



Land for Maine's Future Program
Minutes of the Meeting
July 13, 2010

Ordway Hall, Gould Academy
Bethel, Maine

Board Members Present:

Commissioner George Lapointe
Commissioner Eliza Townsend
Commissioner Seth Bradstreet

Diane Doyle
Ben Emory
Martha Freeman, Director

Don Marean
Leon Gorman
Bucky Owen

Board Members Absent:

Commissioner Danny Martin

Jeff Thaler

LMF Staff Members Present:

Tim Glidden
R. Collin Therrien

Steve Brooke
Aline Lachance

Jim Connors

Others

Representative Jarrod S. Crockett
Robin Zinchuck, Bethel Area Chamber of Commerce
Tom Abello, The Nature Conservancy
Nancy Bell, The Conservation Fund
Lee Dassler, Western Foothills Land Trust
James Mitchell, Mahoosuc Land Trust
Nina Young, Maine Farmland Trust
Stacy Gambrel, Maine Farmland Trust
Jeff Romano, Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Kathy Eickenberg, Dept. of Conservation
Alan Stearns, Dept. of Conservation
Robin Beck, Dept. of Agriculture
Craig Castagna, Dept. of Agriculture
Grace Falconer, Dept. of Agriculture
Stephanie Gilbert, Dept. of Agriculture
John Boland, Dept. of Fisheries & Wildlife
Ken Elowe, Dept. of Fisheries & Wildlife
Wolf Tone, Trust for Public Lands

Morning Field Trip

Morning field trip around the Gilead stretch of the Androscoggin River and Sunday River Valley as ‘gateway’ areas to Bethel to view potential new acquisitions and to discuss role of conserved land in the community’s economic health. This guided tour generously provided by Robin Zinchuck, Executive Director, Bethel Area Chamber of Commerce and Jim Mitchell, Executive Director, Mahoosuc Land Trust.

Minutes of the Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Bradstreet and seconded by Ben Emory to accept the May 11, 2010 Minutes of the Meeting. Vote was unanimous.

Discussion – DRAFT Report on Deriving Economic Development Value from Land Conservation in Maine

The issue of how to attract land conservation projects having direct economic benefits for communities and enhancing the economic well being of the State is now at the forefront for consideration and inclusion as a possible ‘criteria’ for future LMF proposals. In the Fall of 2009, the Land for Maine’s Future Program partnered with the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and Coastal Enterprises, Inc. on a research project to identify opportunities for encouraging integration of economic development impacts into conservation projects. As a result, this draft report was presented to the Board for discussion.

Tim presented an overview of the report and sought out comments from members of the Board as to how to proceed.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Caribou Bog – Penjajawoc Phase III** (*Tabled May 11, 2010 to re-examine score under Multiple Land Categories*)

Vote to Remove from Table

A motion was made by Ben Emory and seconded by Martha Freeman to move this project ‘off-the-table’ for discussion. Vote was unanimous.

Report of the Scoring Committee

The Scoring Committee after reviewing supplemental information provided by LMF staff recommended that the Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species criteria be increased from 0 to 5 points for a total project score of 81 points.

Vote to revise score

A motion was made by Martha Freeman and seconded by Commissioner Bradstreet to approve the Scoring Committee's recommendation. Vote was unanimous except for Bucky Owen who abstained.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Caribou Bog – Penjajawoc Phase III, Wood parcel, Bangor, Penobscot County,** 44.6 ± acres in fee to Bangor Land Trust under a Project Agreement with the Maine Dept. of Conservation.

Public Notice

On July 1, 2010 published in the Kennebec Journal and the Bangor Daily News.

Appraisal Review Committee Recommendation

The ARC recommends accepting an appraisal value of \$ 197,000 and further recommends LMF funding of \$ 119,000 (not including all other costs) for this parcel.

Public Comments

None.

Vote

A motion was made by Ben Emory and seconded by Martha Freeman to support acquisition of this parcel. Vote was unanimous.

- **Central Falmouth Conservation Corridor, Dictar parcel, Falmouth, Cumberland County, 15 ±** acres in fee to the Town of Falmouth under a Project Agreement with the Maine Dept. of Conservation.

Public Notice

On July 1, 2010 published in the Kennebec Journal and on July 2, 2010 in the Portland Press Herald.

Appraisal Review Committee Recommendation

The ARC recommends accepting an appraisal value of \$ 64,000 and further recommends LMF funding of \$68,500 which includes transaction for this parcel.

Public Comments

None.

Vote

A motion was made by Martha Freeman and seconded by Commissioner Townsend to support acquisition of this parcel. Vote was unanimous.

WATER ACCESS PROPOSALS

- **Androscoggin River Water Access McCoy parcels, Gilead and Bethel, Oxford County**, (three separate parcels 17.39 ± acres, 8.1 ± acres, and 17.48 ± acres) in fee to be held by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife.

Public Notice

On July 1, 2010 published in the Kennebec Journal and the Lewiston Sun Journal.

Appraisal Review Committee Recommendation

The ARC recommends accepting an appraisal value of \$78,000 for the Gilead North parcel, \$127,000 for the Gilead South parcel, and \$140,000 for the Bethel parcel and further recommends LMF funding of \$182,441 (not including all other costs) for these parcels.

Public Comments

Representative Jarrod Crockett favored acquisition of these parcels stating it was a fantastic idea and that it would provide access on the north side of the Androscoggin River for family recreation and shoreline fishing. Also, the Town of Gilead supports acquisition and that the project would provide great economic value to the region.

Vote

A motion was made by Bucky Owen and seconded by Ben Emory to support acquisition of these three parcels. Vote was unanimous.

- **Browns Pond, public access to Maine Waters, Sebago, Cumberland County, 102 ±** acres in fee to the Maine Department of Conservation.

Proposal

This water access site would guarantee public boat and shoreline access to Brown's Pond and has potential to be developed further as a picnic site, campsite, and expand regional trail systems. This acquisition would build upon the efforts to conserve one of the last undeveloped ponds in southern Maine.

Preliminary Vote to Allocate Funds

A motion was made by Bucky Owen and seconded by Martha Freeman to allocate \$143,000 of water access funds contingent upon an appraisal and recommendation by the Appraisal Review Committee. Vote was unanimous.

WORKING WATERFRONTS

- **Potts Harbor Lobster – Bibber's Wharf, Harpswell, Cumberland County, 0.4 ±** acres of a working waterfront covenant to the Department of Marine Resources.

Public Notice

On July 1, 2010 published in the Kennebec Journal and on July 2, 2010 in the Portland Press Herald.

Appraisal Review Committee Recommendation

The ARC recommends accepting an appraisal value of \$700,000 and further recommends LMF funding of \$145,750 (not including all other costs) for this working waterfront covenant.

Public Comments

None.

Vote

A motion was made by Ben Emory and seconded by Commissioner Bradstreet to accept this working waterfront covenant. Vote was unanimous.

- **Wharf on Johnson's Bay, Lubec, Washington County, 1.47 ±** acres of a working waterfront covenant to the Department of Marine Resources.

Public Notice

On July 1, 2010 published in the Kennebec Journal and the Bangor Daily News.

Appraisal Review Committee Recommendation

The ARC recommends accepting an appraisal value of \$1,370,000 and further recommends LMF funding of \$341,500 (not including all other costs) for this working waterfront covenant.

Public Comments

None. However, Tim Glidden did receive a letter of support from the Town of Lubec stating that the town is “very much reliant on the local fisheries. The site also possesses growth potential for ecotourism and recreational water-based activities by offering a water taxi service, whale watching, kayak and canoe excursions, plus seasonal tie-up space, all contributing to the local and state economy.”

Vote

A motion was made by Commissioner Bradstreet and seconded by Ben Emory to support this working waterfront covenant. Vote was unanimous.

5 % GRANT PROPOSALS

NOTE: The Lubec Salt Ponds proposal was voted on separately.
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LUBEC SALT PONDS, Lubec, Washington County, 4.4 ± acres held by the Downeast Coastal Conservancy under a Project Agreement with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife.

The Downeast Coastal Conservancy is requesting an access improvement grant in the amount of \$2,900 to assist in a portion of the overall cost to: (1) install a six car parking area to provide safe parking off the South Lubec Road, (2) create a trail from the parking area to the shore, and (3) installation of signage.

Vote

A motion was made by Bucky Owen and seconded by Commission Townsend to fund the amount requested by the applicant for \$2,900.00. Vote was unanimous except for Ben Emory who abstained.

Note: After a brief overview of each of the following projects, it was decided by the Board to combine the vote into one motion in order to fund the following access improvement proposals.

A motion was made by Bucky Owen and seconded by Commissioner Bradstreet to fund the amounts request by each applicant. Vote was unanimous.

Highlights below:

MILL POND PARK, Swans Island, Hancock County 10 ± acres held by the Town of Swans Island under a Project Agreement with the Maine Department of Conservation.

The Town of Swans is requesting an access improvement grant in the amount of \$6,667 to 1) improve the access road in the park, 2) clearing stones from a field area of approximately 2 acres so a tractor and brush hog can keep the area accessible to the public, and 3) fill and grade the remains of a foundation that pose a safety and access problem in the most active part of the park.

LITTLE POND, Franklin, Hancock County 666 ± acres held by the Maine Department of Conservation.

The Department of Conservation is requesting an access improvement grant in the amount of \$5,000 to 1) improve and officially adopt the existing trail accessing Little Pond from the Sunrise Trail, 2) correct drainage issues along the trail length and address concerns where the trail crosses Little Pond's outlet stream by constructing bridge, 3) create parking area and block motorized access several hundred feet from Little Pond' shore, and 4) improve and designate campsite and day use area on Little Pond's southwest shoreline.

DODGE POINT, Newcastle, Lincoln County, 506 ± acres held by the Maine Department of Conservation.

The Department of Conservation is requesting an access improvement grant in the amount of \$43,000 to rehabilitate the *Shore Trail* which is a heavily used trail along the Damariscotta River and trail rehabilitation along the *Ravine Trail*. Work at the Shore Trail includes ditch and drain and resurfacing a significant portion of the trail, including several waterbars and rock staircases. The entire trail system would be blazed, brush and overgrowth would be cut and some new signage added. The Ravine Trail would consist mainly of putting in several bog bridges, some stone steps and stepping stones along the wet areas of the trail along with drainage and ditching in several sections of the trail.

MACHIAS RIVER-Phase II, T36, MDBPP, T42 and T43 MDBPP, Washington County and T35 and T41 MD Hancock County, 7,630 ± acres held by the Maine Department of Conservation.

The Department of Conservation is requesting an access improvement grant in the amount of \$65,000 to fund three related access improvement projects: 1) Third Machias Lake (road and facilities improvements at the “middle ground” , 2) an ADA campsite at Salmon Pond, and 3) Unit-wide signage.

Third Machias Lake – Middle Ground

This “middle ground” access road is one of the roughest access roads within the Unit with deep ruts and large rocks impeding vehicle traffic. The three campsites within the area lack picnic tables and adequate fire rings, and finally the toilet currently serving these campsites is insufficient for the anticipated growth in use. Also, the hand-carry boat launch suffers from erosion requiring repairs.

Salmon Pond

LMF funds were used to improve a rough hand carry boat launch into an ADA compliant launching and fishing area. The Bureau of Parks & Lands would like to expand this project to include an ADA campsite, as well.

Unit-wide signage

Signage within the Machias River Corridor is currently very limited. The Unit lacks ‘yardarm’ signs to mark major entrances, boundary markers at side entrances, and directional signage within the complex road system. It is currently very difficult to differentiate access roads for camping and boating facilities from the numerous logging roads and camp lease roads that intersect the 52-00-0 road and Little River Road.

KENNEBEC HIGHLANDS, Phase II, Rome, Mt. Vernon, Vienna, Kennebec County and New Sharon, Franklin County, 6,000 ± acres by the Maine Department of Conservation.

The Department of Conservation is requesting an access improvement grant in the amount of \$8,809 to begin capitol upgrades to the access road (McIntire Pond Road). The road will be graded, fill and crown to provide proper drainage and allow access for more vehicles.

SALMON BROOK LAKE BOG, Perham, Aroostook County, 1,857 + acres held by the Maine Department of Conservation.

The Department of Conservation is requesting an access improvement grant in the amount of \$13,900 to add an extension of the hiking trail and an addition of an observation deck in the western portion of the Unit that allows people (on a boardwalk) into close proximity to the Lake and Bog plus providing for environmental education programs for children in area schools.

MOUNT ABRAHAM, Franklin and Salem Townships, Franklin County, 6,317 ± acres held by the Maine Department of Conservation.

The Department of Conservation is requesting an access improvement grant in the amount of \$21,500 for work on two parcels (*Mead parcel and Plum Creek parcel*) to 1) re-establish the hiking trailhead at the original lower elevation site and reroute the trail on Bureau lands to connect with the Warden's Trail and 2) remove the old Fire Wardens cabin and locate/construct a group tent site. Proposed work includes a new kiosk, improved parking, waterbars, stone steps, bog bridging, trail corridor clearing, etc.

GRAFTON NOTCH, Grafton Township, Oxford County, 3,688 ± acres in fee and STOWE MOUNTAIN, Newry, Oxford County 3,360 ± acres in easement, both held by the Maine Department of Conservation

The Department of Conservation is requesting an access improvement grant in the amount of \$24,782 to make improvements to the Wright Trail and Grafton Loop Trail Campsite Development. Numerous improvements to the trail infrastructure (Wright Trail) such as waterbars, stone steps, bog bridging, etc., is needed as well as repainting trail blazes, removing encroaching brush, and trail quality. The Grafton Loop Trail requires clearing, access trail construction, signage, privy construction, and building of tent platforms.

MORONG COVE PROJECT, Lubec, Washington County, 136 acres held in fee by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife.

The Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife is requesting an access improvement grant in the amount of \$10,000 to construct a parking area for 3-4 vehicles, construction of a 100 foot long gravel path to a scenic overlook with views of the field and Morong Cove, construction of a short hiking trail to a rocky knoll with a higher view of the field and cove, and installation of signage.

NEW FARMLAND PROPOSALS

Report from the Scoring/Nominations Committee

The four farmland proposals listed below represent a diversity of agricultural scale and geographic locations in Maine. Each farmland project highlights economic contributions that each property provides to the local, regional, and statewide agricultural markets.

The committee applied the scoring criteria in five categories adopted by the Board in its proposal workbook. Having reached consensus for each criterion on each proposal, the committee then reviewed a summary sheet of the scores for each proposal to be sure that the results were consistent and that scoring differences between projects were logical and could be explained.

Scoring results is as follows: 1st Deb Tone, 2nd Kents Hill, 3rd Clark Farm, and 4th River Rise Farm.

Tim stated that the Program has a sufficient balance of farmland funds to fully fund all 4 farmland project proposals at the amount requested by the applicants, plus 10 percent reserve for 'all other costs' associated with each project.

The Committee recommends that the Board fully fund the four proposals at the amounts requested.

Note: After a brief overview of each of the following farmland proposals, it was decided by the Board to combine the vote into one motion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bradstreet and seconded by Martha Freeman to fund the amounts requests including 'all other costs' for a total not to exceed \$947,962.42 contingent upon an appraisal and recommendation by the Appraisal Review Committee. Vote was unanimous.

Highlights below:

- **Deb-Tone Farm – North Berwick**

This is a small family farm with a herd of four cows and seasonally raised pigs. Haying is outsourced to the Tibbetts Farm who keeps the surplus for their needs. With no next generation to take over the farming operation and its location putting it at high risk for development, the owner is looking to keep the farm in permanent conservation. Because of its risk for transfer out of agriculture and its adjacency to two other farms, the Great Works Regional Land Trust has placed this project on its high priority conservation list; the Southern York County Farmland Protection Program. Also, The Town of North Berwick voted to apply \$40,000 from their open space fund towards this project.

The goals are to permanently conserve the agricultural attributes of the farm; partner with the Town of North Berwick to conserve this gateway to their community as described in their comprehensive plan; preserving a block of prime and significant farm and forestland; preserve the foreground of a regionally recognized viewshed to the greater Mt. Agamenticus Region to the east; and to demonstrate that agriculture can continue to be a viable economic enterprise in this rapidly developing portion of the State of Maine.

The applicant is requesting \$50,000 in LMF funding.

- **Kents Hill Orchard – Readfield**

This is a prime agricultural property located in Readfield, Maine where it has operated as an apple orchard for nearly 100 years. The Maine Farmland Trust who recently purchased the property plans to continue operating the property as Pick-Your-Own

orchard and expand into a diversified operation that will include growing vegetables, cultivating elderberry trees for medicinal purposes, boarding horses, and raising laying hens.

The goals are to conserve an active farm property; secure a new farm buyer to continue the property's farming legacy and enhance and expand its agricultural production; use the sale of development rights as a mechanism for increasing the affordability of this property for new farm buyers; preserve an important piece of local history and well loved community landmark; conserve open space within the village of Kents Hill and maintain a critical 'viewshed'; protect wildlife habitat; and provide new public recreational opportunities via the development of a new trail system on the property.

The applicant is requesting \$60,000 in LMF funding.

- **Clark Farm & Forest - Windham**

This is a multi-phase project a portion of which has previously received LMF support. This application for LMF agricultural funding applies only to the first part of a broader conservation effort covering nearly 550 acres. LMF funding would secure the protection of 217 acres of contiguously owned farmland in the heart of the fastest-growing metropolitan area in Maine. This project will cultivate long-standing open farmland with high quality soils, and adding to the health and vitality of the local agricultural industry. The land's proximity to markets in Bridgton, Lewiston-Auburn, Gray-New Gloucester and Greater Portland make it an attractively located site. Also, the project will preserve and ensure continued public access to three important local resources. Language in the easement will guarantee public access, with the consent and cooperation of the farmer as to siting, for the banks of the Pleasant River and Black Brook, and the continued trail links for two major snowmobile routes.

The applicant is requesting \$371,784 in LMF funding.

- **River Rise Farm - Turner**

This farm has operated most recently as a dairy farm with sustainable forest management being a significant part of the farm activity. The owners have contracted to sell the farm to Maine Farmland Trust, with the sale of development rights through LMF/FRPP as part of that deal. The owners wish to see the farm remain as a working farm and forestland.

The goals are to conserve this historically productive farm; divide the farmland portion into two viable farms, and sell to two farmers who will expand agricultural productivity; use the sale of development rights as a means of lowering the price of the farmland (and potentially the forest land) to affordable levels for incoming buyers; to conserve the extensive forest land and sell either as additional working wood lands to farm purchasers or separately to conservation buyers who are seeking to protect forest land to work in a

sustainable manner; and create public access through the woodlands and along the river on the woods parcel for hiking, snowmobile and non-motorized boat use.

The applicant is requesting \$380,000 in LMF funding.

OTHER BUSINESS

Policy Governing 5 % Grants

The objective of this change is to encourage timely use of the funds following project closing. A draft eligibility policy was discussed at the last board meeting and feedback received has resulted in the revised policy below. This new policy will apply to farmland projects as well.

1. The remaining “investment” funds from past LMF bonds will continue to be available to fund investment grants on past (completed) and current LMF projects that have closed as of [September 14 Board meeting] – first come, first serve. When those funds are committed, these projects would no longer be eligible for these grants.

2. If and when a new Bond passes in the fall, the Board will set aside 5% of the total LMF allocation to new projects for possible investment grants to the new projects funded from the new bond and those still pending as of [September 14 Board meeting]. These new projects will be eligible to apply for investment grants for a period of up to 2 yrs after closing of the project on a first come, first serve basis. Remaining funds, if any, will lapse back to the general LMF pool and be available for reallocation by the Board

- Vote to adopt policy

A motion was made by Ben Emory and seconded by Commission Bradstreet to adopt the proposed changes for eligibility to receive 5 % improvement grants.

Androscoggin River Project – expanding the ongoing river corridor effort by 3 acquisitions.

Overview

The Department of Conservation (DOC) is asking the Board to consider a new approach to funding projects linked together by a compelling geographic and natural resource value. The Androscoggin River Project is such a project which would conserve lands along the Androscoggin River, from the New Hampshire border to Merrymeeting Bay. The DOC is requesting that the Board consider preliminary approval of the use of certain unallocated LMF funds to enable acquisition of three parcels that are crucial to the success of the overall vision of the Androscoggin River Project. Together, these 3 parcels/projects support farming, forestry,

water access and associated recreational use while delivering very real economic, health and quality of life benefits to the people of Maine.

The 3 parcels being recommended by the Department of Conservation for Board consideration are: (1) Turner Riverlands Park Access, (2) Leeds Riverlands Park Access, and (3) Tuner River Rise Wooded parcel and riverfront.

The Department of Conservation is requesting that the board approve a preliminarily award of \$368,000 to a new Androscoggin River Project.

- Vote

A motion was made by Bucky Owen and seconded by Don Marean to refer the proposal to the Scoring Committee. Vote was unanimous.

Keeping Maine's Forest – the Great Maine Forest Initiative

Brief Overview

This landscape forest conservation initiative is a proposal being submitted to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack and U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar developed by the Keeping Maine's Forests Steering Committee. This proposal provides the background and broad vision of Keeping Maine's Forests while describing two potential pilot projects; one in Maine's Downeast Forest and the other in the High Peaks region of Western Maine each involving multiple landowners that have expressed and interest in participating in conservation and/or stewardship initiatives. Both involve acquisition of both conservation easements and fee lands that would connect existing conservation ownership resulting in an extraordinary example of landscape conservation. This committee seeks a future that maintains both the environmental and economic integrity of Maine Woods, the largest continuous expanse of largely undeveloped and unfragmented forest in the Eastern United States.

After one or more pilot projects has been implemented, the Steering Committee will evaluate the success of the project(s) in meeting the goals of Keeping Maine's Forests and reassess the long-term objectives of the initiative and whether, and how, it should be expanded to the broader region.

Keeping Maine's Forests is seeking \$25 million of federal funding (above and beyond what Maine has been receiving for forest conservation and stewardship) to initiate the pilot project phase which will be supplemented by state and private funding.

Bond

Tim stated that a Press Release from Maine's Secretary of State announced the order of November 2, 2010 ballot questions. **Question 3** is the land bond for \$9,750,000 to invest in land conservation and working waterfront preservation and to preserve parks.

Project Updates

Distributed to the Board was the latest LMF Project Status Report. Tim stated that we have closed on many projects, connecting the dots, getting lots of press coverage and high public profile.

Retirement



Ken Elowe, Director of Resource Management for the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, will be retiring at the end of July 2010. Commissioner Lapointe stated that Ken has been a valuable asset to both the Board and LMF staff and that we are sad to see him go. We wish him well!

Adjourn: 4:12 p.m.