

**ALLAGASH WILDERNESS WATERWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES**

December 14, 2018, 9:00 am – 11:20  
Cross State Office Building, RM 214, Augusta, Maine

Council Members Present: Josie Allen; Dave Basley; Peter Bourque; Brent Hardy, Chair; Melford Pelletier; Toby Pineo. Jamie Fosburgh was unable to attend.

Others Present: Tom Desjardin, Ron Hunt, Jocelyn Hubbell, Cindy Bastey (Bureau of Parks & Lands); Matt LaRoche, Bob Johnston (Allagash Waterway); Dave Flanagan, AWW Volunteer; Jim McCartney (National Park Service); Don Hudson, Paul Johnson (AWW Foundation); Greg Shute (Chewonki); Camille Denico (Haymock Lake); Rick Denico; Cathy Johnson (NRCM); Jim St Pierre (RESTORE the North Woods)

**Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Brent Hardy opened the meeting at 9:00 am and asked Council members and attendees to introduce themselves.

**Review of Minutes of September 14, 2018 meeting**

Brent asked if the Council wished to approve the minutes of the September meeting. Melford Pelletier moved and Toby Pineo seconded that the September minutes be approved as presented. Council approved unanimously.

**Operations and Maintenance Review 12/14/18, Matt LaRoche**

Water levels:

- Water levels were low for canoeing (100-200 cfs) to the end of September.
- Some rain in mid-October bumped the river flow up for a week.
- There was no significant rainfall until the first week of November. The river came up to a little over 3000 cfs in early November.
- Water levels did not meet October target levels for togue spawning at Telos Dam (3.9' above sill) or Churchill Dam (926.1' elevation above sea level).
  - IF&W gave permission to lower the level at Telos to accommodate the construction at Lock Dam.
  - In correspondence with IF&W about the water level at Churchill Dam, we identified language in the water management plan that allows accommodating drought conditions.
- Telos Dam is currently at 5.8 feet above the sill.
- Churchill Dam elevation is 927.2 above sea level.

Personnel:

- Staffing level for November/December:
  - Kevin Brown, Chief Ranger
  - Trevor O'Leary, Ranger
  - Matt LaRoche, Superintendent
- Jay Young went on seasonal layoff on November 2<sup>nd</sup> and will return to work in the Waterway during Christmas week.

Public Use:

- It was a good year despite low water through most of the summer and fall. Once the water went down in June it essentially never came back up.
  - August and September was not very good for canoeing or fishing.
  - These numbers are only preliminary as we still have some registrations with NM Woods that have not come in.
  - Total camping nights for 2018 = 19,243. Up 4.7% from 2017.
  - See chart and bar graph attached at end for a comparison of use with past years.
- Winter campground registration at Chamberlain Bridge took place Saturday (12/8) and 31 of 48 available sites were sold that day, all of which were rented for the entire winter. (Three more sold since for a total of 34 sold.)

- Projects since our September meeting:
- New pole barn built at Churchill Depot
- Lock Dam project completed.
- Covered broken windows in the boarding house.
- Eagle Lake ranger station repairs:
  - New sill logs installed on two sides
  - Camp jacked up a foot and leveled
  - New floor stringers installed
  - New subfloor and finished floor installed
- Replaced rotten floor and shower in bathroom at the Kellogg Brook Camp at CTB.
- Made repairs to the solar power systems at the Round Pond (T6R11) and Lock Dam Camps.
- Mowed fields and roadsides at Churchill and Telos Dams.
- Worked with Public Lands on mutual boundary lines north of Round Pond (T13 R12) on the west side of the river.
- 55- yards of superhumus has been delivered to Churchill Dam, to be delivered to campsites this winter.
- At Telos Dam, flood gate sluice timbers that washed away last spring were replaced and voids under the sluice filled with rock.
- Assisted IF&W with trap-netting 200 togue at Allagash Lake. Dave Basely also volunteered with the trap-netting.
  - The togue were then stocked in Crescent Pond to help lower the smelt population there, which should benefit the whitefish population.
  - Togue from Allagash Lake are considered native to Crescent Pond and therefore comply with the IF&W heritage fish stocking policy.
- 2 Attempts to locate:
  - One family emergency with evacuation.
  - One in-reach S.O.S.
- 1 Boating assist: swamped/pinned canoe in Chase Rapids.
- 1 Evacuation for a medical emergency.

#### Special Activity Permits:

- CanAm sled dog race – crossing the AWW at Round Pond
- “Mysteries of the Abandoned” filming at the tramway.

#### Training:

- Wilderness First Aid training
- Bureau of Labor Standards training
- Excel spread sheet training (Kevin Brown)
- Informal training at staff meetings and on the job.

#### Miscellaneous:

- Met with John Daigle at the University of Maine to move ahead with a visitor survey during the 2019 season.
  - The survey will replicate the 2003 visitor survey.
  - Will add an economic impact section to the survey.
  - It will be an online survey, unless a printed survey is requested.
  - The survey will be funded by the AWW Foundation and UMaine.
- Matt showed several photos that illustrated recent Waterway projects.
- Questions
  - Dave asked if the survey would capture winter use. Matt said no.

- Tobey indicated he had seen some material from "Mysteries of the Abandoned," a TV series, which did show the AWW trains.
- Brent asked where the new pole barn is located. Matt indicated it is near the Churchill Dam service area and not visible from the watercourse.
- Josie inquired if the public use data documented more than the number of campers. Matt said the data captures sporting camp visitors and day users coming through the North Maine Woods gates/check points. Josie would like to see more analysis of the data to get a clearer picture of the use of the Waterway. She asked to see this as an agenda item on an upcoming meeting. Ron noted that our current data primarily reflects where people stay overnight.
- Brent asked how far we departed from target water levels this year. Matt noted that flows are over the target level now (12/14), reflecting recent rain. He said we try to maintain a small surplus cushion in case of winter drought to protect fish eggs. Brent reported observing Chamberlain Lake as it went below the target this past dry summer and then seemed to take a long time to refill. Years ago, this water level drop exposed boulders and bottomland.

#### **Lock Dam Report Slide Show – Matt LaRoche**

Brent remarked that he observed this project from ground-breaking to completion. Matt thought that project start-up was a bit rough, but the contractors adjusted where needed, and the project was completed before October 1<sup>st</sup> and well-executed. Narrating the project slide-show that appeared on-line, Matt noted that the size of the new culvert was dictated by the desire to restore the fishery in Martin Stream and provide the water flows needed to accomplish that. The new outlet also has a fish barrier to block upstream migration and a new Martin Stream put-in and portage trail.

Pete asked how thick the rip-rap was and whether ice might move it. Matt said the rip-rap met plan specifications and was larger on the lower end. Pete said he would have asked for larger material to prevent ice scour.

Dave asked if the access road will be maintained. Matt said the contractors left the road graveled, and it will be graded next spring and used for emergency and maintenance access.

Brent said Matt and others deserve much credit for the attention paid to this project. It has met the multiple goals of the Army Corps, Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Parks and Lands and the Allagash Waterway. Hopefully, the whitefish fishery will return to Martin Stream.

#### **AWW Foundation (AWWF) Report - Don Hudson**

The Foundation now has a 15-member board that has attracted financial support from many sources including LL Bean, Allagash Brewing and Wicked Joe's Coffee. The Allagash [Brewing Co.] Street Fair will continue to include AWWF, and a portion of Joe's sales of an "Allagash Coffee" will go to the Foundation's efforts get area youth into the Waterway.

In the coming year, AWWF will concentrate on their youth Initiative for the gateway communities of the Fort Kent and Katahdin regions, to later include Greenville and the Moosehead region. Their goal is to provide opportunities for kids to have multiday experiences in the Waterway. Foundation members are meeting with area schools now to discuss the initiative. Looking toward 2020, the Waterway's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a national Wild and Scenic River, The Foundation hopes to use the anniversary as an opportunity to raise money for an endowment fund for the youth program.

In 2018, the Foundation submitted the resource assessment and interpretive plan, Storied lands and Waters of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. The plan recommended the development of an interpretive program ("Allagash Explorer") that includes a pocket guide and online component that work together to engage visitors in Waterway features and stories. AWWF hopes to work with BPL to begin development of the pocket guide in 2019, and is considering an application to the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund for assistance.

Also in 2019, the Foundation will help fund a visitor survey conducted by John Daigle and students the University of Maine. This survey will update information gained in a similar 2003 survey and include some new information. Unlike prior surveys, this one will be conducted primarily online.

Don observed that AWWF is taking a “slow path” to success by taking on a few projects initially and laying a foundation for future efforts. Recognizing that the Foundation and BPL may occasionally compete for funds from the same sources, the Foundation will maintain regular communications with the Bureau.

#### Questions/Comments

Brent cited the Taylor Camps as an important feature of the Waterway that paddlers often miss because they aren't aware of the site. He hopes the guide will locate such features. Don noted that the right amount of information about such resources is important.

Jocelyn noted that interpreted resources should all have lat/long locations. Also, as a fundraiser, LL Bean might sell AWW anniversary paddles.

Dave Flanagan liked the Allagash Explorer idea and recommended the Grand Canyon Guide as a model river guide to be used while paddling. There are no signs posted along the river and river travelers rely on a tablet-type guide.

Someone asked if virtual geocaches had been considered for the Waterway. [Scribe's note: See [www.waymarking.com](http://www.waymarking.com).] Don indicated they are slowly becoming aware of this type of activity.

He noted that the Foundation hopes to see a natural resources inventory and evaluation developed like that done for historic resources in Storied Lands & Waters.

Melford referred to a pamphlet created by Paul Lajoie with gps points for features all along the Allagash from Telos Dam to the St John River and offered to show it AWWF members when they are in the area.

Pete noted that North Maine Woods once produced a good waterproof map and guide of the St. John River that people might want to see. He has a copy.

Brent asked if there had been any talk about making other studies and research opportunities available to universities. Don answered this not on the Foundation work plan at this point. AWWF is trying to balance youth opportunities with the many recommendations made in Storied Lands and Waters.

#### **Boarding House Nomination update – Tom Desjardin**

Tom Desjardin reported that the Maine Historic Preservation Commission has made its recommendation to the National Park Service (NPS) that the Boarding House and Storehouse at Churchill Depot be placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Tom indicated that there is no definite timeline for the NPS decision, but in a matter of weeks or months, we should receive a certificate of approval, at which time we can order bronze plaques for the buildings. Brent expressed hope that more detailed planning and fund raising for Boarding House could begin next year.

#### **Appreciation to David Flanagan - Tom & Brent**

The Council and Bureau have wanted to recognize the efforts of Dave Flanagan to stabilize the Boarding House – only the most recent of many projects Dave has undertaken for the AWW. Tom read a letter recognizing Dave's work and presenting him with print of Mark McCulloch's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary painting of the river near Allagash Falls as a token of appreciation. Dave said that by attending Council meetings, he's come to appreciate how state groups work together to benefit the people of Maine. He is impressed and hopes to continue contributing.

### Allagash Suite Concert – Cindy Bastey

Cindy described the “Allagash Suite,” composed by local musician Nathan Saunders and premiered at South Congregational Church in Augusta on November 17. The suite combined music with spoken word and included recognizable AWW themes (e.g., logging, railroad, birdsong, wind). It will also be performed at LL Bean on December 16. Cami Denico suggested that some photographs might enhance the presentation, and Paul Johnson noted that the orchestra wore flannel and incorporated a moose horn.

Brent recognized Cindy for her help with meeting agendas and materials. [Scribe’s note: Very kind. Thank you!]

Cindy indicated that BPL needed signed photo releases from Council members and Dave’s Boarding House work crew to use their pictures in the annual report. She asked folks to stay after the meeting to complete the releases, including restricting use if desired.

### Election of Chair and Schedule of Meetings for 2019

Brent invited Council members to nominate a Chair for next year. Melford nominated Brent, Pete seconded, and the Council voted unanimously to re-elect Brent as its chair for 2019

Brent recommended a schedule of quarterly Friday meeting dates for 2019 as follows: March 15, June 14, September 13 and December 13. Matt indicated he would be travelling on March 15, and the group agreed to move the March meeting date ahead one week to March 22.

<p><b>2019 AWW Council Meeting Schedule</b> Friday, March 22 Friday, June 14 Friday, September 13 Friday, December 13</p>
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Paul thanked BPL staff present and past for follow-through on the Lock Dam project. It will have multiple lasting benefits.

Matt reminded people that the project would not have been possible without 50% funding from the federal Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), noting that the same fund paid 50% of the cost of creating Waterway.

Matt presented Cindy a Waterway T-shirt for helping with Waterway projects. [Scribe’s note: Grand!]

Brent asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Melford moved, Pete and/or Toby seconded. Council members voted unanimously to adjourn.

Year	MAINE RESIDENTS					NON RESIDENTS					Total camper nights
	No. Campers	No. Nights	Camper Nights	Under 10	<10 camp. nights	No. Campers	No. Nights	Camper Nights	Under 10	<10 camp. nights	
2010	2,273	2,946	8,788	86	~	1,902	2,178	9,797	29	~	18,585
2011	2,172	2,877	9,018	~	262	1,987	2,256	10,672	~	139	20,091
2012	2,162	2,635	7,920	129	336	1,960	2,270	10,476	35	160	18,892
2013	2,118	2,871	8,310	82	234	2,031	2,501	10,498	42	205	19,247
2014	1,182	2,466	7,349	46	146	2,067	2,334	10,952	42	209	18,656
2015	2,178	2,848	8,778	80	206	2,018	2,417	10,437	49	237	19,658
2016	2,250	3,009	9,000	87	261	2,012	2,388	10,013	38	185	19,459
2017	2,136	2,703	8,353	71	240	1,889	2,130	9,625	36	158	18,376
*2018	2,040	2,652	8,393	68	242	2,146	2,213	10,422	40	186	19,243

\* Incomplete

