

Wassataquoik Stream

T3 R7 WELS

Vital Statistics:

Size: 2,110 acres

Regulated: 0 acres

Non-Regulated: 2,110 acres

Upland: 1,635 acres

Forested Wetland (NWI): 418 acres

Non-Forested Wetland: 16 acres

Open Water: 40 acres

Roads: unimproved <1 mile

Biophysical Region: Central Mountains/
Aroostook Highlands

BPL Region: North



Rare Species and Exemplary Natural Community Table for Wassataquoik Stream

Common Name	Latin Name	S-RANK	G-RANK	State Status
<i>Exemplary Natural Communities</i>				
Appalachian-Acadian Rivershore Ecosystem		S4	GNR	N/A
Hemlock Forest		S4	G4G5	N/A
Silver Maple Floodplain Forest		S3	GNR	N/A
Sugar Maple Forest		S4	G4	N/A
Upper Floodplain Hardwood Forest		S3	GNR	N/A
White Pine Forest		S5	G5	N/A
<i>Rare Plants</i>				
American Ginseng – <i>Panax quinquefolius</i>		S3	G3G4	Endangered
<i>Rare Animals</i>				
None found				

Description

The Wassataquoik Stream ecological reserve lies at the confluence of Wassataquoik Stream and the East Branch of the Penobscot River. The central features are stream bank and river floodplain forests. The steep wooded slopes of Wassataquoik Stream give way at its mouth to a broad floodplain, and the vegetational gradients reflect the effects of topography, hydrology and soils.

The mixed forests along Wassataquoik Stream rise 15 – 35 meters above the streambed. Both sides of the stream contain scattered older trees, mostly white pine, among a multi-aged mix of hardwood and softwood. On the north bank, large superstory white pine (over 19 m tall and over 90 cm dbh) emerge over the canopy of hemlock, spruce, pine, and poplar. The south bank lacks these superstory pines, but has some large hemlock, sugar maple, poplar and spruce, with some trees over 100 years old. The stumps and traces of logging roads throughout this area are evidence of its past logging history.

The floodplain of the East Branch, on either side of the Wassataquoik's mouth, is a fine example of a relatively undisturbed hardwood floodplain forest. It is large, over a mile in length, and displays excellent gradations from the river's edge to the uplands back up towards Hunt Mountain. At the lower elevations near the stream, impressive silver maple (some over 120 cm dbh) form an arching canopy over a carpet of tall ferns and other herbs. Large fallen trees have left canopy gaps, with green ash, young silver maple, and elm regenerating. As one moves away from the river, the gradual change in elevation leads to replacement of the silver maple by sugar maple, and a change in the herb flora composition as well. It is unusual to find terrace floodplain forests like this as intact as seen here.