

# Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region Management Plan

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*Tumbledown Public Land - view toward Tumbledown Mountain and Pond from Parker Ridge*

**Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry  
Bureau of Parks and Lands**



February 1, 2022

[reverse of front cover]

## 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 **Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region** is hereby adopted.

RECOMMENDED:



DATE:

1/31/2022

Andrew Cutko  
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Bureau of Parks and Lands

APPROVED:



DATE:

2/1/22

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ADOPTED DATE:

2/1/22

REVISION DATE:

2/1/37



## Table of Contents

<b>I. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
About this Document .....	1
What is the Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region? .....	1
The Lands of the Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region .....	3
Acquisition History .....	5
<b>II. The Planning Process and Resource Allocation System.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Statutory and Policy Guidance.....	5
Public Participation and the Planning Process.....	6
Summary of the Resource Allocation System .....	8
Forest Certification .....	8
<b>III. Planning Context.....</b>	<b>9</b>
Conservation Lands and Public Recreation Resources in the Region .....	9
Population and Access .....	9
Recreation Resources.....	10
Other Conservation Lands in the Region.....	12
Summary of Planning Implications .....	14
<b>IV. Resources and Management Issues for Lands in the Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region....</b>	<b>15</b>
General Management Focus .....	15
Tumbledown Unit.....	16
Character of the Land Base.....	16
Natural Resources .....	16
Wildlife and Fisheries Resources.....	18
Recreation Resources.....	20
Historic and Cultural Resources .....	24
Timber Resources .....	24
LUPC Zoning.....	26
Leases.....	26
Management Issues, Concerns and Opportunities .....	26
<b>Vision for Tumbledown Public Land.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Resource Allocations for the Tumbledown Unit .....	33
Management Recommendations for the Tumbledown Unit.....	37
Mount Blue State Park .....	39

Acquisition History and Character of the Land Base .....	39
Recreation Resources.....	40
Natural Resources .....	44
Wildlife and Fisheries Resources.....	44
History and Culture.....	46
Management Issues, Concerns and Opportunities .....	48
Administrative Issues.....	49
<b>Vision for Mount Blue State Park</b> .....	<b>50</b>
Management Recommendations for Mount Blue State Park.....	50
Bald Mountain Lot (Perkins Twp.).....	51
Character of the Land Base.....	51
Access and Recreation Resources.....	51
Exemplary Natural Communities, Rare Plants, and Wildlife.....	51
Timber Resources .....	54
Management Issues.....	54
Management Recommendations for the Bald Mountain Lot.....	54
Resource Allocations for the Bald Mountain Lot.....	54
<b>V. Monitoring and Evaluation</b> .....	<b>57</b>
Implementation of Plan Recommendations .....	57
Recreation .....	57
Wildlife .....	57
Timber Management.....	58

## **Appendices**

- A. Public Consultation Process
  - Advisory Committee Members
  - Public Consultation Summary
  - Public Comments and Bureau Responses
- B. Guiding Statutes and Agreements
  - MRSA Title 12
- C. Summary of BPL's Resource Allocation System - Criteria and Management Direction
- D. Summary of 2019 & 2020 Tumbledown Public Land Visitor Data
- E. Glossary
- F. References

## *Acknowledgements*

The Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region Management Plan was prepared through a collaborative effort involving contributions from the following Bureau of Parks and Lands staff:

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The Bureau also acknowledges the helpful participation of the Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region Management Plan Advisory Committee, and the members of the public who participated in public meetings held during preparation of this Plan and submitted comments on the Plan (see Appendix A for more details on the public consultation process).

## **I. Introduction**

### **About this Document**

This document constitutes a fifteen-year Management Plan (the Plan) for more than 18,000 acres of Public Reserved and Park land in the Tumbledown/Mount Blue Region, managed by the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (the Bureau). The Plan addresses the Tumbledown Public Reserved Land, the Bald Mountain Public Lot, and Mount Blue State Park (MBSP). This is the first regional management plan addressing these Public Reserved Lands and State Park.

The Plan includes background information about the planning process and the regional context of the Plan. The core of the Plan is a description of the character and resources of the units, a Vision for the future of the major units, and management allocations and recommendations.

One objective of the regional plan is to provide a balanced spectrum of opportunities across the Region, and in keeping with the opportunities and resources available in the broader surrounding Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region. In developing the management recommendations for the reserved lands and park lands, the Bureau has been mindful of this broader perspective.

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

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

Under current policy, the Bureau's management plans cover a period of 15 years after the date of adoption. A review of current issues and progress on implementing this Plan's recommendations will be undertaken beginning in 2026, as part of the first mandated 5-year review and update of the regional plan.

### **What is the Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region?**

The Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region encompasses 23 organized towns and 5 unorganized townships, a total area of about 570,000 acres, extending from the towns of Livermore, Livermore Falls and Fayette in the south to Madrid Twp. in the north. Excepting those three towns in the south, the Plan area is within southern Franklin and eastern Oxford Counties.

This region is characterized predominantly by rural areas interspersed with small communities hosting year-round and seasonal residences as well as commercial areas, mainly in town centers and along the major roads. The region also retains natural landscapes that are somewhat more

remote and thinly populated or unpopulated. These are primarily also a working landscape, where commercial forestry is the predominant land use. The region is well served by State highways and paved secondary roads as well as improved gravel roads, providing convenient vehicle access to most areas.

The region is divided between the Androscoggin and Kennebec River watersheds. The Androscoggin flows across the south part of the region, with the Swift River and Webb River tributaries and associated streams generally flowing south across the area to join the Androscoggin. The east half of the region (generally east of Township 6, Weld and Carthage) is in the Kennebec River watershed. Mount Blue stands astride the watershed boundary. The Sandy River, a main tributary of the Kennebec, and associated streams drain the north and east part of the plan area.

The region lies within the Western Mountains Foothills and Western Mountains biophysical regions of Maine. A striking feature of the region is the ring of mountains surrounding the Webb Lake basin, of which the peaks in the Tumbledown Unit as well as Mount Blue are a part. The terrain is generally flat to rolling within the Webb Lake basin, in the middle of the region, and southward from the lake along the meandering Webb River.

The region experiences winter weather typical of southern interior Maine. In Weld the average daily high temperature in January is 21° F, and the average daily high temperature in July is 76° F. In an average year, there are about 150 frost free days in the region (with considerable variation from place to place). Average annual precipitation in the region is about 45 inches and average annual snowfall is about 90 inches (usclimatedata.com, 2020; NACSE, 2020).

Bedrock of the mountains of the region (including those within the Tumbledown Unit and MBSP) are metamorphosed sedimentary rocks of Devonian and Silurian origin (~358-443 million years ago). These are marine deposits of black muds and clayey sands that have been subjected to very high temperatures and pressures. There are also igneous rocks such as pegmatite that were extruded as hot liquid magma into the sedimentary rocks (K. A. Pankiwskyj, 1965; Maine Geological Survey, 2002).

Several signs of metamorphism such as folding of the rock, with the original sedimentary layering making the folding more apparent, are particularly visible on the exposed peaks and ledges of the mountains. The erosional work of glaciers is also apparent. The glaciers, which last passed over the landscape more than 10,000 years ago, scraped and polished the bedrock on the summits and plucked rocks from those summits and deposited them at the base of southward faces. The result of this “plucking” is visible in several locations on the public lands (Maine Geological Survey, 1998).

While the ring of mountains is underlain by metamorphic rocks, Webb Lake and the surrounding lower elevation lands are underlain by granodiorite (a type of granite). The valley stretching from north of Webb Lake to Dixfield in the south was formed by the abrasive action of the last glacier. The surficial geology of much of the landscape is characterized by glacial till and thinner layers of glacial drift, on the higher ground often over near-surface bedrock, from that

glaciation. Other areas are characterized by peat deposits and bedrock outcrops (Maine Geologic Survey, 2020).

### The Lands of the Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region

The Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region lands comprise a total of about 10,550 acres designated as Public Reserved Lands at the Tumbledown Public Land and Bald Mountain Public Lot and about 8,200 acres designated as park land at MBSP. Tumbledown is one of the largest public lands in this part of the State and MBSP is the largest of the State’s 34 parks (not including Baxter State Park, which is not part of the Maine State Park system).

The table below summarizes the acreage contained in each property addressed in the Plan. A map of the Public Reserved Lands and other conservation lands of the Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region is provided on page 4.

#### The Public Lands of the Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region

Name and Townships (all are WELS: West of the Easterly Line of the State)	Fee Acres
<b>Primary Units</b>	
Tumbledown Public Land ( <i>Township 6, Weld, and Phillips</i> )	10,389
Mount Blue State Park ( <i>Weld, Avon and Temple</i> )	8,220
<b>Smaller Public Lot</b>	
Bald Mountain Public Lot ( <i>Perkins Twp.</i> )	167
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,776</b>

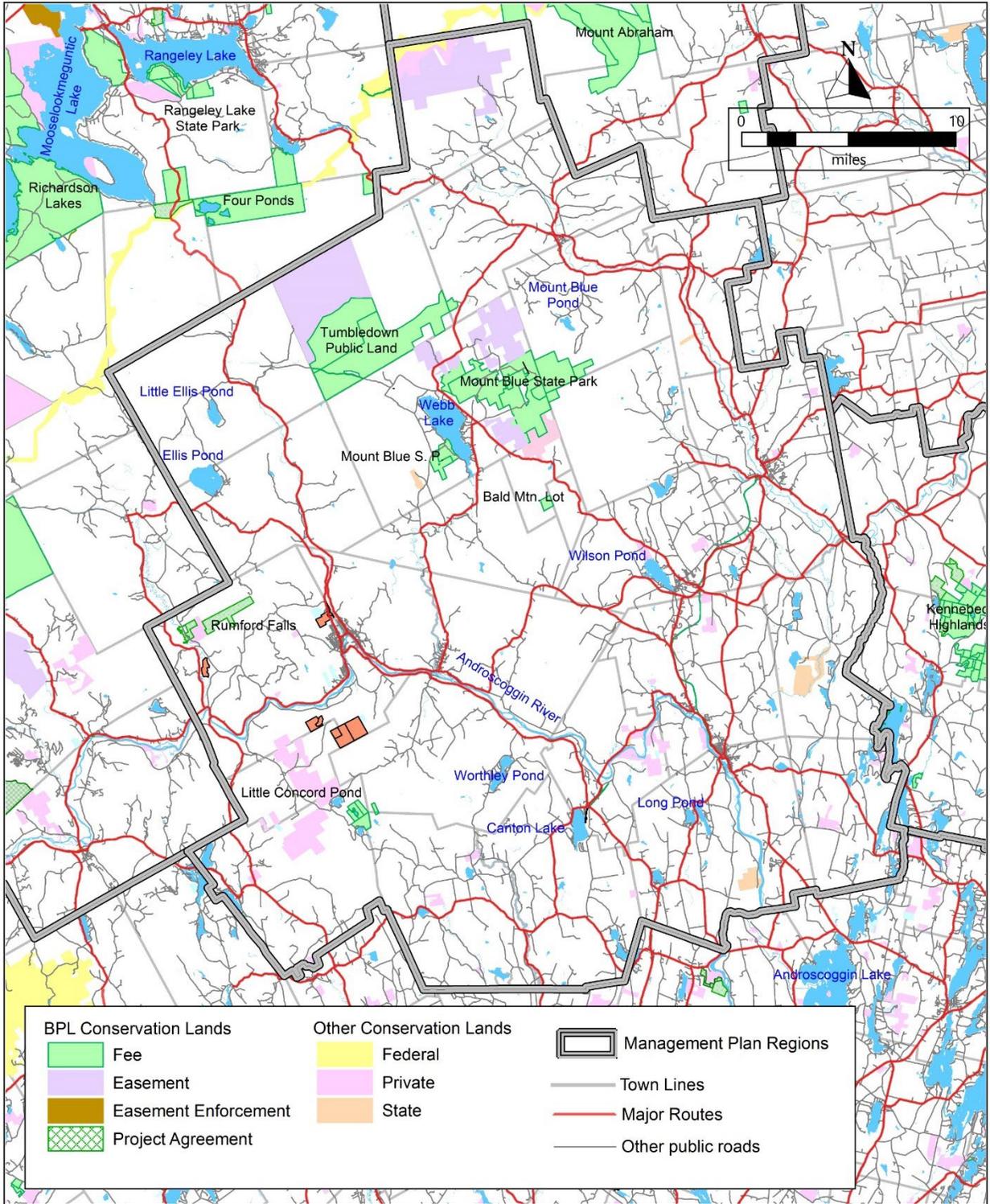
*Note: Figures listed are derived from surveys or GIS; deeded acres may differ.*

In addition, the Bureau has responsibility for monitoring compliance within five conservation easements, as listed below. Two of these abut Tumbledown Public Land and two abut MBSP. In total, those four easements cover 12,030 acres. The fifth is in Madrid Twp. at the northern end of the region. Monitoring occurs annually; monitoring reports are available from the Bureau. The easements are described in more detail in the Planning Context section (Section III).

#### Conservation Easements in the Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region

Easement Name	Townships/Town	Acres	Notes
Township 6	T6 North of Weld	7,832	Working forest land abutting Tumbledown Public Land; owned by Billion Pine Enterprises Corp.
North of East Brook	Weld	910	Working forest land abutting Tumbledown (Weld parcel); owned by Maine-ly Trees; access to Blueberry Mtn. trailhead via road across easement.
Pope Mountain	Weld	2,446	Working forest land abutting MBSP; owned by Rensma Timberlands
Hedgehog Hill	Weld	842	Working forest land abutting MBSP; owned by Legacy Conservation, LLC
Orbeton Stream	Madrid Twp.	5,808	Working forest land; owned by Linkletter Timberlands, LLC

# Tumbledown / Mount Blue Region Base Map



MAP FIGURE 1.

## Acquisition History

**Tumbledown Public Land** was acquired primarily in two purchases. The north part of the unit, comprised of 3,788 acres in Township 6 North of Weld, was acquired from Hancock Land Company in 2002. A 426-acre parcel in Weld -- abutting MBSP and not contiguous with the primary Tumbledown lands -- was also acquired in 2002 from the Trust for Public Lands. The south part of the unit, comprised of 6,063 acres in Township 6 and 126 acres in the Town of Phillips, was acquired from Mead Westvaco Oxford Corp. in 2004.

**Mount Blue State Park** was established in 1955 when the U.S. Department of Agriculture transferred 4,921 acres in Weld and Avon to the State. These lands were composed of numerous farms purchased by the U.S. Resettlement Administration Land Utilization Project in the 1930s. Approximately 400 of those acres are on Webb Lake, where the park campground, beach and other developed amenities are located. The remainder of the acreage is east of Webb Lake, encompassing Center Hill, Mount Blue and surrounding lands.

An additional 17 acres on the shore of Webb Lake was acquired in 1967, and an 84-acre parcel near Center Hill was acquired in 1988. The first major expansion of the park occurred in late 2001 and early 2002 when 2,466 acres between Center Hill and Mount Blue and 376 acres abutting the campground parcel were acquired from the Trust for Public Land. The last expansion occurred in 2004 with the purchase of 96 acres in Weld and 258 acres in Avon south and west of Mount Blue from Mead Westvaco Oxford Corp. (part of the series of purchases at Tumbledown from the same landowner). The major park expansions were funded by the Land for Maine's Future program, the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund and private donations.

The **Bald Mountain Public Lot** in Perkins Twp. was acquired from Mead Westvaco Oxford Corp. as part of the 2004 Tumbledown and Mt. Blue State Park purchases.

## II. The Planning Process and Resource Allocation System

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. 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.

### Statutory and Policy Guidance

Multiple use management plans are statutorily required for Public Reserved Lands pursuant to Title 12 MRSA § 1847 (2) (see Appendix B) and must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the IRP revised and adopted in December 2000 by the Bureau. The IRP provides further policy guidance for development of resource management plans and applies to

Parks as well as Public Reserved Lands. These laws and policies direct the Bureau to identify and protect important natural, ecological, and historic attributes; enhance important fisheries and wildlife habitat; provide opportunities for a variety of quality outdoor recreation experiences; and provide a sustained yield of forest products by utilizing forest management techniques and silvicultural practices that enhance the forest environment. Revenues received from timber harvesting are retained by the Bureau to manage Public Reserved Lands.

The portion of the IRP addressing management of fisheries and wildlife resources makes reference to the Bureau's *Wildlife Guidelines*. The guidelines provide specific management objectives and strategies for wetland, riparian and upland ecosystems on the public reserved lands, including areas designated for timber harvesting. Additional guidance is provided for management of special habitat features such as mast trees, snags, and forest openings/old fields, and for species of special concern, such as bald eagle, osprey and great blue heron. (Note: The *Wildlife Guidelines* are currently being updated by MDIF&W and will address a broader array of potential special habitats and larger landscape features such as rare and exemplary ecosystems and natural communities, as listed in the IRP.) The overall fisheries and wildlife resources policy of the Bureau is to strive to maintain a landscape characterized by a rich variety of native species and the functioning ecosystems on which they depend.

This plan meets the requirements for multiple use management plans for the Public Reserved Land properties set forth in Title 12 M.R.S.A. § 1847 (2) and is consistent with the Integrated Resource Policy.

### **Public Participation and the Planning Process**

Overall, the development of Management Plans includes a series of steps, each involving interdisciplinary review, as well as extensive efforts to solicit and consider public comment, in order to achieve a Plan that integrates the various perspectives and needs while protecting and conserving the resources of the Public Reserved Lands and the State Park lands. In total four public meetings were held in the development of this Final Draft Plan, as described below.

*Resource Assessments*: The first phase of the planning process includes a thorough study of the resources and opportunities available on the Public Reserved Land and the State Park. Beginning in the fall of 2019, Bureau staff undertook a review of the natural and geological, historic and cultural, fisheries and wildlife, recreation, and timber and renewable resources. In anticipation of this Plan the Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) aggregated survey data on important natural resources including wetlands, late successional forest, and other areas to be managed as special resources. Resource professionals from within the Bureau provided information on wildlife, recreation, and timber resources. Mapping and GIS-related information was also obtained as part of this phase.

Staff also participated in reconnaissance field trips to both Tumbledown and Mount Blue to view first-hand and characterize the resources and recreational features, and to observe recreational use. These visits occurred in the fall of 2019 and the spring, summer and fall of 2020.

*Advisory Committee*: The Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region Advisory Committee was assembled in the early winter of 2019 at the start of the Plan process and invited to a public scoping meeting that would formally kick off the Plan's development.

Issue Identification/Public Scoping Session: The first step in the planning process is a public scoping meeting. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to help ensure broad-based public input regarding management direction and other issues needing to be addressed by the Plan. A public scoping meeting was held in Farmington on January 28, 2020. Attendees were invited to submit written comments during the one-month period following the meeting. Several members of the public submitted written comments during the scoping phase on management issues and their vision for the Tumbledown Unit.

First Advisory Committee Meeting: The initial Advisory Committee meeting was held on February 26, 2020 in Weld. The purpose of the meeting was to gain a fuller understanding of the issues and opportunities to be addressed in the Plan, including guidance on developing an overall Vision for each of the major properties covered by the Plan. In addition, the group explored concerns of user groups and management challenges that may be associated with certain issues and opportunities. The meeting was guided by the list of Issues, Needs and Opportunities developed during scoping and subsequent BPL staff discussions, and which was distributed to the AC in advance. Subsequent to the meeting, several members of the public submitted written comments on management issues and local history.

Second and Third Advisory Committee Meetings: Through the spring and summer of 2020 the Bureau continued to compile information on the resources and management issues and drafted vision statements, proposed resource allocations and management recommendations into a Draft Plan. An Advisory Committee meeting focused on the issue of camping at Tumbledown was held September 21, 2020. An Advisory Committee meeting to review the Draft Plan was held July 29, 2021. (Both of these meetings were held via videoconference due to the Covid-19 pandemic.) Comments on the Draft Plan from the Advisory Committee and the public are included in the Appendices of this plan and were reflected in the Final Draft Plan.

Public Meeting on the Final Draft Plan: The Final Draft Plan was presented and discussed at a public meeting (also held via videoconference) on December 1, 2021.

Commissioner's Review of the Final Proposed Plan, and Plan Adoption: Comments received on the Final Draft Plan were considered in preparing the Final Management Plan. Upon recommendation from the Bureau of Parks and Lands, the Plan was then reviewed and approved of the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

Five-Year Plan Review and Updates: The Bureau's management plans are normally adopted for a 15-year period. The Bureau is required to report to the Advisory Committee at five-year intervals on accomplishments and changing conditions that may warrant amendments to the plan. The first mandated Five-Year Review of the regional plan is scheduled for 2027. Advisory Committee members will review the Bureau's report on actions taken to implement management recommendations in the Plan and will be asked to identify any new issues or circumstances they feel warrant Committee input or action. If neither the Bureau nor the Advisory Committee identifies any new issues or circumstances that warrant Committee input or action, the five-year review process is completed.

If any of the Advisory Committee members identifies new issues or circumstances that, in their opinion, may require an amendment to the plan, or that should be discussed with the Committee prior to the Bureau taking action without amending the plan, then the Bureau will seek Committee comment through correspondence or a meeting. Depending on Committee input, a decision will be made to formally amend the plan or to take action without amending the plan. (The Bureau may also bring forth new issues which may require amendment of the plan. Also, if requested, the Bureau may address a new issue or proposal and potential amendment of the plan outside the normal five-year review schedule.) If a decision is made to formally amend the plan, the Bureau will hold a public meeting to gather public input on the proposed amendment(s), document public comments and Bureau responses, and adopt the plan amendment. If a decision is made to take action without amending the plan, the Bureau will document the Committee discussion and the specific actions that can be taken without a plan amendment.

### Summary of the Resource Allocation System

The Bureau's Resource Allocation System is a land management-planning tool first developed in the 1980's and formalized in the IRP. The current version of the IRP was adopted December 18, 2000, following a public review and refinement process. 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 and where dispersed recreation facilities or activities are most appropriate, to those that are less sensitive and where more intensive recreation facilities or activities may be appropriate. The resource attributes are aggregated into seven categories or "allocations".

The hierarchy of the allocation system defines the type of management that will be applied depending on the particular resource attributes present, with *dominant* and *secondary* use or management designations as appropriate to achieve an integrated, multi-use management. Allocations, from most sensitive to least, include:

- **Special Protection Areas** (including Ecological Reserves and Significant Natural Areas)
- **Backcountry Recreation Areas** (Motorized and Non-mechanized)
- **Wildlife Areas** (essential wildlife habitat, significant habitats, and specialized habitat areas and features including rare natural communities)
- **Remote Recreation Areas**
- **Visual Protection Areas**
- **Developed Recreation Areas**
- **Timber Management Areas**

Appendix C includes a more detailed description of the Resource Allocation System categories and the management direction defined for each category.

### 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. It was concluded that 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 needed to satisfy as it continues to improve its forest management which has already been certified as being exemplary. The Bureau's second full recertification audit for FSC took place in December of 2011. The BPL forests were again certified as being well managed, with only a small number of corrective action requests (now known as minor non-conformances).

Audits conducted in early December of 2016 included a full recertification audit for FSC and an annual surveillance audit for SFI. Therefore, the auditors visited all three BPL regions and over 30 sites, including several within the Plan area. All non-conformances arising from that audit have been addressed and closed. Most recently, concurrent annual surveillance audits were conducted in October 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 in the North, East, West and North Regions, respectively.

### **III. Planning Context**

The purpose of this Plan is to identify management allocations and recommendations for the Public Reserved Lands in the region and recommendations for MBSP. The Plan has been developed taking into account the context of the region's other conservation lands and recreation resources, as summarized below.

#### **Conservation Lands and Public Recreation Resources in the Region**

##### Population and Access

The center of the region is about a 1.0-1.5 hour drive from Lewiston/Auburn and from Augusta, the nearest major population centers, and a 2.0-2.5 hour drive from Portland. The region

includes several smaller communities such as Farmington (pop. ~7,800), Rumford (pop. ~5,800), and Jay (pop. ~4,850). Approximately 350,000 people live within a 50-mile radius of Weld.

The primary routes into the region are U.S. Route 2 and State Route 4 and, which run generally east-west and north-south, respectively, across the south part of the region, and State Routes 142 and 156, which extend northward from Route 2 in Dixfield and Wilton, meeting in the town center of Weld. Route 142 continues northward to State Route 4 in Phillips, providing access from the north. State Route 17 runs northward from Route 2 along the west side of the region; visitors may come into the core of the region from Route 17 on the unpaved Byron/Weld Road.

### Recreation Resources

#### **Camping and Hiking**

There are no public campgrounds in the region other than the MBSP campground on Webb Lake. However, there are several privately-operated family campgrounds available, including Dummer's Beach on Webb Lake, across the water from the park.

The hiking opportunities at Tumbledown and MBSP are the most extensive in the region. The trail to the Bald Mountain Lot, across private forest land, is also very popular. Other hiking opportunities in the region include about four miles of trail on the Little Concord Pond/Speckled Mountain BPL park property in Woodstock and Peru, and other short hikes on various land trust properties (discussed in more detail below). Given the comparatively modest size of this BPL plan region, it should be noted that there are numerous camping and hiking opportunities within the proximate parts of the plan regions to the north (the Western Mountains and Flagstaff regions), and east (the Kennebec Highlands region). A few miles of the Appalachian Trail cross the northernmost corner of the region, between the long sections of the trail in the Western Mountains and Flagstaff regions.

#### **Fishing**

In addition to Webb Lake (the largest waterbody in the region), there are several ponds and rivers in the Tumbledown/Mt. Blue Region that provide diverse destinations for both cold-water and warm-water fishing. The Androscoggin River and more than a half dozen lakes and ponds from 30 acres to over 900 acres in size are available to anglers, most with developed boat launch facilities. Among the popular coldwater species are brook trout, brown trout, landlocked salmon, and togue (lake trout). Popular warmwater species include largemouth and smallmouth bass and white perch. These waters are regularly stocked with coldwater species by IF&W. The table below provides more details on several of these angling opportunities.

IF&W's fishing guide highlights brown trout and splake fishing on Mount Blue Pond, brown trout fishing on Webb Lake, wild lake trout fishing on Wilson Pond, smallmouth bass fishing on Ellis Pond, Mount Blue Pond, and the Androscoggin River and trout fishing on the Swift River. Large (16-17 in.) brown trout are stocked in Canton Lake and Mount Blue Pond, and large brook trout in Ellis and Worthley Ponds.

Local guides offer guided fishing on these ponds and rivers. Special regulations apply to all the ponds and streams listed above and other waterbodies in the region to protect the self-sustaining

populations of gamefish and to enhance the quality of the fisheries. Little Concord Pond, unique in this region, is managed as fly-fishing only water, with a six-month season (April-Sept.).

<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Primary fisheries</b>	<b>Stocking</b>
<i>Lakes/Ponds</i>				
Canton Lake	Canton	588	C: BNT W: SMB, CP	BNT
Ellis Pond	Roxbury	920	C: BKT W: SMB, WP, CP	BKT
Little Concord Pond	Woodstock	30	C: BKT	BKT
Little Ellis Pond * unimproved access	Byron	297	C: LLS, BRT	LLS, BKT
Long Pond	Livermore	208	W: SMB, WP C: BKT	BNT
Mount Blue Pond * carry-in only	Avon	134	C: BNT, SPK W: SMB	BNT, SPK
Webb Lake	Weld	2,146	C: BNT, BKT, LLS W: SMB	BNT, BKT, LLS
Wilson Pond	Wilton	563	C: LLS, LKT, BKT W: SMB, CP	LLS, BKT
Worthley Pond	Peru	375	C: BNT W: LMB	BNT, BKT
<i>Rivers/Streams</i>				
Androscoggin River	Flows through 8 towns in region	NA	C: BKT, BNT, RBT (above Rumford Falls) W: SMB	BKT, BNT, RBT
Swift River *walk-in access	Byron to Rumford	NA	C: BKT, BNT, RBT	BKT, BNT, RBT
<b>Key:</b> C = coldwater, W = warmwater, BNT = brown trout, BKT = brook trout, RBT = rainbow trout, LLS = land-locked salmon, LKT = lake trout, SMB = smallmouth bass, LMB = largemouth bass, CP = chain pickerel, WP = white perch				

### **Boating**

Canoeing and kayaking are common activities on Webb Lake as well as the Androscoggin River, and a number of the region's lakes and ponds. Local outfitters offer guided canoe trips, rental equipment and some offer shuttle services on the Androscoggin River (mainly upstream of Rumford), the full length of which is a designated water trail.

As mentioned above, both anglers and pleasure boaters have trailer-launching access to several of the larger lakes and ponds in the region, including Webb Lake, Ellis Pond, Wilson Pond, Worthley Pond and Long Pond. Informal trailer launching or carry-in access is available at other ponds. There are several public launch sites on the Androscoggin River.

### **Snowmobiling and ATV Riding**

In winter, snowmobile riders have abundant riding opportunities across the region. Several segments of the statewide Integrated Trail System (ITS) cross the area. ITS 82 runs east/west and ITS 89 runs north/south across the center of the region, meeting in Carthage; ITS 84 crosses

the north part of the region. ITS 117, a connector trail between Rumford and Rangeley, runs along the west side of the region. Numerous other club-maintained trails provide additional connections between these trails and many shorter loops. MBSP is a favorite snowmobile destination, with ITS 89 crossing through and connecting to other trails in the park. A trail on the Webb Lake area park entrance road provides access to the lake and links to the regional trail network.

ATVs routes are also plentiful in the Tumbledown/Mount Blue region. The local clubs maintain many miles of trail, a portion of which are on town roads and others on private woods roads. MBSP has 18 miles of ATV trail in the Center Hill/Mount Blue area, connected to the regional system. The 14-mile Whistle Stop Trail, a BPL-owned multiuse rail trail open to ATV's and snowmobiles (as well as bikes and pedestrian uses), runs between Farmington and Jay.

### **Hunting**

Ample hunting opportunities exist in the Tumbledown/Mount Blue region for deer, black bear, moose, turkey, ruffed grouse, and coyote. In addition to the State lands addressed in this plan, most of the commercial forestland in the region is open to hunting. (Note: Hunting is not permitted at MBSP between June 1 and Labor Day.) IF&W manages several Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in the region that are available to hunters. Relatively few moose are taken in the region; however, Weld and Rumford record some of the largest bear harvests in the state (IF&W, 2019). Local guides offer deer, moose, bear and upland game bird hunts.

### *Other Conservation Lands in the Region*

#### **BPL Fee Properties**

Little Concord Pond is a 530-acre undeveloped park property in Woodstock, with  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile walk-in access to the 30-acre pond (mentioned above). The pond was reclaimed in 2011 and restocked with brook trout the following year. A 50-acre parcel on Speckled Mountain is nearby. Four miles of trail take hikers to the top of Bald Mountain (1,650') and on to Speckled Mountain (2,200').

#### **BPL Easements**

As described in Section I, there are several working forest conservation easements held by BPL in the Tumbledown/Mount Blue Region. All are intended to support the long-term sustainable management of the protected properties including unique natural features, diverse wildlife and plant habitats, public access and traditional dispersed recreation opportunities. All five easements were funded through the federal Forest Legacy Program.

The North of East Brook easement consists of three parcels. The largest is ~640 acres with the south boundary fronting on Route 142/Phillips Road and the northwest corner touching on the main part of Tumbledown Public Land. A gravel road extends northward from Phillips Road across the length of the parcel and provides access to the Blueberry Hill Bible Camp north of the easement, as well as to a BPL-maintained trailhead on that property. Other woods roads on the parcel are open to pedestrian use. The other two parcels, 187 acres and 83 acres in area, are on the opposite side of Phillips road, and border East Brook and the disjunct Tumbledown parcel on the south. The parcels are separated by about 700 feet. There are no roads on the parcels.

The Pope Mountain easement is on a 2,446-acre irregularly shaped parcel east of Phillips Road and abutting MBSP on the south. Pope Mountain (2,210 feet) is on the northeast part of the parcel, as are the west slopes of Hurricane Mountain. There are several gated woods roads on the property. In addition to conducting timber management, the owner leases a portion of the property for maple sap tapping.

The 848-acre Hedgehog Hill easement property abuts MBSP on the southeast and has about 0.4 mile of frontage on Route 156/School Street. Woods roads and skid trails provide pedestrian access. The property is also crossed by both snowmobile and ATV trails linked to MBSP.

The 7,836-acre Township 6 easement abuts the Tumbledown Public Land along its entire southern border, occupying the remainder of the western half of the Township. The lands contain much of the upstream drainage of the East Branch of the Swift River. There are several woods roads branching across the property, and a leased hunting camp. An ATV route crosses the parcel on the woods roads.

The 5,798-acre Orbeton Stream easement is about 10 miles north of the Tumbledown lands. The lands abut private fee and easement conservation lands and the Appalachian Trail corridor on the north. A portion of the 44-mile multiuse Fly Rod Crosby Trail, developed by a consortium of local conservation groups, crosses the easement from east to west and other motorized and pedestrian trails are present or proposed.

### **IF&W Properties**

IF&W operates four WMAs in the region, which provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping, wildlife watching, and canoeing (at two of the three). Chesterville WMA is 1,340 acres, primarily with young to medium-aged second growth forest and cut-over lands, and a variety of wetlands along Norridgewock Stream. Tolla Wolla WMA in Livermore is 520 acres of upland forest and forested wetlands with frontage on the Androscoggin River. Flagg WMA is a 174-acre parcel in Weld, just west of the Webb Lake section of MBSP. Strong WMA is 93 acres of northern hardwood forests and fields along the Sandy River.

### **Land Trust Properties**

Mahoosuc Land Trust owns the 752-acre Rumford Whitecap Mountain Preserve in Rumford, with two scenic trails leading to the bald summit of Whitecap Mountain. Along with accessible summer hiking and blueberry picking, the property provides winter snowshoeing and backcountry skiing. The Trust has entered into a Project Agreement with the Department on these lands, as required under the LMF program which partially funded the acquisition, and submits a project report each year. The Trust also owns the nearby Ellis River Conservation Area (228 acres, linked to the preserve by easement lands), and other smaller parcels in Rumford on the Androscoggin River. Notable among the smaller parcels is the 32-acre Glassface Mountain Conservation Area in Rumford, with a 0.8 mile trail to open ledges 500 feet above the Androscoggin. The Trust has conservation easements on over 4,600 acres of contiguous forest land in the Towns of Woodstock and Rumford and in Milton Twp.

Foothills Land Conservancy owns a 230-acre preserve surrounding Wilson Stream at the north end of Wilson Pond in Wilton. A parking area is provided, from which visitor may access

walking trails along the edges of fields and leading to inlets and wetlands on the pond, providing excellent birding and other wildlife watching. IF&W has an easement on the property.

Androscoggin Land Trust owns the 40-acre French Falls Recreation Area in Jay, and in cooperation with the town provides a network of trails along the Androscoggin River. The Trust also owns Stevens Island and several other parcels along the river upstream in Canton; BPL holds a public access easement on those parcels but there are no developed facilities.

The Kennebec Land Trust owns the 327-acre Meadow Brook and Sturtevant Farm Conservation Areas in Livermore, which permanently protect two active farms, wetlands, a cedar seepage forest, and an historic homestead. A trail provides a one-mile walk through wetlands and forests.

### **Summary of Planning Implications**

1. The Tumbledown/Mount Blue Region Public Reserved Land and Park land lie in an area highly valued for its natural resources. The culture and economy of the area are historically linked to the forest resources and outdoor recreation.
2. The recreation opportunities on the Public Reserved Lands and Park land are part of a much larger landscape-level system across the Western Mountains and foothills, both within this plan region and adjacent regions.
3. Public and private initiatives to support the recreation-based economy and to conserve the special natural areas in the Region are strong. The conservation easement lands spread throughout the region, as well as the private conservation lands held in fee, are central to both objectives.
4. The overriding attraction of the area for recreationists is the region's mountains, lakes, ponds and streams and the mix of undeveloped backcountry and commercial forest land open to traditional recreation uses. Careful stewardship is needed to protect these values while making the public lands available to enjoy.