

**Allagash Wilderness Waterway
Advisory Council / Working Group Meeting
August 27, 2007
Governor's Cabinet Room
Minutes**

The Allagash Wilderness Waterway Advisory Council met pursuant to notice for its initial organizing meeting Monday, August 27, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. in the Governor's Cabinet Room, State House, Augusta. Present for the meeting were members of the Council, members of the AWW Working Group, representatives of the Governor's office, representatives of the Department of Conservation, members of the Legislature and members of the AWW Technical Advisory Committees.

Advisory Council Members Present: Don Nicoll; Anthony Hourihan, Irving Woodlands; Don Hudson, Chewonki; Dick Walthers, Trout Unlimited; Bob McIntosh, National Parks Service

Others Present: Gil Gilpatrick, Phyllis Jalbert, Dick Barringer, Rick Denico, Jamie Fosburgh, Paul Johnson, Rep. Wendy Pieh, Rep. Jeffery Gifford,

Staff: Will Harris, BPL/DOC; Tom Morrison, BPL/DOC; Kelly Arata, Office of the Governor; Karin Tilberg, Office of the Governor; Patrick McGowan, DOC; Eliza Townsend, DOC; Mackenzi Keliher, BPL/DOC

Advisory Council Members Absent: Don Cyr, Janet McMahon

I. Karin Tilberg Called Meeting to Order.

- a. She hopes that harmony can be brought to the AWW. She conveyed the Governor's deep appreciation for the Working Groups time and commitment and welcomes the new members of the Advisory Council.
- b. Commissioner McGowan stated his hope that that this Advisory Council can turn the page on the AWW and begin a new day, but there have been many new days. He hopes that we can move forward toward a common good. He pledges DOC's full support to make the work of the Advisory Council a success. The Department will be a support base for their work.
- c. The success of the AWW video *Northrunner*, with more than 3,000 copies sold, illustrates the importance of the waterway.
- d. As a partner in this effort, the Department will not allow a compromise when it comes to the protection of the river.
- e. Commissioner McGowan provided an update on the pending lawsuit brought against Will Harris, as Director of the Bureau and cautioned that there would likely be more to come.

II. Will Harris Invited Introductions and Called for the Nomination of the Advisory Council Chair.

- a. Don Nicoll was elected chair by unanimous vote.
- b. Harris turned meeting over to the newly elected chair.
- c. Nicoll thanked the Advisory Council for the honor and indicated that as chair he would follow the lead of his colleagues.

III. Report on the Status of the Waterway, Report Provided by Will Harris.

- a. Recent legislation changed the reporting relationship of the AWW, as it will now have regional status and will be equal to the Northern and Southern Regions for State Parks. The waterway will fall directly under the jurisdiction of Tom Morrison, Director of Operations and Maintenance. The Bureau's Bangor office will house the clerical support for the waterway. A physical move will be considered if this does not work.
- b. The Department is seeking to establish a Superintendent position. The position will be established using existing positions. Discussion is currently taking place between HR and Employee Relations. As members of the Working Group, Don Nicoll and Senator Martin urged the Governor to move forward with the establishment of this position.
 - i. This position will be critical in raising a long-term endowment for the independence of the waterway.
- c. Budgeting is done as a whole for the Bureau, with \$76,500 in dedicated funds allocated to the AWW out of the total operation budget.
- d. Technical Committees
 - i. The Director of the Bureau is charged with establishing technical committees under the recent legislation. Technical committees established to date:
 1. *Fisheries, Wildlife & the Environment*. Members appointed to date are Paul Johnson, Rick Denico and Gary Pelletier
 2. *Recreational Use / Promotion*. Members appointed to date are Gil Gilpatrick and Russ Collett.
 3. *Endowment*
 4. *Forest Management*
 5. *Historic and Cultural Preservation*
- e. Additional Discussion Regarding the Lawsuit.
 - i. As Director of the Bureau, Will Harris was sued for not managing the waterway in accordance with the WSRA. Commissioner McGowan believes that there will be another suit against the Army Corps of Engineers regarding the reconstruction of Henderson Brook Bridge.
 1. The bridge was evaluated by John Buxton of DOT and rated a 2, on their evaluation scale of 1-10, 1 being condemnation. DOC is aggressively moving forward with the completion of the LURC and Army Corps permit applications so that the new bridge can be completed as soon as possible for recreation and wood transport, although it is not expected to happen by Fall. Repairs were done last week. The new bridge will be located just down river of the existing bridge.
 - ii. The decision to dismiss on the current suit will stand, if not appealed. Although an appeal is likely.
- f. Additional Discussion on Technical Committees.
 - i. Fish, Wildlife & the Environment will deal with issues surrounding maintaining the outstanding trout fishery of the waterway as well as bridges dams and water management. Rick Denico brings experience and knowledge to this committee. This technical committee will weigh in on Henderson Brook Bridge as well as the recreational use technical committee. Those interested in serving on a technical committee should contact Will Harris.
 - ii. The first meeting of the Advisory Council meeting will discuss the relationship between the technical committees and the Advisory Council.
 - iii. Technical committees may be integral to the drafting of the strategic plan, which is a charge of the Advisory Council.

- iv. Under the legislation, the technical committees are to be established to advise the Director, however they will likely work closely with the Advisory Council. This relationship will be discussed further at the next meeting.

IV. Questions / Additional Comments.

- a. Transparency should be established (through a web page), so that the air of conspiracy can be eliminated. This should be taken into account with the relationship of the technical committees to the Bureau.
- b. There should be a representative of the Advisory Council on each of the technical committees, but caution should be taken as the relationships can be muddy, going from healthy tension to very ugly. Relationships will be discussed further, taking into consideration the potential for efficiency in the flow of information.
- c. The Bureau currently accepts the work of volunteers and in-kind services and these situations are assessed on an individual basis.
- d. A system for accepting monetary donations for the endowment will need to be established.
 - i. Baxter could serve as a model. Should be discussed at the next meeting.

V. Other Business.

- a. Next meeting, as soon as practicable in September. Potential dates will be circulated. Duration of meeting will likely be 4 hours plus a lunch break (10-3). Location will likely be in Augusta in one of the legislative committee rooms.
- b. Frequency of meetings is anticipated to be every 2 months for the first 6-8 months.

VI. Brainstorm on Substantive Issues / Agenda Building for Subsequent Meetings.

- a. Strategic Plan
 - i. Recommendation to breakdown plan into Capital Improvements, Land Acquisition, Watershed Planning & Management (with Anthony and Janet's involvement).
- b. Bridges, Dams & Capital Improvements
 - i. Churchill Dam integral to usage
- c. Establishment of Visitor Centers, New Trails and Campsites
- d. Improving Use of Waterway (Kayak vs. Canoe, Decreasing Duration of Trips)
- e. Brook Trout Protection
- f. Education (Cultural, Historical and Usage Information)
- g. Superintendent Critical to Success
- h. Management for a Whole Spectrum of Values
- i. Planning – Status of Existing Management Plans and Where the WRSA Fits.
- j. Landowner Cooperation
- k. Continue to Inform the ACF Committee to Facilitate Transparency
- l. Interpretive Materials
- m. Baseline Inventory of Resources (to see the waterway in it's entirety and build stewardship around key features to entice visitors).
- n. Encouraging Volunteers
- o. Forest Management

VII. There being no further business, the Council adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mackenzi Keliher, Secretary