

Bureau of Parks and Lands
Crocker Mountain Unit Management Plan
Public Meeting – Final Draft Plan
March 18, 2015 6:00 – 7:30 PM
UM Farmington, Roberts Learning Center

MEETING MINUTES

The Public Meeting was attended by approximately 13 people.

Additionally, the following BPL staff members were present: Peter Smith, Western Region Lands Manager; Steve Swatling, Bigelow Preserve Manager; Kathy Eickenberg, Chief of Planning; Jim Vogel, Plan Coordinator; Rex Turner, Outdoor Recreation Specialist; Scott Ramsey, Director ORV Division; Tom Charles, Chief of Silviculture.

Welcome/Introduction

Jim Vogel welcomed the attendees, and asked staff to introduce themselves. The attendees also introduced themselves. A meeting agenda and copies of the Final Draft Plan were distributed.

Presentation

Jim Vogel used a PowerPoint presentation throughout the meeting. The first half of the presentation reviewed the public planning process, the Crocker Mountain property and the resources present, the plan's purpose, the proposed Ecological Reserve and the agreement for management developed during the acquisition period. It was pointed out that the Crocker Unit plan will be a 7 year plan to start (rather than 15 years) to align with the Flagstaff Region Plan cycle. The second half of the presentation summarized the Vision, Resource Allocations, and Management Recommendations contained in the Plan. Comments and questions were taken during and at the conclusion of the presentation.

Public Comments/Questions (paraphrased from notes)

Proposed Resource Allocations

- Richard Fecteau – Asked where snowmobiles go that use the annually-permitted club trail on Caribou Valley Road.
 - Jim Vogel explained that the trail permits access on the road only to its terminus at Caribou Pond, immediately south of the Unit, on Sugarloaf Inc. lands.
- Bob Weingarten – Asked where the Backcountry Recreation – Motorized corridor (an allocation added since the presentation of the Draft Plan to the Advisory Committee in response to committee comments) came from. Bob further questioned if it was appropriate to have a motorized trail (a future possibility in the corridor so allocated) right next to the ecoreserve and “wilderness.”
 - Jim Vogel explained that the new allocation (about 275 acres in total) was taken from an area formerly allocated to the proposed Ecological Reserve; however, most

of those acres were recovered by adding to the Ecological Reserve allocation elsewhere on the Unit.

- John McCatherin (Carrabassett Valley ATV Club) commented that maintaining a north/south motorized trail connection to and across the unit (as the new allocation is intended to facilitate) was a part of the deal made with the Trust for Public Land during acquisition of the property.

Proposed Management Recommendations

- **Richard Fecteau** – Related to the recommendation for development of parking areas, asked for clarification regarding the ownership of the existing parking area on Caribou Valley Road, and also whether there would be a need for a parking area on Route 27 to serve a possible future snowmobile trail in the Backcountry-Motorized corridor.
 - Jim Vogel confirmed that the existing parking area is on Plum Creek land, about 500 feet short of the Unit boundary and that the Plan provides a small area allocated to Developed Recreation nearby on the Unit, for the future eventuality that the parking area could be relocated onto BPL land. Bill Munson (J.V. Wing Snowmobile Club) answered that there could be an option for snowmobile parking on Rt. 27 at the base of Bigelow Hill, but that the need and location of parking for a trail in the corridor is something that would need to be worked out in the future, if a new snowmobile trail is built in the corridor.
- **Bob Weinstein** – Related to the recommendation to assess the location of bear bait sites established for lease by Plum Creek before the state's acquisition of the lands, asked if there is a requirement to allow bear baiting sites and how close to the proposed ecoreserve they were.
 - Jim Vogel responded that the bear bait sites were not specifically required, but that the Plan intends to continue this use as one of the traditional activities that have occurred on the land prior to the state's acquisition, in keeping with the management agreement with TPL and Carrabassett Valley. Pete Smith further explained that the existing sites are off Stoney Brook Road and connected spur roads and not near the proposed ecoreserve.
- **John McCatherin, Carrabassett Valley ATV Club** – Comment related to the recommendation to consider ATV use of Caribou Valley Road with the qualification that this will only occur if an extension of a motorized trail south of the Unit, with an approved AT crossing; commented that ATV riders would like the Plan to make allowance for ATV use of the road and short destination trails on the Unit, with this qualification deleted from the Plan.
- **Richard Fecteau** – Asked if BPL knew the status of Sugarloaf Corp. discussion with trail groups (e.g., MH&T) regarding use of the Sugarloaf lands abutting the Unit to the south and the size of the Sugarloaf parcel. Larry Warren (MH&T board member) responded with details of a tentative agreement with Sugarloaf for locating a new MH&T hut and associated trails on the Sugarloaf parcel, and gave the acreage as 1,400 acres.
- **Dave Cota, Carrabassett Valley Town Manager** – Commented that he agreed with and supported John McCatherin's concern regarding the conditions put of potential future ATV use of Caribou Valley Road, and that these conditions were not consistent with the intent of the acquisition related to allowing motorized trails and trail connections.

- Larry Warren (MH&T board member) – Commented regarding routing of a future groomed cross-country ski trail across the unit on or near Caribou Valley Road, stating that he and others have already explored most options for routing the trail, finding there were not a lot of viable areas. He further described the route he believes is most favorable and feasible and described a 200 acre easement from Sugarloaf Corp. on the northwest side of Caribou Pond for siting a new hut.
 - Jim Vogel highlighted the Plan’s Timber Management allocation, with an identified “recreation - important secondary use” area within that allocation, intended to allow for the future development of a groomed cross-country ski trail across the unit generally along and upslope of Caribou Valley Road.

Next Steps/Concluding Comments

- Jim Vogel reminded attendees of the opportunity to provide written comments over the next week, and that an email and mailing address to submit comments are provided on the bottom of the meeting agenda. The meeting was concluded with a thank you to all who attended.