

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

Upper Kennebec Region Management Plan

Advisory Committee Meeting

June 20, 2018 5:30 – 8:00 PM
Quimby Middle School Gym, Bingham

MEETING NOTES

The Advisory Committee Meeting was attended by two AC members and about 15 interested members of the general public.

AC Members Present

Kristen Hoffmann, Forest Society of Maine (FSM)

Jeff Reardon, Trout Unlimited

BPL Staff Present

Peter Smith, Western Region Lands Manager (until 6/22/18); Doug Reed, Acting Western Region Lands Manager (beginning 6/25/18); Jim Vogel, Plan Coordinator; Rex Turner, Recreation Planner; Marc Albert and Jeff Bartley, Foresters assigned to the Upper Kennebec Region; Brian Bronson, ATV Coordinator; Tom Desjardin, Director.

Welcome/Introduction and Purpose

Jim Vogel welcomed the attendees and Bureau staff introduced themselves, followed by AC members and the general public. A meeting agenda was provided (attachment 1). The meeting was focused on a PowerPoint slide presentation by Jim of the Vision (major Units only), Resource Allocations and Management Recommendations for each management unit as contained in the Draft Plan (attachment 2). The Draft Plan had been distributed several weeks prior to the meeting. Additional copies of Resource Allocation maps were available at the meeting and large scale maps of the two largest Units were posted on the wall. Jim stated the purpose of the meeting was to review of the core of the Draft Plan, as summarized in the presentation, and an opportunity for AC members and the general public to comment on the Draft Plan.

Draft Plan Review

- The first few minutes of the presentation reviewed the Plan development process and indicated what stage had been reached, and what additional steps would occur over the following few months to finalize the Plan.
- The next 30 minutes of the meeting were directed at the **Holeb Public Lands**, the largest unit in the region. Comments were generally supportive of the Vision, Resource Allocations and Management Recommendations in the Draft Plan, but also included the following (comments and, where applicable, BPL staff responses, are summarized or paraphrased here):

- Kristen Hoffman commented that the issues and recommendations are generally good, but had some comments on details that will be provided to BPL in writing.
- Kristen also offered a correction regarding hiking trails on FSM easement lands, pointing out that those trails are provided by the landowner rather by FSM, and also clarified that the Holeb portage trail is entirely on easement lands (including the short portions at each end that are on BPL fee lands).
- Regarding the recommendation to develop a lease for the Attean Lodge's use of Attean Landing, Kristen emphasized the frequency of comments from the public on problems at the site and the length of time the issues have gone unresolved. It was reported that a Lodge employee is now (illegally) charging the public to park. Kristen urged that the Bureau take action soon.
- Jeff Reardon commented on the description of "A list" and "B list" brook trout ponds on the Unit, explaining that those lists have now been combined by IF&W. [Note: the Plan will be revised to instead refer to Heritage Brook Trout Ponds.]
- The next 60 minutes of the meeting were directed at the recently acquired **Cold Stream Forest Unit**, unique in the Plan area both for the ecological resources present and the history of public use under the previous ownership. Nearly all of the members of the general public attending were long-time Cold Stream visitors and contributors to its upkeep, who have particular interest in the road and trail improvement work that has begun last fall and future plans for the lands. Comments were mainly focused on road and trail improvement issues, as well as the proposal contained in the plan for addressing the boat storage issue at the ponds. Specific comments and questions included the following (the comments and, where applicable, BPL staff responses, are summarized or paraphrased here):
 - Several Cold Stream users commented that the new bridge installed on Lone Jack Road near the campground is a problem, specifically due to steep approaches. In particular, a serious concern was expressed that the RVs that frequently come to the Unit could damage their sanitation system plumbing (on the underside of the RV) when crossing the bridge, posing a risk of a raw sewage spill.
 - Marc Albert responded that the Bureau is aware of the problem and the need to modify the bridge approaches. Marc also spent considerable time explaining the work that was done on the road and bridge, the fisheries and flow concerns that were important factors in the design, the Bureau's collaboration with IF&W and LUPC in planning the work, and additional work that needs to occur on that critical road to address drainage needs.
 - It was asked whether the Bureau has a plan to address derelict boats.
 - Jim Vogel responded that addressing derelict boats was part of the recommendations in the Draft Plan to address the broader issue of boat storage at the ponds.
 - A comment was made that there is no signage at the ponds stating the "fly fishing only" regulation, bag limits, etc. It was also stated that anglers coming to the Unit "don't know where they are" (what pond) and so don't know the applicable fishing rules. Related questions were asked about who monitors use and enforces rules in

the Unit and whether there will be more enforcement presence with the expected increase in use at the Unit.

- Jim Vogel responded that fishing regulation signage at ponds is within the purview of IF&W. [Note: old signage is present at certain ponds.]
- Pete Smith explained that the Bureau relies on the Maine Forest Service and Maine Warden Service to provide enforcement on the public lands, and that those agencies are responsive with increased patrols or other action if the Bureau alerts them to a particular problem or problem area. Pete also offered the opinion that angler's claims of ignorance of what pond they were at would not be regarded as a valid excuse by the wardens.
- The question was asked whether studies have been done on the health and population status of the brook trout in the Cold Stream Unit.
 - Jim Vogel responded that he was not aware of any such specific studies. [Note: like fisheries regulations, fisheries studies and data are under the purview of IF&W.]
- There was a general discussion of the requirement for boats to be marked, and questions about how quickly unmarked boats would be removed. Jeff Reardon suggested BPL affix a letter on waterproof paper to unmarked boats, notifying owners that the boats will be removed within a certain time if the owner's name is not on the boat and other boat storage policies are not adhered to.
 - Jim Vogel explained that the IRP requires only that the boat owner be identified on the boat. He further explained that the intent in the Plan is to layout a general two-phase approach to the boat storage problem, with numerous details to be worked out by the Bureau before proceeding. A commitment was made to conduct extensive outreach to boat owners as part of the process, to provide boat owners ample opportunity to bring their boats into compliance with the storage policy contained in the IRP.
- Attendees commented that improvements to the roads and pond access trails are attracting more and different fishermen to the area than were coming before. The specific concern was voiced that making access trails "too easy" will attract a different kind of fishermen (presumably, those who are less aware or knowledgeable regarding the value of and threats to the brook trout resource and fishing regulations in these special status waters).
- A more general comment was made that "it's working" at Cold Stream (referring to the road, trails and other facilities as they have been under the prior ownership), so "why change it"? It was further stated that road improvements increase access and change the character of the area.
 - Jim Vogel stated that the Bureau's objective and intent is not to alter the status quo at Cold Stream regarding access and the visitor experience, but to bring up to Bureau standards the primary public access roads and select, well-used access trails (those that will become "official" rather than informal trails, and will appear in Unit maps, brochures, etc.). [Note: Within the Bureau's major management units, public access roads are generally maintained for travel by 2WD vehicles with reasonable ground clearance.

Trails are designed and maintained for public safety and enjoyment, sustainability, and resource protection.]

- Jim stated that the priority for the initial road and bridge work has been water quality protection, and that the Plan calls for development of a Roads Plan to help prioritize future road work. [Not all the numerous roads into the Unit (several are included in the reciprocal road easement with Weyerhaeuser) will be improved; the Bureau intends to limit the number of maintained access roads into the Unit. An important concern is to limit maintenance costs, particularly for roads the abutting landowner will not be maintaining for their purposes in the near term.]
- Regarding pond access trails, Marc Albert explained that one purpose of the improvements was to increase safety (e.g., by replacing poles laid on the ground in wet areas with proper bog bridging).
- Jim stated that the Bureau's intent is to improve only a few of the existing informal pond access trails (well established trails into Lang Pond and Big Berry Pond, with numerous boats stored at the end of the trails). Access trails at other ponds would be left as is, including at remote ponds other than Lang (i.e., Little Lang, Snake, Fernald). In addition to bog bridging in wet areas, the trails are to be brushed out to a width and height that facilitates hand-carrying of boats to and from the ponds. Some signage or trailhead marking may be added, as needed. However, the intent is not to treat these short access trails like day-use or hiking trails, with improved trailheads, blazing, etc.
- Concern was expressed by several attendees about increased ATV activity they had observed or seen signs of in the north end of the Unit (both on and off road), none of which is authorized. Some discussion was had about where the riders are coming from and how some might wander into the Unit inadvertently, following snowmobile routes/signs and not realizing they have strayed from authorized ATV trails (for example, the ATV route passing to the east side of Parlin Pond). A request was made that BPL "jump on the issue" before it worsens, including posting of "No ATV" signs.
 - The Bureau is taking action to post "No ATVs" signs at critical road locations on surrounding lands and at the Cold Stream boundary, to conduct surveillance, and to coordinate with Maine Warden Service regarding recent violations and future patrol needs.
- A comment was made that the water level in Big Berry Pond was less than it had been historically, and it was asked if the water level might be raised. It was suggested that BPL check with IF&W about this issue.
- Regarding toilets and sanitation at campsites, it was commented that the Plan should specify compliance with LUPC for toilets; this may include installation of a privy at Durgin Pond and replacement/relocation of the existing outhouses at Long Jack campground. Commenters mentioned the lack of toilets at the scattered individual roadside campsites and resulting improper handling of waste, suggesting those sites should be supplied with a privy or posted closed.

- After a 10 min. break, the meeting proceeded to review of the portion of the Draft Plan addressing the **Sandy Bay Unit** and the 11 **smaller public lots** and clusters of smaller public lots. Comments and questions included (summarized or paraphrased here):
 - The license holder questioned the appropriateness of allocating the Sandy Bay maple sugar license areas to Timber Management; he indicated that with the presence of the taps and tubing, no machines would be used for future tree removals to benefit sap production -- only hand-felling would be used. It was also asked if such tree removals could be covered by the existing agreement or a permit.
 - Jim Vogel pointed out that the Timber Management allocation allows tree removals and that other maple sugar license areas are allocated as such. Pete Smith stated that the specifics of tree removal within the license areas was an administrative issue to be handled by the Western Region, not a plan issue.
 - Regarding the Johnson Mountain and West Forks North Lots, it was highlighted during the discussion that the two ponds on the lots are connected to Cold Stream via Tomhegan Stream (as noted in the Plan), and so deserve special consideration in relation to brook trout habitat.
 - Marc Albert agreed to the preference stated by Jeff Reardon that future road improvements for harvesting keep access as is, and treating these as remote, walk-in ponds. A primary justification is to minimize the risk of harm to the brook trout resource by non-native bait fish carried into those ponds by anglers, as has occurred at other ponds in the region.

Next Steps and Concluding Comments

- Jim Vogel described the next step in the Plan's development, to be completed over the next few months, in which the Bureau will revise the Draft Plan based on comments received and in advance of a Public Meeting at which the Final Draft Plan will be presented.
- AC members were also reminded of the opportunity to provide additional thoughts or comments over the next three weeks on any part of the Plan, and that an email and mailing address to submit comments are provided on the bottom of the meeting agenda. The meeting was concluded at 7:45 with a thank you to all who attended.

Additional Pre and Post-Meeting Comments

- AC member Suzanne Hockmeyer emailed Jim Vogel prior to the meeting express general support for the recommendations and other aspects of the Plan.
- During the three-week period following the meeting and concluding on July 11, 2018, AC members Kristen Hoffmann and Jeff Reardon submitted additional written comments. BPL staff met with Jeff on July 2 to review his written comments. Written comments were also submitted by one Cold Stream Forest user who had attended the meeting, and by another member of the public also focused on Cold Stream fisheries concerns. These comments are provided in Attachment 3 and will be addressed in the Final Draft of the Plan, where appropriate. Responses will be included in the Final Draft Plan appendices.

Attachment 1: Meeting Agenda

Attachment 2: PowerPoint Presentation (slides in handout form)

Attachment 3: Written Post-Meeting Comments



Upper Kennebec Region Management Plan

Advisory Committee Meeting

June 20, 2018

5:30 to 8:00 pm

Quimby Middle School Gymnasium, Bingham ME

Agenda

- 5:30 Welcome and Introductions, Meeting's Objectives and Goals
- 5:35 Holeb Public Lands – Review of character of Unit, Vision, proposed Resource Allocations and Management Recommendations [25 min.]
- 6:00 Cold Stream Forest Public Lands – Review of character of Unit, Vision, proposed Resource Allocations and Management Recommendations [60 min.]
- 7:00 Break [10 min.]
- 7:10 Sandy Bay and Small Lots North of West Forks – Review of character of Units/Lots, Vision, proposed Resource Allocations and Management Recommendations [25 min.]
- 7:35 Small Lots in West Forks and South of West Forks – Review of character of Lots, proposed Resource Allocations and Management Recommendations [20 min.]
- 7:55 Next Steps

Adjourn

You may send **written comments** to be considered in preparing the Final Draft Plan **by July 11 to:**

Jim Vogel
Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands
22 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
OR
Jim.Vogel@maine.gov

The webpage for the Upper Kennebec Region Plan can be found at:

http://www.maine.gov/dacf/upper_kennebec.

This page will be updated with draft plans and announcements about upcoming meetings and written comment periods.

Upper Kennebec Region Management Plan

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

Upper Kennebec Region Advisory Committee Meeting
June 20, 2018



DRAFT PLAN REVIEW



Public Planning Process

- **Step 1: Scoping (6 mo.)**
 - Gather and share information on the resources present on the lands
 - Seek input from the public regarding their interests and ideas for uses and management of the property and issues of concern
- **Step 2: Draft Management Plan (9 mo.)**
 - BPL crafts a 15 Year plan for the lands that protects the exceptional natural and biological resources and balances the variety of land uses and recreation interests on the parcels
 - **BPL presents Draft Plan to the Advisory Committee for review and comment**
 - BPL revises Draft Plan as needed
- **Step 3: Final Draft Management Plan (1-2 mo.)**
 - BPL presents Final Draft Management Plan to public for comment and discussion
 - BPL responds to comments and prepares Final Plan
- **Step 4: Final Management Plan (1 mo.)**
 - Presented to BPL Director for his recommendation
 - Presented to DACF Commissioner for his approval
 - Plan is adopted with signature of Commissioner

Public Reserved Lands of the Moosehead Region

- 3 major Units and 11 smaller lots and groups of smaller lots in Somerset County
- >43,000 acres in total
- Major Units account for >80% of the public lands in the region

Name	Fee acres
Holeb Unit	23,612
Cold Stream Forest Unit	8,159
Sandy Bay Unit	2,712
Dennistown Lot & Moose River	1,282
Bradstreet Twp. South Lot	180
Coburn Mountain Lot	300
Johnson Mtn. & West Forks NE	1,245
West Forks NW, C, SW Lots	450
Moxie Gore & The Forks N Lots	854
Bald Mountain Lot	1,650
4 remaining lots/groups of lots	1,515

Presentation Outline

- We will focus on review of **Section IV – Resources and Management Issues** of the Draft Plan, specifically:
 - Vision (major units only)
 - Dominant Resource Use Allocations
 - Management Recommendations
- Will spend most of our time on 3 major Units
- Followed by less detailed review of smaller lots
- Feel free to ask questions or offer comments at any point in presentation
- Comments are also welcome on any of the first 3 sections of the Draft Plan though we won't review them here

Holeb Unit



View of Attean Pond from Attean Landing

Character of the Unit

- Adjacent to the town of Jackman and State Rt. 201
- Limited public use road system, primarily providing access to boat landings
- Attean and Holeb Ponds and 4 smaller ponds, including 3 Heritage Brook Trout ponds
- >20 primitive water-access campsites serving Moose River Bow Trip
- 1 mile portage trail between Attean and Holeb
- 4,000+ acre exemplary bog complex
- The primary source of timber in the region



Holeb Pond campsite at end of portage trail

General Vision for the Unit



- Accommodate a range of primitive camping, paddling, fishing, and hunting experiences
- Maintain backcountry multi-day paddling opportunity on Moose River
- Protect ecological values associated with ponds and No. 5 Bog
- More than half of the unit managed primarily for timber, emphasizing high value forest products, while providing a variety of wildlife habitats and protecting other significant resources



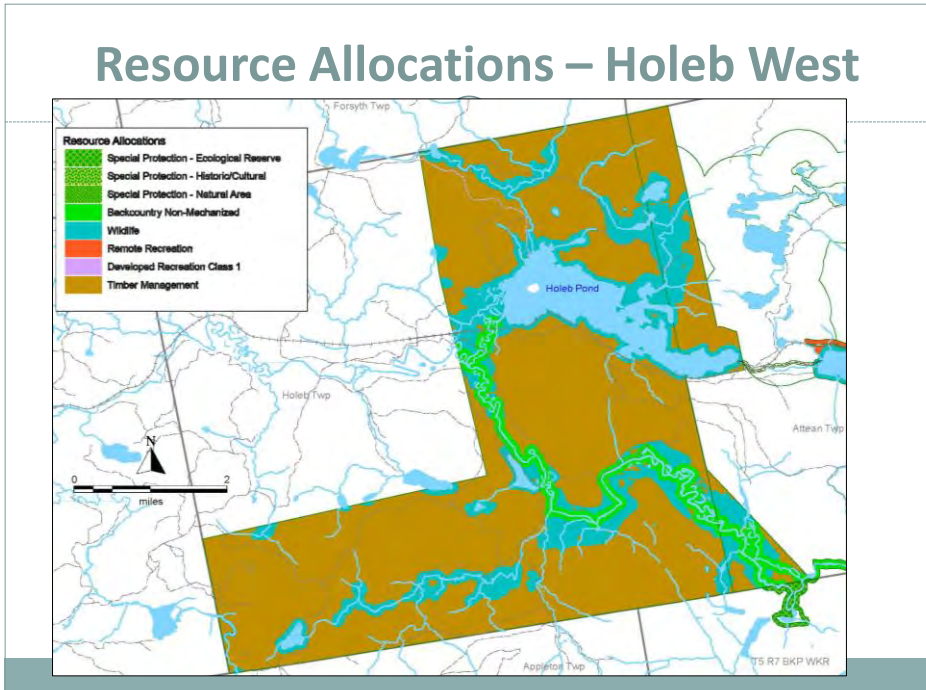
Start of Holeb portage trail

Resource Allocations

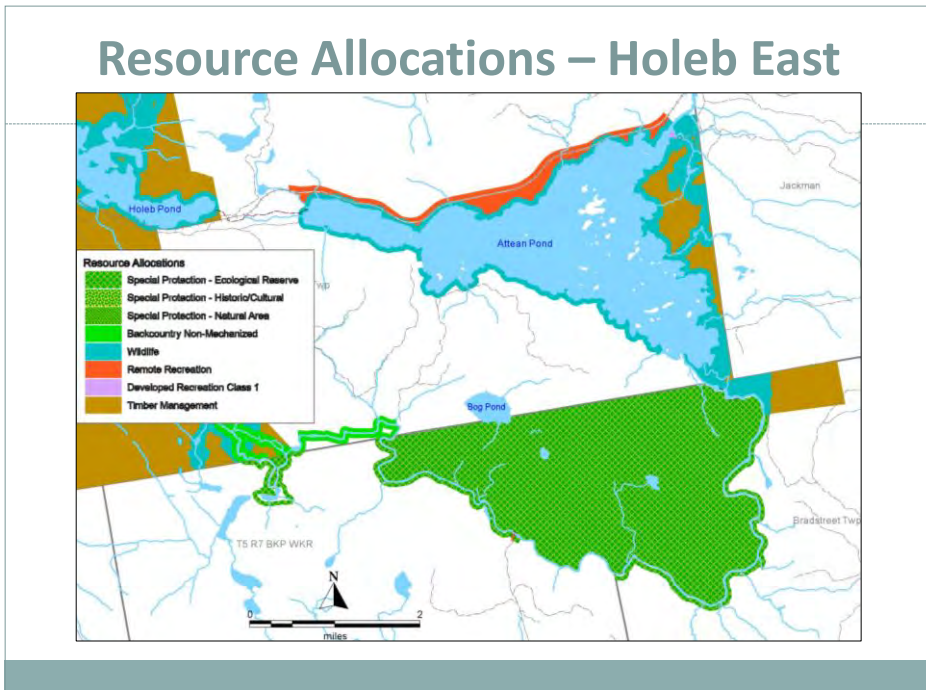


- Summary of allocations :
 - Special Protection allocation protects exemplary natural communities within the No. 5 Bog ecological reserve
 - Backcountry Non-Mechanized allocation has been applied to the Holeb Stream and Moose River corridor to protect the recreation experience associated with the waterway
 - Wildlife allocation protects riparian areas beyond Special Protection and Backcountry Non-Mechanized areas, and deer wintering areas
 - Developed Recreation and Remote Recreation allocations protect pond landing areas and Attean Pond shore lands outside of the riparian buffer area
 - Timber Management allocations continue the historical emphasis on timber production on most of the unit, with appropriate visual, recreation, and wildlife considerations.

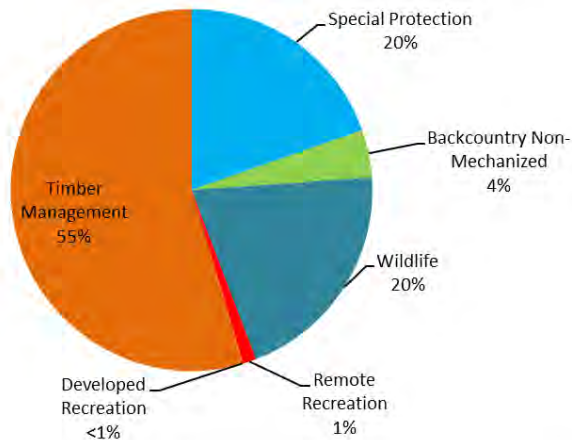
Resource Allocations – Holeb West



Resource Allocations – Holeb East



Holeb Unit - Dominant Resource Allocations



Management Recommendations

- **Recreation:**
 - Continued maintenance and rehab of Moose River Bow Trip campsites and portages
 - Explore options for a group campsite near Attean Landing
- **Public Access**
 - Clarify public use needs and rights and maintenance responsibilities for Attean Landing Road
 - As resources allow, maintain Holeb Landing Road to public use road standards
- **Wildlife**
 - Survey and evaluate the DWA at SE corner of Attean Pond
 - Manage softwood on adjacent Bradstreet Twp. acres to benefit wintering deer

Timber Management

- Continuation of long-term program to improve timber quality on the unit, with the overall objectives of growing high value timber products while maintaining visual integrity and enhancing the diversity of wildlife habitat.
- Much of the timber management is subject to Visual Class II considerations due to visibility from major ponds and Bow Trip



Administrative Issues

- **Signage and Visitor Information:**
 - Assess at Attean and Holeb Landings for possible improvements
 - Develop updated Map and Guide Brochure
- **Attean Landing Use:**
 - Develop a lease for Attean Lodge: ensure unfettered public use, define boating launching, docks and parking for commercial and public use
 - Address impermissible seasonal residency by Attean Lodge employee
- **Potential ag lease for hayfield near Attean Landing**

Cold Stream Forest Unit



Small waterfall on Cold Stream, below snowmobile trail bridge

Character of the Unit

- 8,152 acres of forestland interspersed with numerous high value native brook trout ponds and 15 mile stream corridor
- Good access from Rt. 201 via extensive logging road network on abutting lands
- 15-site campground and several additional drive-to campsites
- Day hike trail to Cold Stream Falls and angler access trails to most ponds
- Snowmobile trails run the length of the Unit, ATV trail crosses southern end
- Exemplary natural communities and rare plants within Cold Stream corridor
- 3,000+ acre Biological Deer Wintering Area at south end of Unit



Lang Pond from south shore

General Vision for the Unit



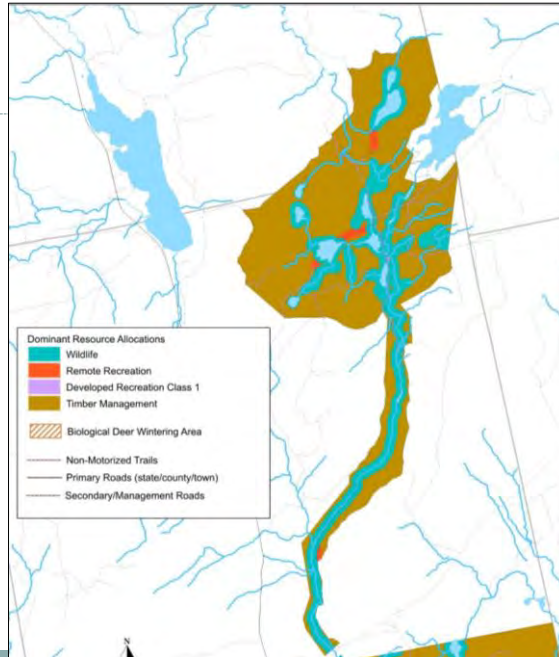
- *Brook trout habitat protection will be a management priority across the Unit, and will be given preference when potential conflicts arise with management for other values*
- Protect and enhance brook trout habitat in ponds and streams, as guided by Fisheries Habitat HMA
- Enhance deer wintering habitat in the BDWA as guided by Deer Wintering Area HMA
- Continue to provide historic camping and angling opportunities, with walk-in access maintained at remote ponds
- Preserve and enhance the scenic setting of remote ponds
- Maintain traditional on-site boat storage at remote ponds while reducing the number of boats stored and aesthetic impacts
- Continue important snowmobile and ATV routes across the Unit
- Develop signage and other visitor information
- Continue road and bridge improvements, as resources allow, to minimize run-off, siltation and other potential impacts on aquatic resources, and ensure adequate passage of high flows and fish passage
- Manage timber on ~40% of unit, respecting fisheries and wildlife habitat needs, and in accordance with the Fisheries Habitat HMA

Resource Allocations

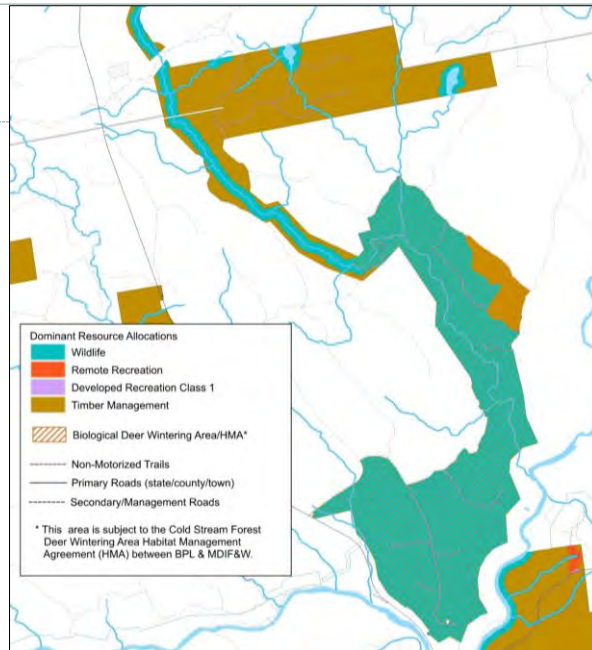


- Wildlife allocation along the Cold Stream corridor and around all ponds and other riparian areas; also within the area subject to the Deer Wintering Area HMA
- Remote Recreation buffer surrounding pond access trails and Cold Stream Falls trail outside riparian zones
- Developed Recreation allocation along public use roads and surrounding campsites and trailheads
- Timber Management allocation on remaining acres

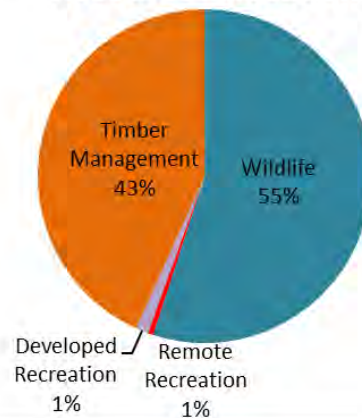
Resource Allocations: North



Resource Allocations: South



Cold Stream Forest Unit - Dominant Resource Allocations



Management Recommendations

- *Focus is on protecting and enhancing trout ponds and streams, maintaining historic camping and angling opportunities provided by primitive campsites and short access trails, and improvement of deer wintering habitat in the HMA area*
- Recreation recommendations maintain status quo while bringing campsites and trails up to BPL standards, and evaluating bear bait sites
- Public Access recommendations continue road, culvert and bridge work already begun (in accord with the Fisheries Habitat HMA) and set priorities for access routes to be maintained

Management Recommendations (cont.)

- Wildlife recommendations focus on implementation of HMAs and coordination with IF&W
- Timber Management recommendations are for management for high quality forest products and improvement of forest quality (in accord with Fisheries Habitat HMA), while protecting visual quality around ponds and Cold Stream
- Administrative issues to be addressed include boat storage at ponds with phased approach, development of a signage plan, and development of a map and brochure

Sandy Bay Unit



View across former impoundment at south end of Unit

Character of the Unit

- 2,700 acres of mainly hardwood and mixed wood forestland on the Canadian border
- 300 acres of open wetland in former impoundment area
- Direct access from Rt. 201 via logging road network
- No recreation facilities other than short segments of ATV and snowmobile trail
- Two maple sugar license areas on the central ridge, totaling ~400 acres



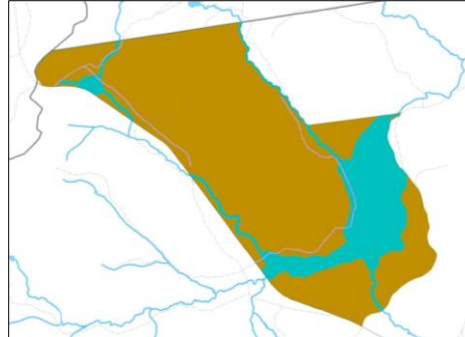
A portion of maple sugar collection system installed on license area

General Vision for the Unit

- About 80% of the unit managed primarily for timber, emphasizing high value forest products, while providing a variety of wildlife habitats and protecting other significant resources
- Continue to manage about 400 acres within two maple sugar license areas; additional license areas may be considered
- Continue to provide ATV and snowmobile routes across western margin of Unit

Resource Allocations

- Wildlife allocation in the former impoundment area and in riparian areas
- Timber Management allocation on remaining acres



Dominant Allocations	
■	Special Protection - Natural Area
■	Wildlife
■	Remote Recreation
■	Developed Recreation Class 1
■	Timber Management

Management Recommendations

- Timber Management: continue management for high quality forest products and improvement of forest quality
 - Visual Class II considerations will apply for area visible from Rt. 201
 - Management within current and any proposed maple sugar license areas will be directing at maintaining or improving sap production
- Recreation: continue snowmobile and ATV trail segments as part of regional trail networks



ATV route on old Rt. 201 on Sandy Bay Unit

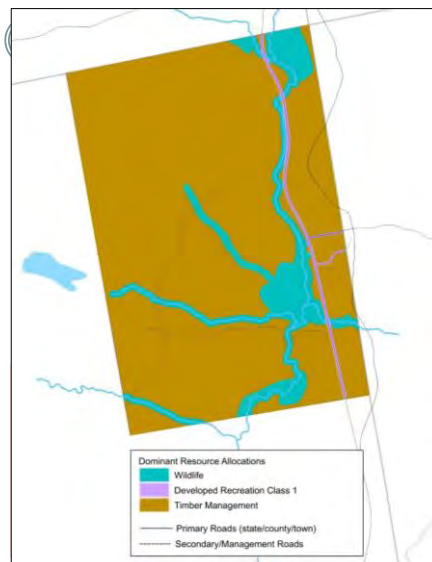
Smaller Lots North of West Forks



Management road and stream crossing on Dennistown Lot

Dennistown Lot

- **Allocations**
 - Wildlife allocation in wetlands and along streams
 - Developed Recreation along Rt. 201 and Heald Pond Road
 - Timber Management allocation on remaining area
- **Recommendations**
 - Timber management favoring better quality stems
 - Take into consideration visual quality along highway
 - Renew Heald Pond Road and telephone cable easements, as appropriate



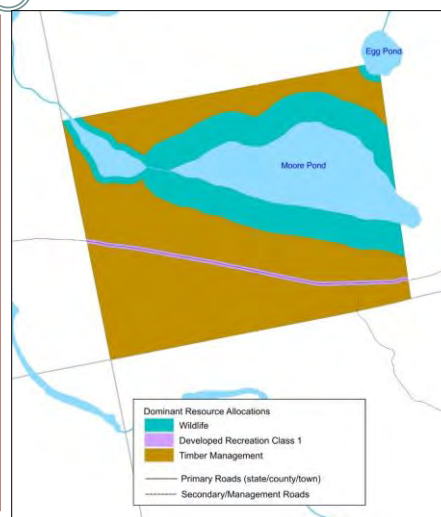
Moose River Lots

- **Allocations**
 - Wildlife allocation along stream buffer
 - Developed Recreation along Mgmt. road/snowmobile trail
 - Timber Management allocation on remaining area
- **Recommendations**
 - Timber management should target low quality trees, reduce red maple, favor spruce, yellow birch and sugar maple and will take into consideration visual quality along highway
 - Need establish/renew access for harvesting (never harvested by BPL)
 - Snowmobile route will continue
 - Need to determine to what extent municipal golf course may be encroaching on South Lot



Bradstreet Twp. South Lot

- **Allocations:**
 - Wildlife along pond shorelines zone
 - Developed Recreation along Spencer Road
 - Timber Management on remainder
- **Recommendations:**
 - Harvesting should focus on increasing the pine component where feasible and encouraging growth on spruce
 - Need to update silvicultural recommendations for jack pine



Upper Enchanted/Coburn Mtn. Lot

- **Allocations:**
 - Special Protection – exemplary natural communities on primary ridgeline and south shoulder of mountain
 - Backcountry Motorized – most of the remainder of the lot
 - Developed Recreation – snowmobile route up to summit and leased lot at summit
- **Recommendations:**
 - Evaluate and possibly reroute informal foot trail to summit
 - Snowmobile trail will continue
 - Evaluate whether operable area on south portion of lot could be economically harvested



Johnson Mtn. & West Forks N Lots

- **Allocations:**
 - Wildlife – pond and stream riparian buffers
 - Dev. Recreation – along management roads open to public
 - Timber Management – remainder of lots
- **Recommendations:**
 - Focus will remain management of timber to improve overall quality



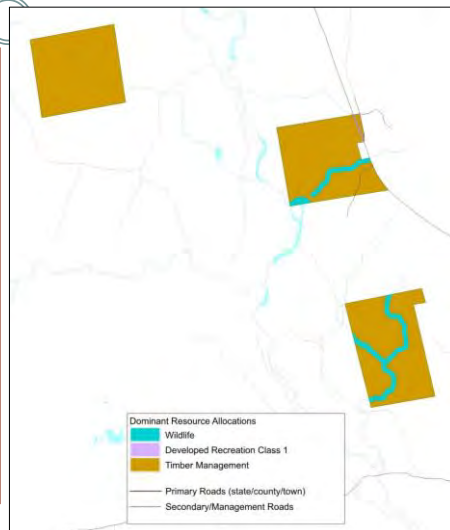
Smaller Lots in West Forks and South



AT on The Forks Plt. South Lot

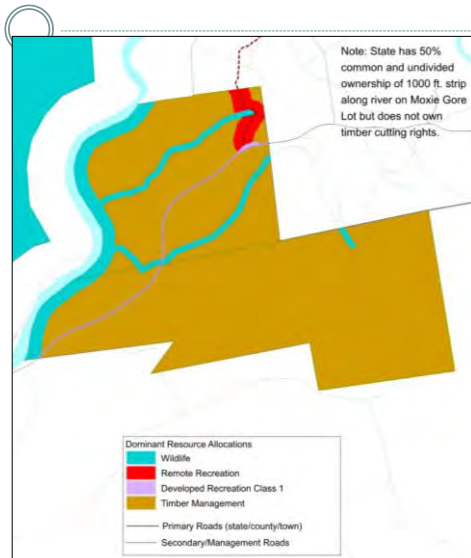
West Forks NW, C, SW Lots

- **Allocations:**
 - Most acres allocated to Timber Management
 - Remainder to Wildlife (riparian), except Dev. Recreation along Rt. 201 (Central Lot)
- **Recommendations:**
 - Timber management focused on increasing quality of timber, targeting mature fir, aspen and birch
 - Work to secure access to SW lot from Rt. 201 with new owner of abutting parcel



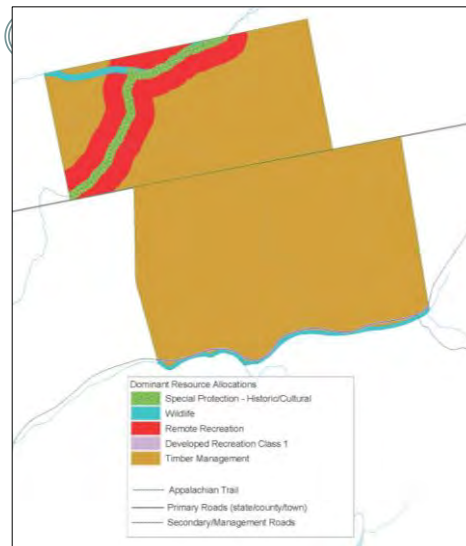
Moxie Gore and The Forks N Lots

- **Allocations:**
 - Most of the lots are allocated to Timber Management
 - Remainder to Wildlife (stream corridors), Remote Recreation (250 ft. trail buffer) and Dev. Recreation (Maxie Lake Road corridor)
- **Recommendations:**
 - Timber management focused on increasing overall quality of more valuable species, while favoring softwoods
 - Lands will continue to coordinate with Parks on Moxie Falls trail
 - Snowmobile and ATV route on North Lot will continue
 - MNAP will be consulted on any activity with potential to impact rare plants noted on Moxie lot



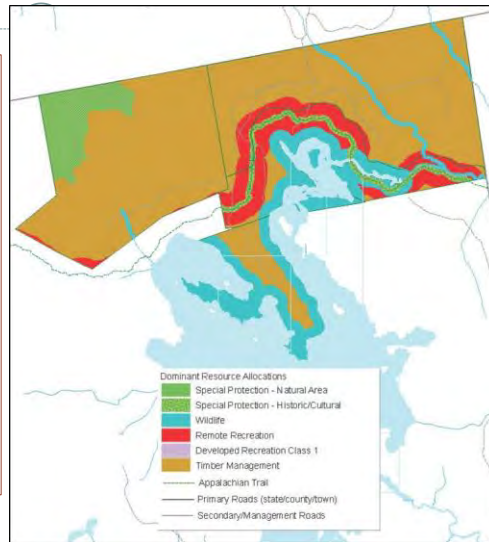
The Forks S & Caratunk N Lots

- **Allocations:**
 - Majority of lots are allocated to Timber Management
 - Along AT: 100 ft. no-harvest Special Protection buffer + 400 ft. Remote Recreation buffer
 - Remainder to Wildlife (stream buffers) and Dev. Recreation (Pleasant Pond Road corridor)
- **Recommendations:**
 - Timber management focused on increasing quality of more valuable species, while favoring softwoods
 - Harvesting will likely occur at the same time on the two lots



Bald Mountain Lot

- **Allocations:**
 - Majority of lot is allocated to Timber Management
 - Special Protection allocation for exemplary natural community on Moxie Bald Mtn.
 - Along AT: 100 ft. no-harvest Special Protection buffer + 400 ft. Remote Recreation buffer
 - Wildlife allocation along stream and pond buffers
- **Recommendations:**
 - Timber management will favor vigorous well formed trees of all species
 - Visual consideration will apply in areas seen from the pond



Caratunk East and South Lots

- **Allocations:**
 - Majority of lots are allocated to Timber Management
 - Wildlife allocation for stream buffers
- **Recommendations:**
 - Timber management focused on increasing quality of more valuable species, while favoring softwoods
 - Attempt periodic mowing of old farm field on South Lot, if access challenges permit



Highland Plt. E & Pleasant Ridge Lots

- **Allocations:**
 - Majority of the lots are allocated to Timber Management
 - Wildlife allocation for stream buffers on Pleasant Ridge Lot
- **Recommendations:**
 - Timber management will continue to favor well-formed and long-lived species
 - Mature stands should be harvested in next few years



Next Steps and Comments

- Will revise the Draft Plan over the next month or so
- In addition to comments provided here, all are welcome to comment during the next three weeks, via a phone call or in writing (email or regular mail)

Jim Vogel
 18 Elkins Lane, Harlow Building
 22 State House Station
 Augusta ME 04333-0022

Jim.vogel@maine.gov
 207-287-2163

Thank You!



Comments submitted by Dick Darling on the Cold Stream Forest Unit (6/27/18)

1. Lone Jack Campground

a. Fire Pits

There are fifteen fire rings/pits which define the “campsites” at Lone Jack. Most of the rings are truck rims that have a cut-out to allow ventilation for the fire. The steel truck rims are surrounded by small stone to help contain the fires and ensure that the rings aren’t relocated. Several of the truck rims are deformed and need replacement. At least one of the rings has been replaced with what looks like a flange from some industrial piping. If similar pipe flange materials were available at a reasonable cost, all the fire pits should be rebuilt using that material.

b. Tables

The Picnic tables at the campground are in poor condition. Most of the tables were built by members of the group who have been maintaining the campgrounds since the State stopped maintenance in the 1980’s. The tables clearly have not been painted or rebuilt for a number of years. It is my understanding that the Bureau has tables available, and, I believe that those tables should replace the existing tables as soon as possible.

c. Privies

There are three privies at the Lone Jack Campground. They were originally put in in the late 1970’s or early 1980’s when the State was maintaining the campground. The two privies adjacent to the outlet stream of Lone Jack Pond were rebuilt at least once since the original construction by the group which has been maintaining the campgrounds since the State stopped maintenance in the 1980’s. Those privies probably should be replaced with pit privies similar to those installed at many of the State’s rest areas. That construction might require more frequent clean-out/maintenance, but the watertight design would protect water quality. The privy nearest Lone Jack Pond is in excellent shape and probably only needs periodic maintenance. The campground gets its highest use on Memorial Day weekend, 4th of July weekend and Labor Day weekend. I believe that the privies should be cleaned out shortly after each of these high use periods. The staff monitoring the site might have a better idea of the maintenance needs, but the privies had obviously not been cleaned out after Memorial Day weekend when we were there June 15-22, 2018.

Also, the holders for toilet paper in the privies are nice, in that they hold three rolls of paper. That said, when the paper runs out, the cotter pins holding the rebar in place were difficult to remove to change the paper rolls. I took the liberty of replacing the cotter pins on one end of the holder with Hitch Pin Clips which can be removed and replaced without tools. Since we’re used to a self-maintained campground, we always bring extra toilet paper and leave any unused rolls in the privies. It’s hard to do that when you can’t move the holder without tools.

2. Lone Jack Road

a. Overflow Structures around bridges

The stone structures built on the north and south sides of the bridge over the outlet of Little Berry Pond will probably be very helpful to prevent erosion of the road during the spring runoff. That said, they are poorly constructed with approach and departure angles that are too steep. These structures were described as “Rock Sandwiches”. I consulted the Department’s handbook for camp roads, and the description and illustrations of Rock Sandwich construction in that book show the coarse rubble covered by filter fabric and gravel. If there was a concern that fines from the gravel pavement would wash into Cold Stream during the spring run-off, gravel screened to remove fine particles could have been used. I live on a camp road, and last fall, we had three Rock Sandwiches installed in a similar area and we did not have any water flowing over the road and no surface gravel ran off into the stream.

b. General Road Construction

The reconstruction of Lone Jack Road was not done well. The road was not crowned and deep ruts have developed. As a result, during a rainstorm, water channels through the ruts, causing erosion of the road material. Water ponds in low areas causing pot holes. The road should be properly crowned and compacted after grading to insure that the paving gravel stays in place.

3. Fishing Laws

a. FFO Signs

When I first started fishing in the Cold Stream area, every point of entrance to every pond was signed “Fly Fishing Only” with a citation to the applicable section of the Maine Revised Statutes, Annotated. Since the early 2000’s, I have seen no such signs on any ponds in the area. I have seen spinning poles being carried and sitting on tables at campsites near several ponds. While “ignorance of the law is no excuse...” I believe that proper signage at all of the Ponds that are fly fishing only stating that fact and including any special laws that apply to the pond, might deter some bait fishing and would be helpful to the fly fishermen who might be unfamiliar with a given pond. I know that there is limited warden availability in the area, but perhaps a few citations might deter others from using worms or other non-FFO fishing techniques. I have attached a mock-up of a sign that might be used.

4. Little Berry Pond water level

a. The water level on Little Berry pond is significantly lower now than when I first fished the area in the late 1960’s. We routinely paddled canoes up the “neck” of Little Berry and walked a short distance through the woods to the lower landing on Big Berry. The survey maps on the IF&W site show 2 feet of water throughout the “neck”, but since the early 2000’s, you can’t get a canoe up there. If there is 6” of water in that area now, I would be surprised. Little Berry had two “holes” that are, I believe, spring fed so that trout can survive even the warmest summers. If the water level in the pond was raised to its historic level, there would be a better chance for the fishery to maintain and improve.

Durgin Pond

FLY

FISHING

ONLY

As defined in Title 12 M.R.S.A §10001-27

Closed to Ice fishing.

Daily bag limit on brook trout (includes splake and Arctic charr): 2 fish; minimum length limit: 10 inches, only 1 may exceed 12 inches.

Motorboats prohibited.

Vogel, Jim

From: Kristen Hoffmann <kristen@fsmaine.org>
Sent: Wednesday, June 27, 2018 12:12 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: RE: DRAFT Upper Kennebec Region Plan and AC meeting

Good morning Jim,

I hope all is going well and that you are getting some field time in with this fantastic weather!

Here are my comments on the Draft Upper Kennebec Region MP:

- P. 11 – second paragraph: FSM does not provide hiking trails on the property. The easement only protects the Portage Trail.
- P. 11 – second paragraph: it is FSM (not FMS)
- P. 16 – Just FYI: FSM holds easements on TNC's Leuthold Forest Preserve
- p. 16 – Just FYI: FSM also owns 36 islands, in Attean Pond, Benjamin Pond, Wood Pond, and one in the Moose River
- p. 26 – The Portage Trail is entirely on FSM's easement – let me know if you need any maps or the CE itself
- All of the allocations look good and appropriate, and I hope that the issues surrounding Attean Landing can be resolved swiftly and peacefully

Sorry if this sounds nitpik-y, but I hope it helps. Good luck with everything, and I look forward to seeing you again,
Kris

*Kristen Hoffmann
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The Forest Society of Maine – Your land trust for Maine's North Woods.

Jim Vogel, Senior Planner
Maine Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Parks and Lands
22 State House Station
18 Elkins Lane (AMHI Campus)
Augusta, ME 04333-0022

July 12, 2018

RE: Comments on the Draft Resources and Management Issues for Lands in the Upper Kennebec Region

Dear Jim,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments on the draft Northern Kennebec Management Plan.

My comments on your carefully drafted work are limited to two narrow topics:

- the history and importance of the relatively new Maine Heritage Fisheries statute; and
 - a recommendation that the opening statement of the Memorandum of Agreement between ACF and IFW on a Long Term Strategy for Habitat Management for the Cold Stream Forest Fisheries Habitat be corrected and/or clarified in your final management plan.
- 1) The waters of the Cold Stream Forest Management Area contain some of the most important habitat for Eastern brook trout in the State of Maine, and throughout their entire range in the United States. There are currently six waters in this Management Area that have been designated as Heritage Fisheries waters by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife under statute that was initially passed and signed into law in 2005.

The Heritage Fish statute ([Title 1, §212-A: State heritage fish](#) , and [Title 12, §12461: State heritage fish waters](#)) grew out of many years of work by the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine's Fisheries Initiative Committee and a report titled "Eastern Brook Trout: Status and Threats" published by Trout Unlimited for the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture. This collaborative report documents the fact that Maine has well over 95% of the remaining self-sustaining brook trout lake and pond habitat in the eastern United States.

The original 2005 Heritage Fish bill (LD1131) was introduced and championed by then Representative Chandler Woodcock, who now serves as the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. This statute was designed to lay the basis of protection for this increasingly rare natural resource by prohibiting all stocking in ponds that have not been stocked with brook trout for at least 25 years. In 2007 the original statute was expanded to add Maine's unique populations of landlocked Arctic charr to the list of Heritage Fish, and in 2014 the law was amended to create a single class of Heritage Fish Waters, which currently contain some 575 named lakes and ponds.

The vast majority of these remaining wild brook trout waters are in the northwest quadrant of our state where limited and more difficult public access has protected them from introduction of non-indigenous competing species. This area also has higher elevation, colder and cleaner waters where both brook trout and "blueback" charr continue to thrive.

In 2017 the Legislative Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife asked the Department to create a Heritage Fish Working Group to address concerns about Maine's Heritage

Fish. This Working Group is in the process of working with IFW fisheries staff to help define the goals and objectives for management of Maine's Heritage Fish, emphasizing the unique resource this represents and working to draft policy that will protect this increasingly rare resource for future generations. The Working Group is currently finalizing a Statement of Purpose for Maine Heritage Fish that includes specific management objectives. This policy guidance should be ready to share with you and other managers to help with management planning very soon. In summary this document lays out specific steps to help to proactively protect and conserve Maine's Heritage Fish Waters as a valuable and unique public resource for current and future generations.

As you are reviewing resources in areas covered by management planning, please be careful to check for the presence of Heritage Waters and apply the current policy and guidance for management objectives for these special waters. IFW provides a list of current Heritage Waters in the form of a Google Earth based map file that is available on their web site at <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fishing-boating/fishing/fishing-resources/maine-fishing-guide/google-earth-data-layers.html>

I hope this background and the coming Statement of Purpose for Maine Heritage Fish will be helpful to you, both as you finalize the Cold Stream Forest Management Plan and on other lands you are responsible for planning recreation management.

- 2) One of the primary goals of management documents like the Northern Kennebec Management Plan is to assemble all relevant documents and references into one single, easy to access package. I urge you to use footnotes and/or appendixes to reference all the background documents for the lands that are covered in this management document. If errors are discovered during this current effort, they should be referenced and corrected in the new Management Plan.

For example: in the first paragraph of the Memorandum of Agreement between ACF and IFW on a Long Term Strategy for Habitat Management for the Cold Stream Forest Fisheries Habitat in Section 1 (page 1) there appears to be an incorrect reference to a "Project Agreement". Project Agreements were created by the Land for Maine's Future Program in 2000 to enable the administration of the first \$50 Million Land Bond to serve as a guarantee of funds provided to entities other than the State of Maine. Before that time all LMF funding went to acquisitions by the State of Maine. Because the Cold Stream Forest Project lands were acquired in fee from the willing seller by the State of Maine, no Project Agreement was required or issued by the Land for Maine's Future Program. Some form of note needs to be added to the current Management Plan that references this error in the drafting of the MOU and saves others the time and effort you and I invested in figuring this out.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Draft Resources and Management Issues for Lands in the Upper Kennebec Region. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Steve Brooke

Stephen W. Brooke
PO Box 53
Hallowell, ME 04347



July 18, 2018

James Vogel
Senior Planner, Bureau of Parks and
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22 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-
0022

Dear Mr. Vogel:

I am writing to provide Trout Unlimited's (TU's) comments on the Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL) Draft Upper Kennebec Region Management Plan. My comments primarily focus on the portion of the plan that represents the initial management plan for the state's newly acquired Cold Stream Forest unit.

Trout Unlimited is a conservation organization whose mission is to conserve, protect and restore North America's trout and salmon and their watersheds. We have 5 chapters and about 1800 members in Maine. Our primary focus in Maine is conservation of intact brook trout habitat, largely through land conservation. The Upper Kennebec Watershed in general, and the Cold Stream watershed in particular, have been a focus for our Maine work for nearly 20 years, and the state purchase of the Cold Stream Forest Property was the culmination of nearly a decade of collaborative work with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, BPL, the Trust for Public Land, and many other partners. Throughout our planning, all of the partners agreed that protection of brook trout habitat was a primary goal. Although protection of deer habitat, public access to lands and waters, and timber management were also important to the project partners, funding applications to both the Land for Maine's Future Program and the US Forest Service Forest Legacy Program emphasized protection of brook trout habitat as a "single exceptional value."

As detailed in our November 11, 2016 scoping comments, the Cold Stream watershed represents one of the most intact and highest value watersheds for native brook trout in Maine. The Cold Stream property contains a combination of pristine native brook trout ponds and intact coldwater streams and tributaries that are valuable and serve as critical nursery and thermal refuge habitat for brook trout from the Kennebec and Dead Rivers. The

project was specifically designed to protect the entire length of Cold Stream and all of its headwaters ponds for their brook trout habitat value. Both the stream and the ponds have been destination fisheries for anglers for more than 100 years.

We have a number of detailed concerns, but our primary overall concern is that the Management Plan as currently drafted does not reflect a project specifically designed to protect brook trout habitat. Although this focus (along with protecting deer wintering habitat) is noted on page 44 of the draft plan, the management plan details that follow do not reflect this focus.

Specific concerns in the draft management plan: The following concerns are addressed in order, page by page.

- Page 11—last paragraph. This paragraph references the state’s designated “State Heritage Fish Waters.” Several comments:
 - The references to “A list” and “B list” waters should be removed; they no longer apply. The former “A list” and “B list” waters have been merged into a single list of “State Heritage Fish Waters.” (SHFW’s) (Note: correct this reference throughout the document.)
 - The draft plan states that “Special regulations to protect the self-sustaining populations of brook trout have been enacted for these waters.” We would add, “By statute, all designated SHFW must have regulations that ban the use of live fish as bait to avoid introductions of bait fish species that may prey on or compete with native brook trout.”
- Page 13-14, Map of ATV trails. This map should show all state-designated ATV trails as of the date of the management plan. The current text states that it shows “major ATV routes in the region.” There may be no difference, but for planning purposes, BPL should focus on opportunities on state-designated trails only. This is important on the Cold Stream unit, as discussed below in more detail.
- Page 18. We note the overall “General Management Focus” on “practices that protect resources from overuse, avoid conflicting use, control exotic species, and continually add value to the resource base and visitor’s “back woods” experience” and on offering new opportunities only “where appropriate and compatible with the emphasis on more remote, dispersed, less-developed activities.” This focus is important on the Cold Stream Forest property and will require careful implementation to achieve given current high use, relatively easy access from paved roads, and the degree to which use, especially camping, is highly focused on one area.
- Page 18. The table at the bottom of Page 18 needs to be completed for the Cold Stream Forest unit.
- Page 22. Reference to “A list” and “B list” waters in last paragraph. Replace with “SHFW’s” as discussed above, and provide information on these in the table on page

23, indicating which ponds are “SHFW”. The most recent version of the list of State Heritage Fish Waters should be used, as it changes annually. It can be found here: <http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/09/137/137c001-A.doc>

- Page 44. The Cold Stream Forest property was acquired “with the primary goal of protecting wild native brook trout habitat, and deer wintering habitat”, and was “accomplished with both Forest Legacy Program and Land for Maine’s Future funds”. We believe you should add a reference to past commitments to maintain intact, forested buffers in riparian areas by BPL and other project partners. In applications for Forest Legacy and Land for Maine’s Future funds, the project partners, including BPL, indicated that:
 - “The Bureau of Parks and Lands already has management protocols that exceed state requirements for riparian areas, and understands that, as will be specified in the Habitat Management Agreement for these lands, even more protective measures will be designed given the significance of the fisheries resource.”¹(Emphasis added); and
 - “The partners envision a 100-foot no-cut buffer along the ponds and streams to protect the significant aquatic resources, but the remainder of the property would be open to harvesting.”² (Emphasis added.)
- Page 46. As noted above for the Holeb Unit, references to “native” and “wild” Heritage Brook Trout Ponds should be replaced with a reference to the most recent list of SHFW. If there is a desire to distinguish between ponds with a history of stocking and those without, the linked reference above provides information on most recent stocking dates. (NRS designates ponds that have never been stocked.) Of note is the fact that no stream or pond in the Cold Stream watershed has been stocked since 1954, and no stocking has occurred on the Cold Stream Forest unit since 1941. The reference to “eight of nine ponds in the northern part of the unit” appears to be a mistake. It should be seven of nine ponds: Lang, Little Lang, Snake, Durgin, Lone Jack, Berry, and Little Berry.
- Page 46. It should be noted that Campstove Pond is the only pond on the Cold Stream Forest property that allows legal use of live fish as bait. This represents a risk of baitfish introductions into Campstove that could drop downstream to Berry Pond and other ponds in the Cold Stream watershed. There are currently no known occurrences of non-native fish species on the Cold Stream Forest property, and maintaining this status should be a management priority, consistent with the General Management Focus to “control exotic species”.
- Page 47. Update table at top of page to remove references to “native” and “wild” designations and replace them with SHFW status. Also, the reference to a principal fishery for brook trout in Fernald appears to be in error. Campstove Pond should be

¹ Land for Maine’s Future Project Application, Cold Stream Forest, page 12.

² August 12, 2012 Letter from Cold Stream Forest Project Partners to Maine Forest Legacy Scoring Committee.

added to this list of waters. Is there any information on physical or biological characteristics of Campstove Pond?

- Page 47. The Cold Stream Forest Fisheries and Deer Wintering Area HMA's should be attached to the management plan. As noted above, the Fisheries HMA does not include 100 foot no-cut buffers that were envisioned by project partners during the planning phase.
- Page 48. The description of recreational resources should note, where applicable, whether the listed recreation sites meet existing BPL and LUPC standards with respect to set backs from water resources, particularly for outhouses where they exist. We believe a more detailed "accounting" of campsites "in scattered locations" should be provided, along with information about whether these sites have privies, fire rings, picnic tables, or other amenities, and whether they are "Primitive Campsites" or "Primitive Group Campsites" as designated on the map on page 50. (Is this a difference that matters? Are there standards for these designations?)
- Page 48. It is not clear to us what distinguishes "walk in trails" to Lang and Big Berry ponds from "informal angler trails" into Snake and Fernald Pond and along Cold Stream. Is this distinction based on level of maintenance or use? Is it appropriate to maintain this distinction for future planning, or would it be more appropriate to treat all of these trails in the same manner? We note that the map on page 50 appears to show only some of these trails.
- Page 50, comments on map. The map shows no designated ATV trails on the North Section. Is this accurate? If so, we strongly encourage maintaining that status in the future.
- Page 51, comments on map. The map shows a single designated ATV trail that crosses the Cold Stream Forest unit. This appears to a critical link to get ATV's from the Forks to points north. Another trail is shown running on the western boundary of the unit for ~2 miles. TU supports maintaining these two trails, assuming they are existing designated ATV trails, but does not support expansion of ATV use on the southern portion of the property.
- Page 53-54. In addition to interest by TU and others in projects to add large woody debris, other fisheries restoration projects, particularly projects to address impacts of old log driving dams, and bulldozed or otherwise altered stream channels should be allowed. The outlet of Little Berry Pond/Lone Jack Road crossing is a prime example, but many other opportunities exist on Cold Stream. Considerable work has already occurred at a site in the southern portion of Cold Stream near an old bridge.
- Page 54. TU supports efforts to move campsites at Lone Jack campground and Durgin Pond into compliance with LUPC rules. As discussed with BPL staff, this should be

done carefully so as not to suddenly reduce availability of campsites. Necessary changes at the Lone Jack site can probably be made with little or no impact or reduction in the number of sites, but the sites at Durgin Pond may need to be moved to a different site to be compliant. Those sites, which are frequently occupied, have significant impacts on Durgin Pond from run-off and erosion, make public use of Durgin Pond by non-campers awkward, and have a high potential, given lack of signage regarding fishing rules, to allow introduction of non-native baitfish into Durgin Pond. We believe a plan to move those sites into compliance—or, failing that, to provide measures that limit their impacts on Durgin Pond and Cold Stream—should be implemented relatively quickly. Adequacy of outhouses is a major issue with all of these sites. There are none at Durgin Pond or Little Berry Pond. The outhouses at Lone Jack are too close to water resources. Providing appropriate facilities for human waste—or moving campsites that see heavy use if this cannot be done—is essential.

- Page 54-55. Storage of boats at ponds. This is a huge issue on several ponds on the property, and significant resources will need to be mobilized to address it. Some users may be unwilling to put their names on boats, and even if they do, there is no way to distinguish boats with names that are still in use from those that have been abandoned. We believe some kind of annual registration sticker might be a better strategy.
- Page 55. Access and Maintenance. The Cold Stream Forest unit has a relatively large number of roads, and needs a plan that prioritizes access for the public to key areas while also protecting sensitive resources. We suggest BPL identify key access routes that will be priorities for investments in road infrastructure and maintenance, and consider whether other roads can be closed, maintained only for administrative purposes, or receive a lower level of maintenance. Several specific concerns:
 - The road between Durgin Pond and Lone Jack campground is a prime access route. BPL provided some road upgrades here last fall, but additional work is likely needed. In particular, the two stream crossings at the outlet of Little Berry Pond are both difficult for vehicle passage in their current condition and problematic for fish passage and habitat. This site is highly altered by a historic log driving dam, by the construction of the road, and by road maintenance activities over the years, all of which took place in a wetland area. We suggest this site be a priority for a project designed to address these impacts in a way that improves access to the Lone Jack campground and also restores fish habitat. This will require significant engineering and habitat assessment to come up with an appropriate design. TU would be willing to help raise site-specific funds to address this site.
 - The road from Long Jack campground south along Lone Jack Pond and Cold Stream to the snowmobile bridge over Cold Stream has multiple problematic

crossings of small streams. Repairing this road, providing appropriate stream crossings, and upgrading the bridge over Cold Stream for automobile use will be expensive. BPL should consider whether this road is appropriate for year-round public use, particularly during wet seasons. The route appears to be critical for snowmobile use in winter. One option might be to maintain the road for snowmobile and administrative use only, with temporary snowmobile bridges rather than culverts at the stream crossings. This would significantly reduce impacts of the road on tributaries to Cold Stream.

- Page 55, Signage. We see two critical signage issues. First, given the risk and potential damage of bait fish introductions, we would like to see signage that indicates at least “No Live as Bait” regulations on the ponds where that regulation applies. The Native Fish Coalition has developed signage to that effect and offered to install it at all SHFW’s, but BPL has not been willing to have those signs installed. Another option might be specific signs for these waters, all of which have “Fly-fishing Only” regulations. This option would ensure the public knew the regulations. A second signage issue is to distinguish formal, designated campsites (presumably those provided with at least a fire ring and a privy) from informal sites where no fires are allowed. This will require an inventory of all campsites on the unit. Signage to identify designated ATV routes and to prevent ATV use on non-designated routes is also needed.
- Page 56, Vision for the Cold Stream Unit. We believe the first paragraph should include language similar to what is on page 44 to reflect that the unit was acquired with “the primary goal of protecting wild native brook trout habitat and deer wintering habitat.” This focus should be at the forefront of every management decision, and the Management Plan needs to make that clear.
- Page 56-60, Resource Allocations. There are several issues to consider here.
 - Given the focus on protecting wild native brook habitat, we believe resource allocations should include 330 foot “Wildlife Management Areas” on all stream corridors and pond shorelines.
 - Given the presence of multiple LUPC-designated remote ponds, difficult access to many portions of Cold Stream within steep gorge sections, and focus in the Fisheries HMA on maintaining “remote wilderness character”, we think the amount of the property allocated to “Remote Recreation” should be increased. We would suggest this allocation around Lang, Little Lang, Snake, Fernald, and Big Berry Ponds; along both banks of Cold Stream from the snowmobile bridge downstream to the Cold Stream Falls trailhead; along the portion of Mountain Brook from its confluence with Cold Stream to the boundary; along Cold Stream from the Capital Road to the confluence with the Kennebec; and along those portions of Tomhegan Stream within the unit.
 - No proposal for Visual Consideration allocations has been provided. We

suggest that in addition to those areas around roads and campsites, areas around all ponds on the unit and within the gorge sections of Cold Stream should be Visual Class 1—where direct enjoyment of visitors will be affected. Viewsheds from the ponds on the property are important to most users.

- The maps do not show the designated ATV and snowmobile trail corridors allocated as “Developed Recreation Class 1”. These should be designated now and shown on the maps.
- Page 61, Trail Maintenance. The plan is not clear about which trails will be marked and maintained and which will remain in their current state. There was considerable public discussion of this at the recent public meeting, and the Final Draft Plan should clarify what is proposed, what the maintenance standard will be, and which trails will be affected.
- Page 61, Motorized Recreation. The draft plan states: “Continue to allow ATV’s to use the management roads on the southern end of the Unit, near the Forks, to maintain important trail connections. This should be clarified to indicate it applies only to existing designated trails, and that ATV use of management roads north of the Capital Road is not appropriate. As noted above, these trails (and existing designated snowmobile trails) should be clearly shown in the Final Draft Plan.
- Page 61, Public Access and Management Roads.
 - As discussed above, we believe some immediate attention is needed on the Durgin Pond to Lone Jack road, and that dedicated resources for engineering, road construction, and habitat restoration at this site should be a priority. We will work with BPL and DIFW to raise those funds, if necessary.
 - The draft puts off developing a formal road plan to future years. However, considerable road work is needed now. We believe the Final Draft Plan should indicate which roads are “primary access routes”, and identify those in need of immediate work. Without this planning, road work—which has already started—may not reflect these priorities. Consideration should be given to whether the snowmobile bridge over Cold Stream is appropriate for snowmobiles, and whether some problematic road segments should be considered for retirement or reduced use and maintenance.
- Page 80, Johnson Mountain and West Forks Lots. We had suggested in earlier comments that management plans for these lots should be incorporated with the Cold Stream Forest unit, because they are contiguous, because they are hydrologically and ecologically connected, and because the units share access routes and users. BPL has chosen not to do that, but at minimum these connections should be noted in the management plans for each unit. A few specific concerns:
 - Information about Wilson Hill Pond and Little Wilson Pond appears to be out of date. Both ponds are designated as SHFW’s and support brook trout fisheries.

- Tomhegan Stream, a tributary to Cold Stream, crosses these two lots. Tomhegan Stream supports a brook trout fishery and telemetry studies indicate that some Kennebec River brook trout ascend Cold Stream and continue into Tomhegan Stream for thermal refuge and spawning.
- Page 88, Bald Mountain Lot. The Management Plan should indicate that Bald Mountain Pond is habitat for landlocked arctic charr, a state species of special concern.

Cold Stream Forest Unit Suggestions for Final Draft Plan

1. Make “protecting wild native brook trout habitat” a primary focus of the management plan.
 - a. Incorporate this language into the vision statement.
 - b. Include brook trout habitat considerations as a primary driver of management decisions, including resource allocations, recreation and trails plans, plans for road maintenance and repair, signage and timber management plans.
 - c. Reconsider “100 foot no cut buffers”. At a minimum, acknowledge that this goal of the project partners has not been fulfilled, and can be considered with the HMA’s are updated.
2. Be more specific in both resource allocations and in proposed management activities about protecting designated remote pond and the remote character of many portions of the unit. For example, the Fisheries Habitat HMA’s statement on Public Access states that “public access should emphasize maintaining the remote, wilderness character of the Cold Stream riparian corridor and headwater ponds.” This should be reflected more clearly in the Final Draft Management Plan.
3. Signage. There is a need for signage that emphasizes the sensitivity of the fishery to use of live fish as bait and informs the public of existing fishing rules to prevent its use on most ponds on the unit.
4. Campsites. Providing privies at designated campsites—and perhaps at some other sites not currently designated that receive heavy use and where camping is an appropriate use—is a priority. This includes sites beyond the cluster of campsites at Lone Jack and Durgin.
5. Roads
 - a. When designating primary access routes, consider impacts of construction and maintenance on stream and pond habitat.
 - b. Consider retiring or limiting use on some road segments, particularly between Lone Jack campground and the Cold Stream snowmobile bridge.
 - c. An engineered solution to both the road corridor and habitat degradation is needed at the “two bridges” that cross the outlet of Little Berry Pond—and potentially at other sites on the unit.

- d. Consider whether automobile use of the snowmobile bridge over Cold Stream is appropriate or necessary.
6. Be specific about designated ATV trails.
 - a. Limit use to existing designated trails only south of the Capital Road, where the one trail on the unit provides a critical link between the Forks and Jackman.
 - b. Do not allow expanded use onto other roads on the unit south of the Capital Road.
 - c. Keep ATV's off roads on the unit north of the Capital Road.
7. Consider outreach to other key groups as you develop the Final Draft Management Plan for public comment. If there is a way to engage the ground of anglers/campsite caretakers who regularly use the Lone Jack site, that would be ideal.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. I look forward to working with you and other BPL staff as you develop the Final Draft Management Plan and respond to public comments on it.

Sincerely,

Jeff Reardon, Maine Brook Trout Project Director