

Minutes

Aroostook Hills Management Plan Advisory Committee Meeting
May 11, 2009, BPL office, Ashland, ME

Attendance:

Advisory Committee: Dan Bridgham
Harry Hafford
Rocky Hill Sr.
Clayton Craig
Lewis Craig
Charlie Beck
Fred Moreau

BPL staff: Amy Hudnor
Will Harris
Don Kidder
Tom Charles
Joe Wiley
Vern Labbe
David Pierce
Chet Condon
James Caron
Scott Ramsey

All comments by advisory committee members related to the Squapan Unit.

Proposed Boat Launch on Squapan Lake

Many members of the committee liked the idea of a boat launch on the Unit. Some members stated that they would prefer the location to be in the cove near Sylvester Point rather than on the northeast portion of the lake across from Walker Siding. Reasons for the Sylvester Point preference include: it is a natural cove that is beautiful and distant from camps, it is a flat site with room for campsites as well as a boat launch, and the fishing is good in that portion of the lake. Reasons given for the dislike of the northeast lake site include: not wanting to go against the wishes of the Walker Siding campowners who don't want a public boat launch across from their private launch, and fear that the nearby exemplary community would cause the boat launch plan to be objected to.

Bureau staff noted that the major challenge to building the launch near Sylvester Point is road access. The Bureau does not have legal right of way to a portion of the West Chapman Road before it enters the Unit. While obtaining legal right of way is a goal stated in the plan, it may not be possible to obtain right of way from the landowner of West Chapman Road, especially because a boat launch would greatly increase public use of the road. In addition, new road would have to be built within the Unit from the public use road to the boat launch. A member of the committee said that Sylvester Point could be accessed from the Sterling Ridge Road.

Obtaining legal right of way would also be a necessity on this road and could potentially be a challenge.

One advisory committee member proposed two launches in the Unit (one at both the northeast corner of the lake and Sylvester Point area). He suggested one could be built by IF&W and the other by BPL. Though there is already a boat launch at the dam site, it is too far out of the way, with little space for parking and too far from the good fishing.

ATV use on the “Ridge Trail”

Many committee members are enthusiastic about plans to convert the snowmobile ridge trail over Squapan Mountain for ATV use. Some would like it to occur as soon as this summer, and feel that most of the trail improvements are already complete. One member would like the plan to give special designation to the trail, so that it will not be discontinued in the event of an ecological reserve designation of the ridgeline in the future.

Wind Power

One member would like to see the possibility of wind power on Squapan Mountain to be mentioned in the plan.

Fire Tower and Hiking Opportunities

One member would like to see more hiking opportunities on Squapan Mountain, including a trail to the fire tower. The fire tower should be improved so it is safe for people to climb. Hiking trails could include the Ridge Trail and be looped off that trail and then re-connected to it.

ATV Camping

Some members would like the “old log yard” area developed for camping as soon as possible. A day use area is very much needed. People are currently creating fires in unauthorized areas, and having a designated area would cut down on this.