recovering population of Atlantic salmon and is the site of international research on this species. The lake and river corridor provide a principal breeding ground for the region's bald eagle population and contain a number of rare plant habitats and old growth tree stands.

### *The Machias River Trip*

In its entirety, the Machias River offers 76 miles of paddling from Fifth Machias Lake to the sea. A mix of smooth water, lakes, riffles, rapids, and technical ledge drops, the Machias has long been a lure to canoeists. Additionally, a variety of access points enable paddlers to run select portions of the trip, as opposed to the entire route.

Contained within the Eastern Interior region is the upper 40 mile portion, from Fifth Machias Lake to just below the Route 9 Bridge in T31 MD BPP. Included in this half of the river are Fifth, Fourth, Third, Second, and First Machias Lakes, Fifth and Fourth Lake Streams, and the approximately 16.5 mile section of the Machias River from the outlet of Third Lake to the Route 9 Bridge. This stretch of lake and river paddling courses through undeveloped forestlands and scenic shorelines. The Bureau owns much of the land along the route, and maintains several campsites. A majority of those sites are accessible by car (as well as by water), while some are accessed only by water. See Machias River Unit section of this Plan for recreational management recommendations on these lands.

The upper half of the Machias River, which is the half pertinent to this Plan, presents paddlers with conditions ranging from lake and flatwater paddling up to and including Class III whitewater.

### *Other Paddling Routes Associated with the Machias River*

Gassabias Lake, within the Duck Lake Unit, provides a link between 5,212-acre Nicatous Lake and Fourth Machias Lake. Gassabias Stream flows between Gassabias and Nicatous Lakes. Heading eastward from the northeast shore of Gassabias Lake, there is a primitive portage path (a traditional Native American travel route between the Penobscot and Machias River watersheds). The Gassabias Portage is a little over two miles in length leading to Fourth Machias Lake. The resulting opportunity therefore, is that paddlers can extend their trips to include not only the Machias River but also scenic Nicatous Lake (on the shore of which the Bureau maintains primitive campsites).

Third Machias Lake can be paddled as part of a loop trip involving several lakes. The loop trail travels north from Third Machias to the Getchel Lakes and Wabassus Lake, to Pocumcus Lake, a portage across the Dobsis Dam to Sysladobsis Lake, and southward to Forth Machias Lake. The majority of land surrounding this route is owned by either the Bureau or DLLT, and both organizations provide water access campsites along the route.

Other Paddling Opportunities Involving Public Lands in the Eastern Interior Plan

The Mattawamkeag River provides another opportunity for an extended canoe trip in the region. The Mattawamkeag River trip can be undertaken in such a way as to allow a ninety mile route beginning at Fish Stream in Patten and ending at the confluence with the Penobscot, in the Town of Mattawamkeag.

Water-accessed campsites for this river trip are available on Bureau-owned lands or easement parcels at the southern outlet of Mattawamkeag Lake, where the West Branch of the Mattawamkeag River continues on towards Rt. 2A in Haynesville. The paddling distance from Island Falls to Rt. 2A in Haynesville is 24.5 miles, with a combination of lake and flatwater paddling and a few Class I and II rapids. The Bureau is in the process of developing additional campsites on its lands approximately half way along this 24 mile route.

Motorized Trail Opportunities

Motorized trail opportunities, primarily for ATV riding and snowmobiling, are an important and economically significant recreational resource within the Plan area. Eighteen local snowmobile clubs and thirteen ATV clubs, along with the Bureau’s Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Division, provide for the ongoing management and maintenance of this system, which includes approximately 1600 miles of snowmobile trails and significant east-west and north-south portions of the ITS (Interconnected Trail System), and several hundred miles of local and main artery ATV trails. Most of this system exists on private lands, with lesser sections located on state-owned lands and conservation easements. The ORV Division has a staff member who works on multiple use trails in the Downeast Region and also maintains a groomer and operator at its Beddington facility for maintenance of significant sections of ITS 81. Of importance to the ongoing success of the ORV program are the numerous partnerships with private landowners, including GMO (American Forest Management), Wagner Forest Management, Gardiner Land Company, H.C. Haines, Robbins Lumber, the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indian nations, and numerous smaller land owners. The ORV Division has also partnered with Project SHARE and Atlantic salmon interests in meeting stream crossing standards, including spending over \$250,000 in restoration and trail relocation projects.

Public Boat Access

The numerous boating facilities providing access to the waters of Eastern Interior Maine are important to the region’s economy and way of life.

**State-assisted or State-owned Boat Sites near Eastern Interior Bureau Land Units**

<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Minor Civil Division</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Ramp Type</b>	<b>Notes</b>
MOPANG LAKE	DEVEREAUX TWP	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	PRIMITIVE
PLEASANT RIVER LAKE	DEVEREAUX TWP	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	PRIMITIVE
PLEASANT RIVER LAKE	BEDDINGTON	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	PRIMITIVE
WEST GAND LAKE	GRAND LAKE STREAM	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	

WEST LAKE	T2 ND	HANCOCK	TRAILER	
SYSLADOBSIS LAKE	LAKEVILLE PLANTATION	PENOBSCOT	TRAILER	
LOWER LEAD MOUNTAIN POND	T28 MD	HANCOCK	TRAILER	PRIMITIVE
UPPER LEAD MOUNTAIN POND	T28 MD	HANCOCK	TRAILER	PRIMITIVE
FIRST CHAIN LAKE	T26 ED BPP	WASHINGTON	HAND CARRY	
PENNIMAN POND	T26 ED BPP	WASHINGTON	HAND CARRY	
SPEDNIC LAKE	VANCEBORO	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	
MEDDYBEMPS LAKE	MEDDYBEMPS	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	
LEWEY LAKE	PRINCETON	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	
LONG LAKE	PRINCETON	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	Greenland point
POCOMOOMSHINE LAKE	PRINCETON	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	
GRAND FALLS FLOWAGE	BAILEYVILLE	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	
ST CROIX RIVER	BAILEYVILLE	WASHINGTON	TRAILER	

### Boating Facilities on Eastern Interior Bureau Lands

Waterbody	Minor Civil Division	Lands Unit	County	Ramp Type	Notes
DUCK LAKE	T4 ND	Duck Lake	Hancock	Trailer	Primitive
MIDDLE UNKNOWN LAKE	T4 ND	Duck Lake	Hancock	Hand Carry	
LOWER UNKNOWN LAKE	T4 ND	Duck Lake	Hancock	Hand Carry	
GASSABIAS LAKE	T41 MD	Duck Lake	Hancock	Hand Carry	
THIRD MACHIAS LAKE	T43 MD BPP	Machias River	Washington	Trailer	Outlet, Primitive
THIRD MACHIAS LAKE	T43 MD BPP	Machias River	Washington	Trailer	Midlands, Primitive
SECOND MACHIAS LAKE	T37 MD BPP	Machias River	Washington	Hand Carry	
MACHIAS RIVER	T30 MD BPP	Machias River	Washington	Hand Carry	Wonderland CG
SALMON POND	T30 MD BPP	Machias River	Washington	Trailer	Primitive
MACHIAS RIVER	T31 MD BPP	Machias River	Washington	Hand Carry	
FIFTH LAKE STREAM	T41 MD	Machias River	Hancock	Hand Carry	Fifth Machias Lake
ST CROIX RIVER	LAMBERT LAKE TWP	St Croix River Parks	Washington	Trailer	Little Falls, Primitive
ST CROIX RIVER	LAMBERT LAKE TWP	St Croix River Parks	Washington	Trailer	Porters Meadow, Primitive
ST CROIX RIVER	Dyer Twp	St Croix River Parks	Washington	Trailer	Loon Bay, Primitive

Within the public lands in the Eastern Interior region, there are seven hand carry boat launching sites and seven trailerable boat sites as shown in the table above. All of the trailerable ramps are gravel surfaced and considered “primitive,” meaning the ramps are not constructed to industry standards and may not be suitable for more than small trailered or hand carry boats.

There are a number of lakes within the Plan area on the DOC boating access priority list, including Fourth Machias Lake, Upper Chain Lake, Lower Pistol Lake, Nicatous Lake, Lower Sabao Lake, Clifford Lake, Crawford Lake, and Wabassus Lake. This list is derived from the *1995 Department of Conservation/Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Strategic Plan for Providing Public Access to Maine Waters for Boating & Fishing*, Appendix B-4. These lakes are listed as priorities because they are at least 500 acres in size, have inadequate public recreational boating access, and/or were identified in one of two boater surveys or by IF&W staff as needing better access. Generally, if a lake is listed as a priority, it may qualify for Boating Facility Funds for acquisition and development of a trailerable boat access site and for Land for Maine’s Future Funds for acquisition of a water access site.

### ***Regional Conservation Efforts***

Several important land conservation initiatives have taken place over the past several years in an effort to preserve and sustain the natural resource and cultural characteristics of this region. These initiatives involve partnerships of local, regional, state, and federal organizations, including public, private and non-profit organizations, resulting in large-scale acquisition of lands and conservation easements. The result is an evolving matrix of public and private conservation lands that complement one another to sustain the natural, cultural, economic and recreational resources of the region. The Bureau has been and will continue to be a partner in many of the conservation projects in the region, and will consider the broader context of these projects when planning for the management of its fee lands.

### ***St. Croix River Waterway***

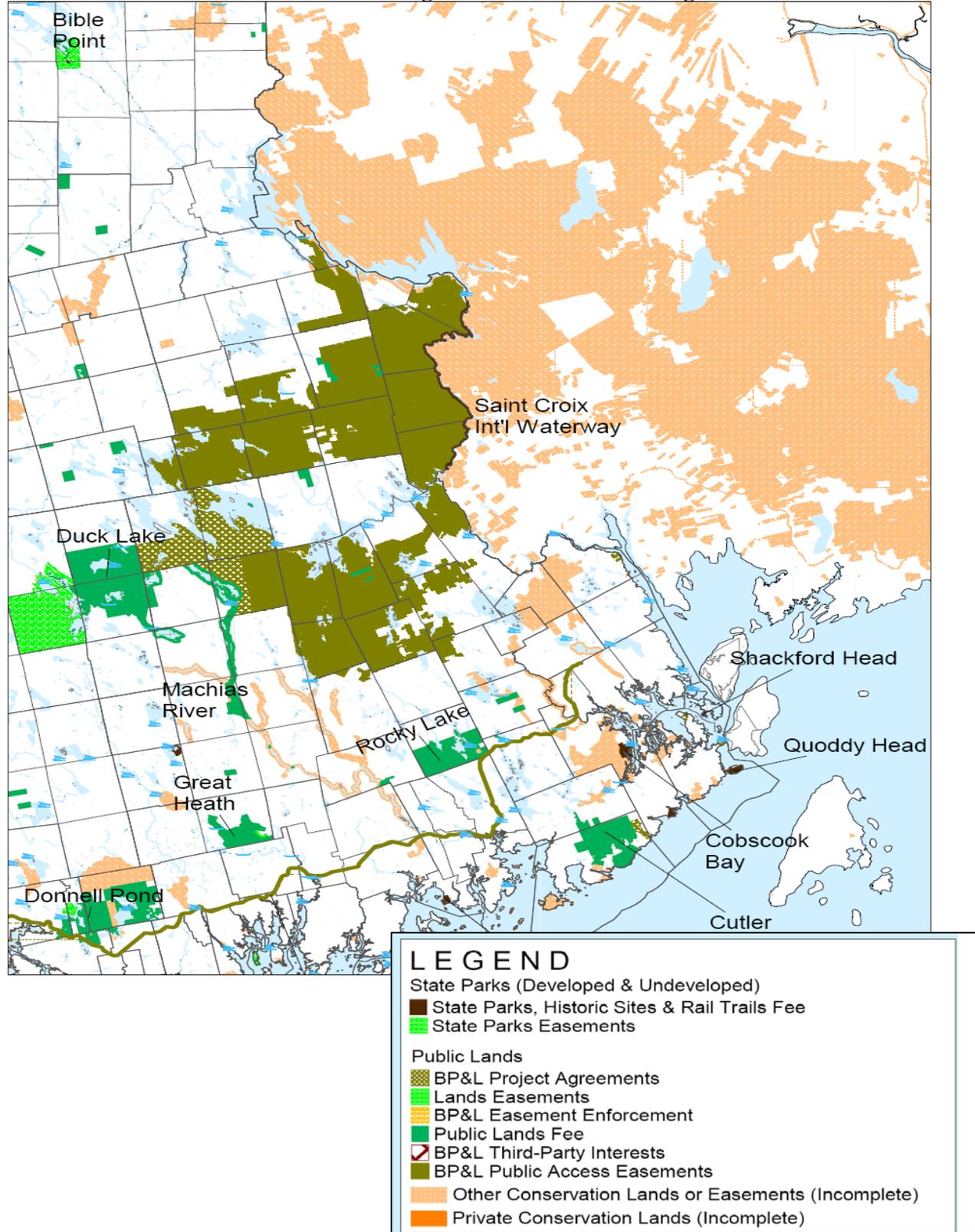
In 1994, by Executive Order, the governments of Maine and New Brunswick generated a long-term plan for the entire St. Croix waterway that included permanent protection of the Spednic and Upper St. Croix River area, one of the most pristine stretches of boundary water in eastern North America. Over the last decade, the two governments have made progress toward this goal through a series of acquisitions and easements, actively supported by the Woodie Wheaton Land Trust, the New England Forestry Foundation, Downeast Lakes Land Trust, and the St. Croix International Waterway Commission, among others.

In the 1990s, Maine protected twenty miles of Spednic Lake shoreline and a number of islands through a series of acquisitions and easements. New Brunswick acquired nearly all of the Canadian side of the lake and river, created an 11-island ecological reserve on the river, and more recently designated a 100-square mile area beside Spednic Lake as a provincial Protected Natural Area. The New Brunswick side of the St. Croix waterway is one of Canada's twenty six Canadian Heritage Rivers.

On the Maine side of the border, in the most recent acquisition completed in 2004, the New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF), Downeast Lakes Land Trust, and partners raised more than \$2.5 million for the public acquisition of a 500-foot, 50-mile conservation corridor on the upper St. Croix River and Spednic Lake. (This was the first phase of the Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership, a partnership formed by the above mentioned organizations aimed at protecting lands in the Downeast Lakes region). The 34-mile upper St. Croix River corridor, from Vanceboro to Grand Falls Flowage, including several islands, is now managed as a recreational waterway by the Bureau of Parks and Lands through an agreement with the St. Croix International Waterway Commission. A shoreland corridor along 16 miles of Spednic Lake is managed by IF&W primarily for wildlife. The Land For Maine's Future Program provided the matching funding for this 3,000 + acre purchase.

Spednic Lake is one of Maine's largest undeveloped lakes and is valued by fishermen and paddlers. The St. Croix is one of Maine's least developed rivers and the upper section is renowned for backcountry canoeing. Both the lake and river serve as valuable habitat for bald eagles, wild landlocked salmon, smallmouth bass and many significant plants. These areas are managed by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Bureau of Parks and Lands, respectively.

## Conservation Lands In and Surrounding the Eastern Interior Region



### Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership

The Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership was a joint effort of the Downeast Lakes Land Trust (DLLT), the New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF), and the Woodie Wheaton Land Trust (WWLT) to protect 342,000 acres of nearly contiguous woodlands and waterways in Washington County, Maine. Locally incubated, locally led, and locally supported, the project was designed to address the social and economic needs of Maine's easternmost county, while achieving far-reaching conservation goals. (DLLT, 2008)

The 342,000 acres conserved create a centerpiece for more than 1 million acres of essentially uninterrupted habitat across the international boundary from Maine to New Brunswick. This major initiative had three components:

- **St. Croix River Waterway:** as mentioned above, the Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership acquired a 50 mile, 500 foot conservation corridor along Spednic Lake and the upper St. Croix River, which was subsequently transferred to the Bureau of Parks and Lands and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for management.
- **Farm Cove Community Forest:** the Farm Cove Community Forest, 27,080 acres bordered by 62 miles of pristine lakeshore, was purchased on May 15, 2005, and is owned and managed as a community forest by Downeast Lakes Land Trust. The Forest includes a 3,560-acre ecological reserve and 3,751-acre late-successional management area, and is managed for sustainable timber production, wildlife habitat, and recreational use. DLLT is in the process of adding 6,628 acres around the southern shore of Wabassus Lake to this property.
- **Conservation Easement:** NEFF acquired an easement over 312,000 acres of the "Sunrise Tree Farm" on May 15, 2005, and the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands acquired a public access easement on the same lands. The land is still owned by Typhoon, LLC and managed by Wagner Forest Mgt. Development rights are extinguished and public access is insured on this large landscape.

### Lower Penobscot Forest Project (Hutchinson and Tetreault, 2005)

The Lower Penobscot Forest Project is a partnership between The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Forest Society of Maine (FSM), and a fee and easement acquisition by the Bureau of Parks and Lands that will conserve over 42,000 acres. This project will be the window to a broader view of conservation in the region—a view that connects the wetlands and woods of central Maine to the coastal forests and waters of Penobscot and Machias Bays. This area contains 75 miles of streams considered a conservation priority by TNC, multiple natural communities considered "exemplary" by MNAP and others, native brook trout fisheries, and 5,751 mapped acres of wading bird and waterfowl habitat. It contains excellent opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, and other recreational activities. The University of Maine has many ongoing research projects in the area, and sustainable forestry will be practiced on much of the property.

The Lower Penobscot Forest project consists of three connected but distinct properties.

The streams of the Lower Penobscot Forests drain into Sunkhaze Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. The Nature Conservancy will purchase an easement on more than 12,000 acres along the southeast border of the Refuge to be managed as an ecological reserve. The project will buffer Sunkhaze from development, protect water quality, and conserve habitat for its diverse wetland and forest species. The property will be available for pedestrian access, for activities including hunting, fishing, and hiking. Its location provides connectivity between the Wildlife Refuge and the Bureau's Bradley Unit.

A working forest easement on 24,557 acres in the Townships of T32 MD and Great Pond will be purchased by TNC and transferred to the Bureau. This property has and will continue to be managed for a sustainable flow of forest products. This area contains the "horseback esker", a geologic feature of statewide significance, which is valued for views and berry-picking opportunities. Canoe access for the Sunkhaze Stream trip is on this property, as well as snowmobile and ATV trails that connect into the statewide networks. Youth programs by the Maine Youth Fish and Game Association are held on this property.

To the south, the remote ponds and red pine woodlands of the Amherst Tract will be acquired in fee by the Bureau of Parks and Lands. An ecological reserve will be designated on 2,000 acres of the property, while the remaining 3,270 will be managed as a working forest. This area is valued for scenic views from Bald Bluff Mountain and other hilltops, scenic and remote ponds, camping and fishing, and rare and exemplary natural communities. This is a pending acquisition, and will not be given resource allocations or management recommendations as a part of this plan.

To the west of Sunkhaze, the Penobscot River Restoration Project is slated to remove two dams from the river and bypass a third—reopening the river and its tributaries to eleven species of sea-run fish. The Lower Penobscot Forest Project will preserve the habitat being reopened for Atlantic salmon, shad, alewife and blueback herring along many of the streams and creeks of the watershed.

### ***Summary of Planning Implications***

The Eastern Interior Region is remarkable for both the abundance of natural and recreational resources and the wide-spread efforts by various groups and individuals to protect those resources. Conservation organizations working in this region range from the local (Downeast Lakes Land Trust) to the international (The Nature Conservancy). This presents opportunity for the Bureau to contribute to planning efforts on a regional scale while also planning locally for its fee lands. The Bureau has partnered and continues to partner with other public and private organizations and landowners in acquisitions of new lands and easements. The Bureau will continue to manage its lands with both a local and regional perspective.