

## Management Recommendations for the Chesuncook/Gero Island Unit

### **Recreation**

- Continue coordination with PRC staff for the maintenance of the Gero Island campsites, and the Graveyard Point boat access.

### **Public Access and Management Roads**

- Develop a maintenance plan for the roads and named streets within the Chesuncook parcel, in collaboration with Piscataquis County.
- Develop a lease for the Chesuncook Lake House seasonal dock and use of the cove on the lakeshore near the facility, in conjunction with public use.

### **Timber Management**

- The Bureau will manage areas allocated to Timber Management as a multiple use working forest. Timber resources where allocated will provide a diverse forested environment and generate high quality-high value products to support Bureau operations and Maine's timber-based economy. The Bureau will practice multi-aged management with a long-term focus primarily on mature quality timber.
- Because of the presence of the historic village and of the PRC adjacent to the Chesuncook tract, certain areas nearest the village and the lakeshore will be subject to Visual Class I considerations.

### **Administrative Issues**

- The Bureau will consider selling remaining leased lots to lessees and undeveloped camplots to abutting landowners, with any such proposals evaluated on a case-by-case basis. A third-party appraisal would determine fair market value. Any such sales that the Bureau wishes to pursue would be presented to the legislature for approval.
- The Bureau will evaluate whether to repair or remove the Graveyard Point bunkhouse, in coordination with the State Historic Properties Office. If repair is not reasonably practical or is cost prohibitive, the Bureau will seek to remove it as an attractive hazard.

### **Allagash Lots**

The Allagash Northwest (NW), Northeast (NE), Southwest (SW), and Southeast (SE) lots are original public lots, renamed from their former township designations when the town of Allagash was incorporated, encompassing the four townships in which the lots lie. Together, the lots total 3,736 acres. All have been managed primarily for timber production and dispersed recreation for several decades.

The NW and NE lots are accessed from Rt. 161 and Allagash village via the NMW Little Black checkpoint, and the SW lot via the Allagash checkpoint. None of the lots have recreation facilities, other than snowmobile and ATV routes crossing the NE lot. A seasonal sled dog trail crosses the SW lot. Local firewood permits have been issued on three of the four lots.

### Character of the Land Base

These lots range in size from about 500 to just over 1,000 acres. In total, 3,519 acres on these lots (94%) are regulated forest. Map Figure 20 locates the lots within the town and depicts road access as well as motorized trails and other recreation facilities in the town and vicinity.

Allagash NW Lot - The west border of this 982-acre lot fronts on the Little Black River. Terrain is mainly a long and sometimes moderately steep slope rising from the river to a small pinnacle near the lot's northeast corner. There are no maintained roads on the lot at this time.

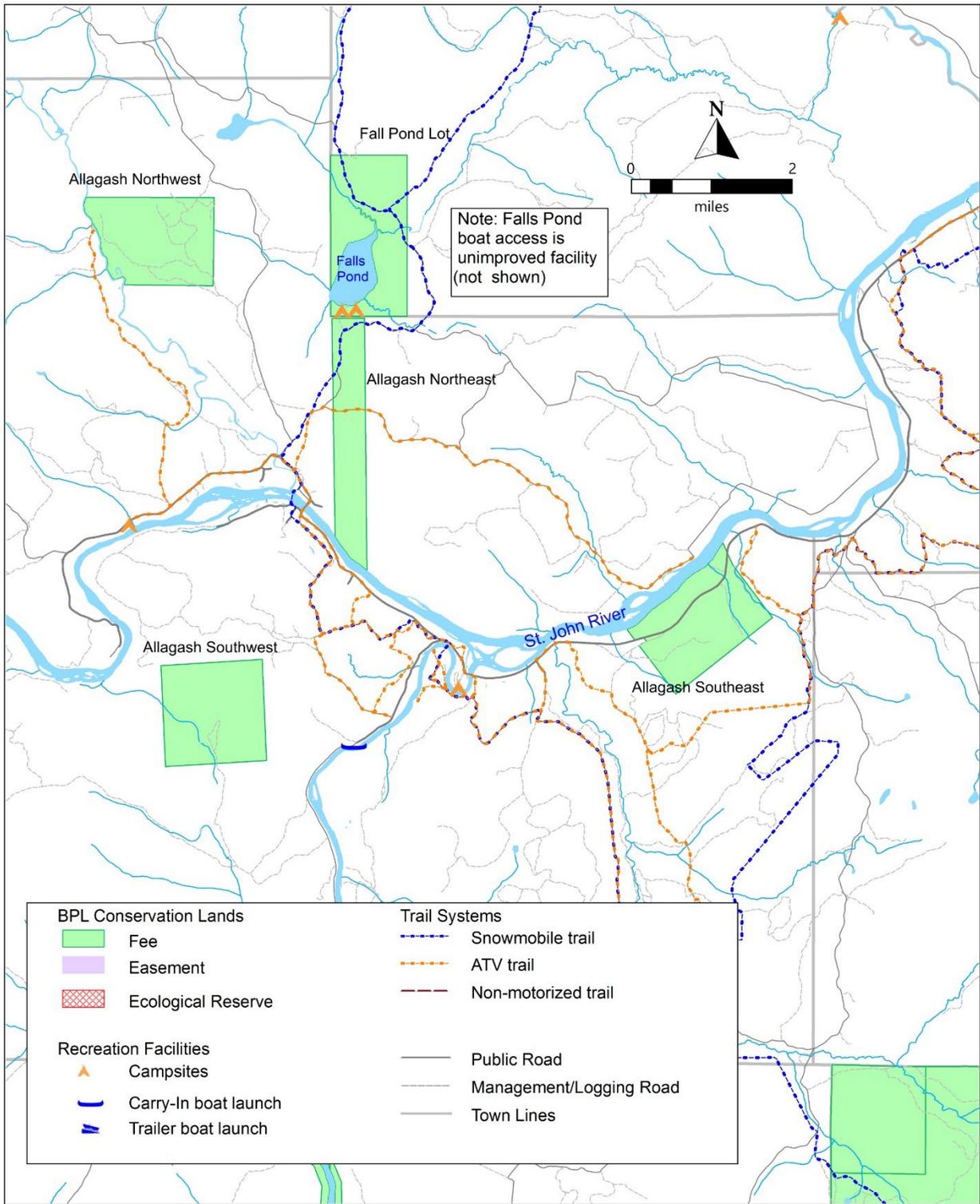
Allagash NE Lot - Among the four Allagash public lots, this one is unique for its long and narrow shape, 3 miles north-south, 0.4 miles east-west, and for its heavy predominance of hardwoods, which make up three-fourths of volume. It's one of the two lots with frontage on the St. John. Topography on the 750 acres includes lots of slopes; south to southwest slopes on the southerly one third, west-facing slopes on the middle, and northwest slopes tapering to a flat at the north end. A major access road for townships to the north passes through the northerly part of the lot and the only road access to Big Falls Pond branches from this road through the northwest corner of the lot. The north and middle parts of the lot have better access than the south.

Allagash SW Lot - The 1,011-acre lot lies on the high ground between the Allagash and St. John Rivers, and topography is hilly, with significant slopes on the northeast and southwest portions separated by the Campbell Brook valley where the watercourse runs northwest toward the St. John. This is the only Allagash public lot with no river frontage, nor main access road frontage.

Allagash SE Lot - Despite being just under 1,000 acres, this lot has a wide range of features of note. It includes the highest elevation of the Plan area except for Allagash Mountain and the lowest point, at the downstream end of the St. John frontage. It also features what is probably Maine's northwestern-most stand with a significant component of hemlock. It also is the only Allagash public lot with paved road frontage – Route 161 transects the lot – and the only one with residential inholdings, two house lots sold to (and built upon by) families whose homes were damaged or threatened by the 1991 ice jam flood. In June 2019 an additional 3.5 acres adjacent to the house lots was authorized to be sold to the Town of Allagash.

The lot slopes gently down from the highway toward the river, getting steep only within the riparian buffer, most of which is unregulated due both to slope and the presence of rare plants. The entire area between the road and the river had been identified as a potential ecological reserve, but the Bureau has allocated other sites as ecological reserves while adding this stand to its High Conservation Value areas as identified under Forest Stewardship Council certification. South of the road is a long north-facing slope with three small valleys and hills to the south of the summit. The 35-acre spruce-hemlock slope forest and adjacent roadside mixedwood are unregulated.

# Allagash and Falls Pond Lots - Access and Recreation Facilities



MAP FIGURE 20.

### Exemplary Natural Communities, Rare Plants, Wildlife and Fisheries Resources

There are several rare plants and rare or exemplary natural communities found on these lots. The Allagash NE and SE lots both abut the St. John River, which supports the second highest concentration of rare plants in Maine after Mt. Katahdin. Both of these lots also contain rare communities that are naturally small in scale, including hardwood seepage forest (Allagash SE) and circumneutral riverside seep (Allagash NE). Rivershore areas of the SE lot contain habitats in which a number of rare plants have been recorded, including the federally listed Furbish's lousewort (*Pedicularis furbishiae*), and ten other plants mainly associated with calcareous ledges and gravels. On the SW lot, a small population of the rare beaked sedge (*Carex rostrata*), a species of special concern, was found in the mixed graminoid-shrub marsh (beaver meadow) along Campbell Brook. Map Figure 21 depicts these plants and communities. Additional details on these resources are available in the St. John Uplands Region Natural Resource Inventory Report, excerpted here and available from MNAP.

Several lots contain MDIF&W-mapped significant wildlife habitats and occurrences of a rare animal, the pygmy snaketail dragonfly. A large MDIF&W-mapped deer wintering area, one of the largest such areas in northwest Maine, connects softwood forest between all the Allagash lots. While all four lots contain some portion of this deer wintering area, the Allagash NW lot is completely within it. In addition, the Allagash NW lot contains areas mapped as Inland Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat. The pygmy snaketail, a species of Special Concern in Maine, inhabits the St. John River during its larval stage, but spends its adult life in upland forests. (See Map Figure 22.)

All of the Allagash lots have flowing water that support wild brook trout, which now exist in the St. John River system as mostly disjunct populations in smaller streams, due to high mortality from invasive muskellunge (muskie) predation in the major rivers.

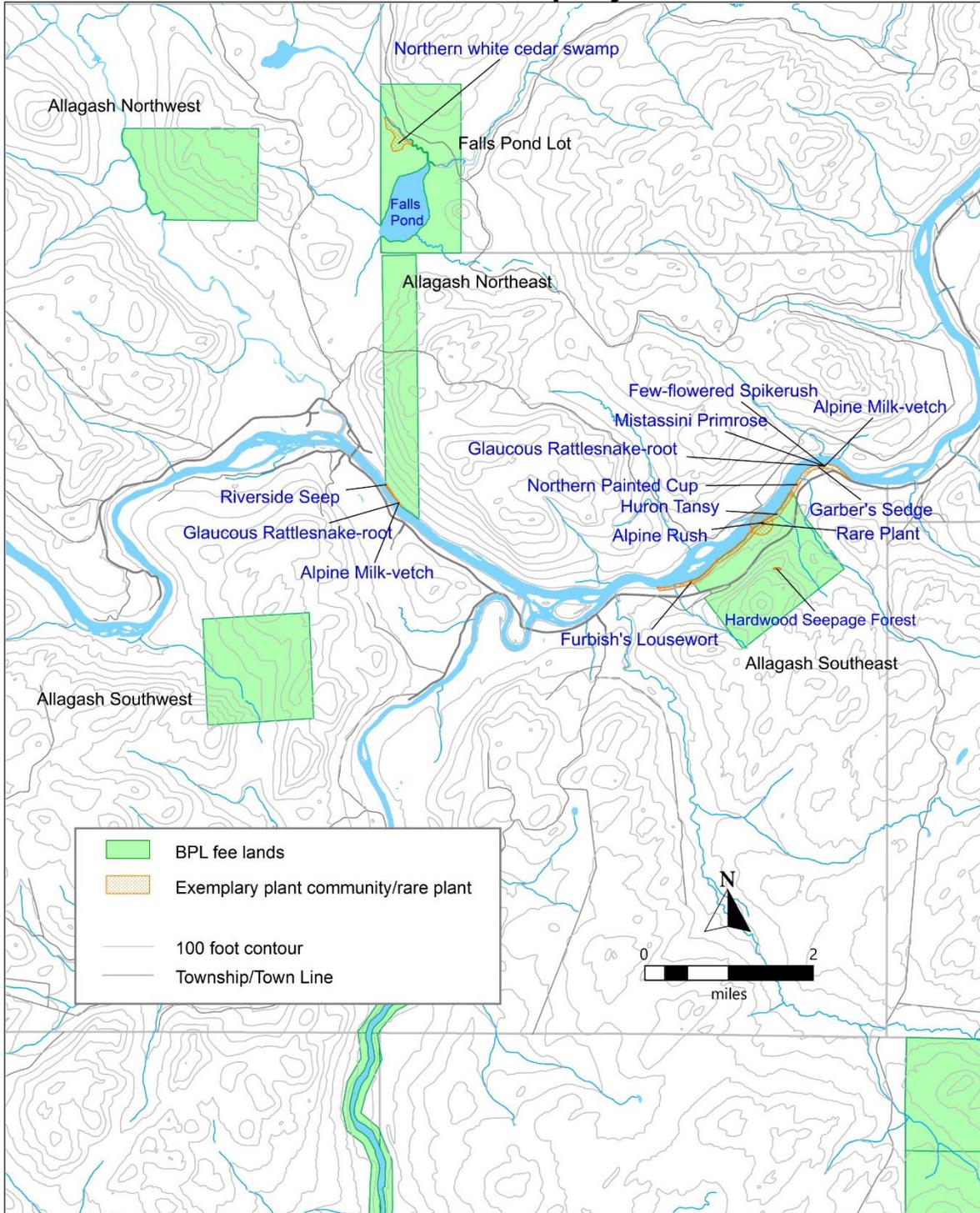
### Timber Resources

Mixedwood types are dominant on these lots, making up 55% of regulated acres, with softwoods and hardwoods at 23% and 22%, respectively. All four lots have considerable steep and hilly terrain, though little that's too steep for timber harvests, and all are well accessed. Average stocking approaches 25 cords per acre, slightly higher on the southwest lot and slightly lower on the northeast lot. Overall species mix is 58% hardwoods, with sugar maple most abundant at 27% of volume. Spruce and fir are each at 16-17%, yellow birch with 11%, red maple at 9% and cedar at 7%.

Allagash NW Lot - This is the only one of the Allagash lots on which the softwood volume exceeds that of hardwoods and the only one on which sugar maple is not the most abundant species. That position belongs to fir, leading the way at 24%, spruce and sugar maple next with 18% each, red maple with 13% and cedar at 11%.

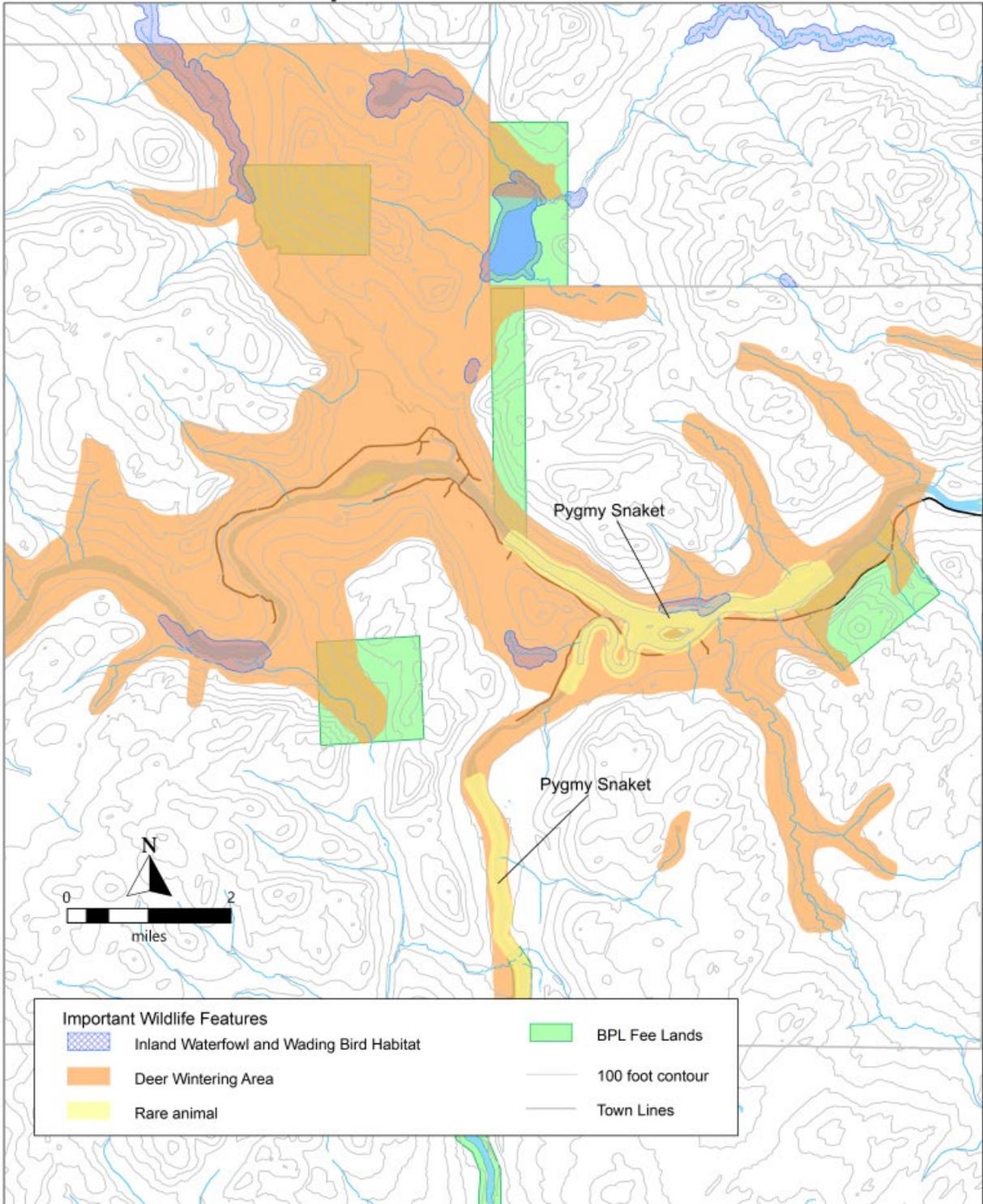
In 1981-82 there was a major timber harvest on the lot, concentrating on budworm damaged/threatened spruce and fir. Volumes are not available, but the type and extent of harvesting suggests a total in excess of 5,000 cords. Since then, a much smaller harvest yielded just over 1,000 cords, mainly overmature fir, and individual firewood harvests another 150 cords. The stocking on the lot tends to be mainly fair quality older hardwoods or small pole softwoods

## Allagash and Falls Pond Lots MNAP "Rare and Exemplary" Features



MAP FIGURE 21.

# Allagash and Falls Pond Lots Important Wildlife Features



MAP FIGURE 22.

with hardwoods mixed. If markets for low grade hardwoods are sufficient, a significant entry during the planning period is probably desirable.

Allagash NE Lot - Stocking of this lot is 40% sugar maple, 12% yellow birch, about 10% each of spruce and fir, and 8% red maple. Quality is good in softwoods and ranges from poor to good in hardwoods.

The lot had a significant harvest shortly before creation of the (then) Bureau of Public Lands in 1973. This harvest took hardwood logs and veneer, and much of the larger spruce and fir, the cut being quite heavy on the north 170 acres where softwoods had been dominant. Harvests under Bureau management were done in 1998-99, yielding almost 2,800 cords, most of which were hardwood pulpwood from selection and improvement cutting, plus some overstory removal in overmature aspen.

Allagash SW Lot – The current stocking and composition/quality make this a very good timber lot. This is the only Allagash lot having more spruce than fir. Stocking in 2017 was 44%/56% softwood/hardwood, with 27% sugar maple, 21% spruce, 15% fir, 13% yellow birch, and 8% cedar. Though the lot has no zoned deeryard acres, management has worked to maintain conforming cover in the Campbell Brook valley, due to significant deer use and stands with opportunities for that type of management. Access is good, with both summer and winter roads enabling harvests to reach the full lot.

The Bureau has conducted two entries to this lot over the past 40+ years. In 1987-89 the harvest totaled 4,635 cords, 80% softwoods, nearly all spruce and fir. Much of the older spruce-fir was in poor health from the recently ended budworm outbreak, and hardwood pulpwood markets were non-existent, leading the foresters to bypass hardwood stands rather than cut just the best trees. The second entry, in 2003-05, harvested nearly 7,000 cords, this time being able to include nearly 4,000 cords of hardwood pulpwood. The current forest is mainly of good quality trees of all species.

Allagash SE Lot - Timber harvests on this lot over the past 40+ years include several hundred cords of firewood cut in the 1970s as part of the town's firewood assistance program, and there was commercial harvesting several times in the 1950s-70s, each treating only a relatively small acreage. In 1985-87 a Bureau-managed harvest produced about 1,000 cords, all fir and spruce, mostly within the DWA area. The second BPL entry, in 2000-02, limited to areas south of the highway, yielded a bit more than 3,000 cords, 58% softwoods and 41% hardwood pulpwood, plus a small volume of hardwood logs. Currently the lot stocking is 62% hardwoods, with sugar maple making up 27% of volume, followed by fir at 16%, spruce 14%, yellow birch 11%, red maple 10% and beech 9%. Quality is generally good for most species, though the beech on the lot has suffered significant mortality in recent years, including some large specimens with no visible evidence of beech bark syndrome. The Bureau has periodically issued a maple tapping permit to a local resident, with tapping occurring on a small area of the lot.

## Management Issues

Allagash NW Lot - If markets for low grade hardwoods are sufficient, a significant entry during the planning period is probably desirable. Though the Little Black River deeryard currently has light use, managing softwood stands near the river should work toward conforming winter cover. Winter feeding of deer in the village complicates evaluation of deer use in the DWA. A Town of Allagash ordinance requires a permit and zoning board approval for all harvesting within the zoned deeryard.

Allagash NE Lot - Near constant moderate to severe slopes on the southerly 80% of the lot make operations and road maintenance challenging. Management needs to maintain visual integrity along the St. John, and along the major gravel road. The preponderance of hardwoods means that future harvests will require decent markets for low grade products.

Allagash SW Lot - Retention/expansion of quality winter cover for deer should continue to be a priority along Campbell Brook, which will also result in growth of high value timber. The brook warrants a major riparian buffer (all of which is within the MDIF&W-mapped deer yard). Two north-facing hillsides total about 40 acres visible from the St. John (though at that point canoeists may be focused on watching the river as they approach Big Rapids).

Allagash SE Lot - Management of the deer wintering area (managed for winter cover on this lot by agreement with MDIF&W) is complicated somewhat by winter feeding of deer in the village. There is an old road along Wesley Brook in the eastern part of the lot, unmaintained by the Bureau but still in use, that provides access to the St. John. This could be developed as a boat launch if public demand warranted. The occurrence of Furbish's lousewort is close to that Wesley Brook access point, though the plant's habitat and unremarkable appearance offer protection. Visual resource protection is important along the Route 161 frontage.

## Management Recommendations for the Allagash Lots

### **Timber Management**

- NW Lot – The next harvest should include considerable work in the hardwood/mixedwood stands which were either bypassed or sifted for spruce-fir in the 1980s harvest. That will hinge on pulpwood markets for hardwoods. Management of softwood stands near the river should work toward conforming winter cover for deer.
- NE Lot — The next harvest on this lot should include considerable work in the hardwood/mixedwood stands which were either bypassed or selectively harvested for spruce-fir in the 1980s harvest. This objective is dependent of pulpwood markets for hardwoods.
- SW Lot – Continue to manage for retention and expansion of quality winter cover for deer along Campbell Brook.
- SE Lot – The Bureau needs to maintain good communication with MDIF&W and other stakeholders for harvests involving the deer wintering area. Plan harvests to move mixedwood stands to softwood, with removal of mostly low-grade hardwood, to improve deer shelter. Monitor public demand for improved river access at the Wesley Brook site.

- Because of the presence of the St. John River and Route 161 (SE lot), certain areas visible from the river and the highway will be subject to Visual Class I considerations.
- The Bureau will consult with MNAP when planning any timber management activity in the vicinity of the rivershore exemplary natural communities and rare plants on the SE and NE lots.

### **Resource Allocations for the Allagash Lots**

The following “allocations,” as shown on Map Figure 23 – Allagash Lots Dominant Use Allocations, define general management objectives and direction for specific areas within the Unit. (Secondary allocations are not shown on the map.) See Appendix C for a description of designation criteria and management direction for the various allocation categories.

#### **Special Protection Areas (Dominant Allocation)**

- The rivershore zones along the St. John River on the SE and NE lots and the hardwood seepage forest on the SE lot, approximately 45 acres in total, based on the rare plant habitats and communities mapped by MNAP.

#### **Wildlife Management Areas (Dominant Allocation)**

- A total of about 2,050 acres as a dominant allocation within the major riparian zones/deer wintering areas on each lot. (Note that the DWA encompasses all of the major riparian areas on the lots, as well as the IWWBH on the NW lot). Remote Recreation is a secondary allocation in these riparian areas.

A secondary Timber Management allocation is also designated for the riparian buffer areas, subject to wildlife, recreation, and visual resource concerns.

#### **Remote Recreation Areas (Secondary Allocation)**

- Remote Recreation is a secondary allocation in the riparian areas with a Wildlife dominant allocation, as described above.

#### **Developed Recreation Areas (Dominant Allocation)**

- Developed Recreation is applied as a dominant allocation along Route 161 on the SE lot and along the primary access road across the NE lot.

#### **Visual Consideration Areas (Secondary Allocation)**

- Visual Class I areas (generally areas where foreground views of natural features that may directly affect the enjoyment of viewers) will be defined as a secondary allocation on the ground for areas along Route 161 on the SE lot and along the primary access road across the NE lot, as well as along the river frontage of the SE and NE lots.
- Visual Class II areas will be defined as a secondary allocation in areas beyond the immediate foreground, such as background views of forest canopies from ridgelines and background hillsides viewed from public use roads, or interior views beyond the Class I area likely to be seen from a road, trail or water body; on the Allagash Lots, this includes timber management areas that may be visible from roads or the St. John River.

**Timber Management Areas (Dominant Allocation)**

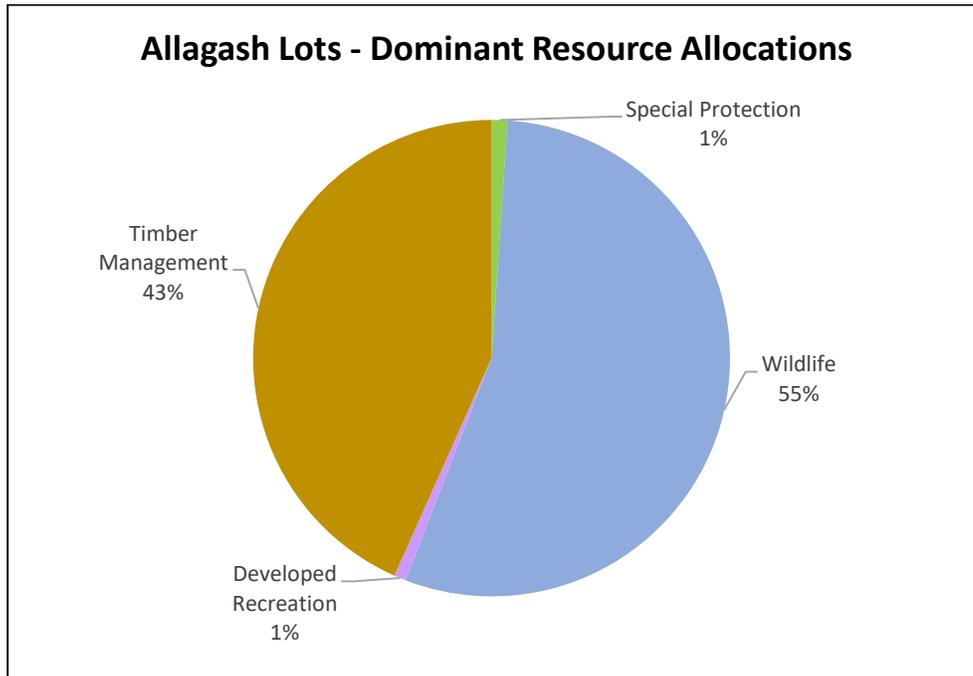
- All other areas not allocated above are designated Timber Management dominant (approximately 1,620 acres); includes a majority of the four lots, excepting the areas allocated to Developed Recreation and Wildlife. Recreation will be recognized as an important secondary use within the timber dominant allocation.

**Allagash Lots Allocation Summary**

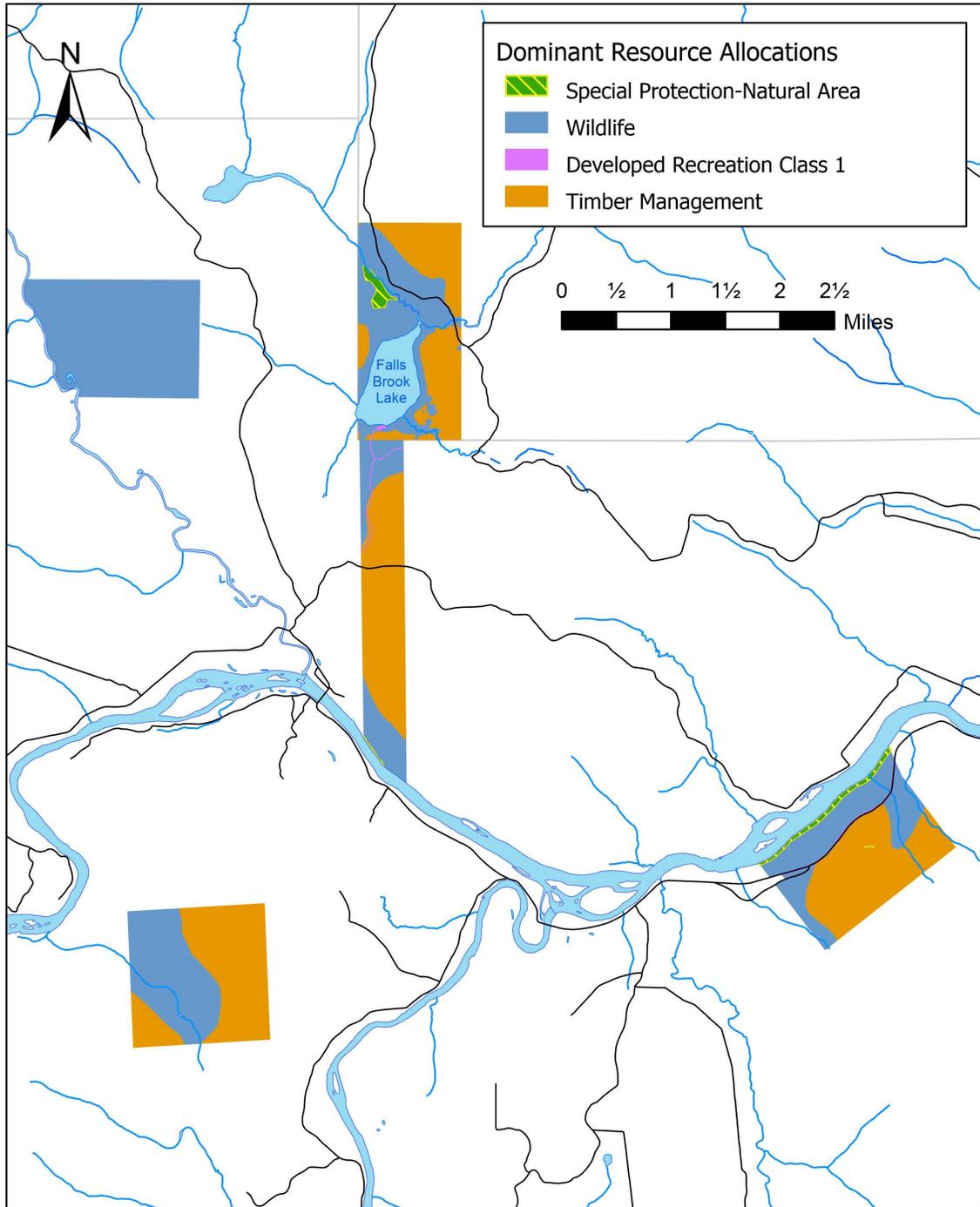
Allocation	Number of Acres			%
	Dominant	Secondary	Total	
Special Protection	45	Not applicable	<b>45</b>	<b>1.2</b>
Wildlife Management	2,050	Not applicable	<b>2,050</b>	<b>54.8</b>
Remote Recreation	0	2,050	<b>2,050</b>	<b>54.8</b>
Visual Consideration – Class I	NA	80*	<b>80</b>	<b>2.1</b>
Visual Consideration – Class II	NA	285*	<b>285</b>	<b>7.6</b>
Developed Recreation – Class I	30	Not applicable	<b>30</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Timber Management	1,620	2,050	<b>3,670</b>	<b>98.1</b>

Note: Acreages are representations based on GIS metrics rounded to the nearest 5 acres, and do not sum to the total Unit acreage due to measuring error and limits of GIS precision.

\* Preliminary estimate, to be refined in the field as part of forest prescription process.



# Allagash and Falls Pond (T18 R10) Lots Dominant Resource Allocations



MAP FIGURE 23.

## Falls Pond Lot

T18 R10 had long been in multiple common and undivided ownerships, which included about 1,000 acres of C/U State land. In the late 1980s, a partition was agreed to by all parties that created a located public lot of just under 1,000 acres in the southwest corner of the town, chosen for State ownership because of the high recreational use at (Big) Falls Pond (aka Falls Brook Lake).

### Character of the Land Base

The lot includes all the frontage on the ~230-acre pond except 500 feet or so in its southwest corner, which extends into the adjacent township. Terrain near the pond is relatively flat, but rises abruptly to the east, and also to the north of the main road. Wetlands surround the lake and include open and forested types. At the south end of the lake is a relatively small northern white cedar swamp which contains a mixture of cedar and balsam fir in the overstory. This area was selectively cut ~ 40 years ago. Wetlands along the northern end of Falls Brook Lake, and which also border the brook, include northern white cedar swamp, spruce - larch wooded bog, and leatherleaf boggy fen. These wetlands are undisturbed.

### Access and Recreation Resources

The lot is accessed from Rt. 161 and Allagash village via the NMW Little Black checkpoint. A gravel boat launch and two campsites, managed by NMW, are located on the southern end of the pond. A snowmobile route crosses the north end of the lot on the primary road. The brook trout fishing opportunity at Falls Pond is particularly valued as it is uncommon in this vicinity.

### Exemplary Natural Communities, Rare Plants, Wildlife and Fisheries Resources

MNAP has identified the **Northern White Cedar Swamp** north of the pond as an exemplary occurrence. The swamp includes multiple age/size classes of cedar trees and has no evidence of past disturbance. Numerous patches of large cedar (>40 cm DBH) occur throughout. Tree cores for the outer 1/3 of the tree had over 200 growth rings for many trees, indicating that these larger trees are at least 350 years old, and could possibly be older. Due to its age, forest structure, and lack of disturbance, this cedar swamp is considered exemplary despite its small size.

The rare sparse-flowered sedge (*Carex tenuiflora*), a species of special concern, was found in an open shrub meadow south of the pond.

The lot includes 337 acres of zoned DWA, north of the pond, part of a larger DWA that extends northwest along Falls Brook toward Little Falls Brook Pond. In addition, much of the wetlands on the unit are mapped as Inland Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat.

Falls Brook Lake is one of the best brook trout fisheries in this region of Maine. The St. John River region is characterized by a lack of ponds and most that occur here are shallow, providing little habitat for cold-water fishes. Falls Brook Lake is also shallow, but dense aquatic vegetation and the likely presence of numerous cool water springs contribute to good brook trout production in most years. The fishery appears to increase when the depth of the pond increases -- by as much as 2-3 feet -- due to beaver activity impeding flow at the outlet. The Falls Brook outlet stream is particularly important as a refuge habitat for fish during warm, dry summer months.

The stream has spring inlets that help brook trout survive extreme water conditions. Falls Brook is likely an important spawning area for brook trout as well.

### Timber Resources

Harvesting prior to the township being partitioned probably covered most forest acres, none more recent than the early 1970s, though some heavy cutting was done about that time. The Bureau prescribed the lot in 2008 but no harvests occurred until 2016, and to-date only a couple hundred cords have been harvested. A new management road was built recently, extending into the southeast quadrant of the lot from the primary road east of the lot.

The tract is 42% softwood types, 47% mixedwood, just 11% hardwood, and the volume of 24.3 cords per acre is 58% softwoods. Spruce is the leading species with 30% of total volume, followed by fir and cedar with 14% each, red maple at 11%, and paper birch, yellow birch, and sugar maple each with 8-9%. Quality is generally fair to good, depending on site quality. About 100 acres of sapling stands, scattered throughout the lot in 10 to 20 acre patches, may be good candidates for precommercial thinning.

### Management Issues

The boat launch and popular spring fishing warrant close attention to minimize impacts of harvesting activity to the extent possible on recreation access and uses. Recent deer use of the Falls Brook DWA has been light, but as long as it remains zoned, harvests there will be coordinated with MDIF&W. The decision on whether to do precommercial thinning should be made within the next couple years, as these stands are toward the tall end of efficient thinning. Visual resource consideration will apply on the slopes facing the pond.

MDIF&W has given consideration to a fisheries project in the outlet stream to the pond, which would involve installing a structure in the stream to increase the depth of the pond (as beaver activity does at certain times). This would provide a consistent deeper cold-water pool to support the native brook trout fishery.

Erosion issues associated with parking/camping and launching have been observed at the boat launch site.

### Management Recommendations for the Falls Pond Lot

#### **Recreation**

- The Bureau will continue to partner with NMW for the maintenance of the boat access and campsites.
- The Bureau will consider steps to address the erosion observed at the boat launch area on the pond.

#### **Wildlife**

- Collaborate with MDIF&W on potential fisheries project in Falls Brook pond outlet stream to benefit native brook trout, if MDIF&W elects to pursue the project.

#### **Timber Management**

- Coordinate with MDIF&W regarding any harvests planned for the DWA.

- Within the next two years, determine whether it remains worthwhile to conduct precommercial thinning in the sapling stands, and conduct the work if so.
- The Bureau will consult with MNAP when planning any timber management activity in the vicinity of the exemplary Northern White Cedar Swamp.

### **Resource Allocations for the Falls Pond Lot**

The following “allocations,” as shown on Map Figure 23 – Allagash and Falls Pond Lots Dominant Use Allocations, define general management objectives and direction for specific areas within the Unit. (Secondary allocations are not shown on the map.) See Appendix C for a description of designation criteria and management direction for the various allocation categories.

#### **Special Protection Areas (Dominant Allocation)**

- An area totaling approximately 30 acres encompassing the exemplary white cedar swamp north of the pond.

#### **Wildlife Management Areas (Dominant Allocation)**

- A total of about 475 acres as a dominant allocation within the major riparian zones and the zoned deer wintering area on the lot (note that the DWA encompasses much of the major riparian areas on the north end of the lot), the minor riparian zones associated with other wetlands; and the portions of Inland Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat (IWWBH) areas outside the above riparian zones.
- Remote Recreation is a secondary allocation in these riparian areas.

A secondary Timber Management allocation is also designated for the riparian buffer areas, subject to wildlife, recreation, and visual resource concerns.

#### **Remote Recreation Areas (Secondary Allocation)**

- Remote Recreation is a secondary allocation in the riparian areas with a Wildlife dominant allocation, as described above.

#### **Developed Recreation Areas (Dominant Allocation)**

- Developed Recreation is applied as a dominant allocation in the boat access and campsite area and along the road to the boat access and the primary road.

#### **Visual Consideration Areas (Secondary Allocation)**

- Visual Class I areas (generally areas where foreground views of natural features that may directly affect the enjoyment of viewers) will be defined as a secondary allocation on the ground for areas around the primary access road and the campsites/boat access and the pond shoreline.
- Visual Class II areas will be defined as a secondary allocation in areas beyond the immediate foreground, such as background views of forest canopies from ridgelines and background hillsides viewed from public use roads, or interior views beyond the Class I area likely to be seen from a road, trail or water body; on this lot, this includes timber management areas that may be visible from Falls Pond.

**Timber Management Areas (Dominant Allocation)**

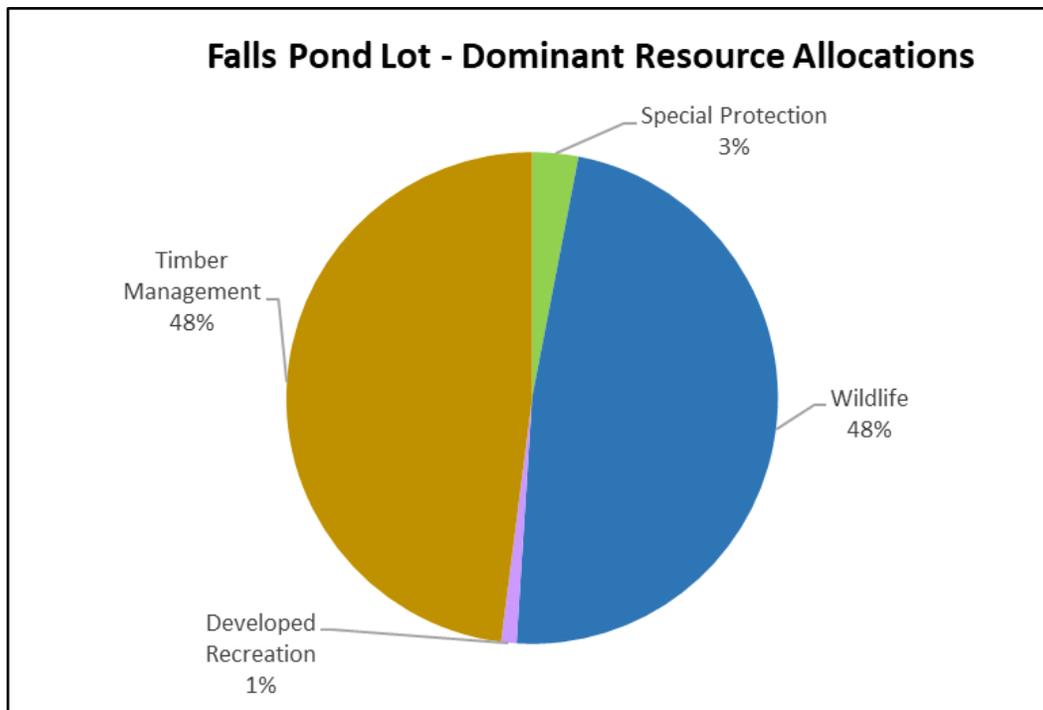
- All other areas not allocated above are designated Timber Management dominant (approximately 475 acres); includes most of the uplands on the north and east side of the lot, excepting the areas allocated to Wildlife. Recreation will be recognized as an important secondary use within the timber dominant allocation.

**Falls Pond Lot Allocation Summary**

Allocation	Number of Acres			%
	Dominant	Secondary	Total	
Special Protection	30	Not applicable	30	3.0
Wildlife Management	475	Not applicable	475	48.0
Remote Recreation	0	475	475	48.0
Visual Consideration – Class I	NA	70*	65	7.1
Visual Consideration – Class II	NA	30*	30	3.0
Developed Recreation – Class I	10	Not applicable	10	1.0
Timber Management	475	475	950	96.0

Note: Acreages are representations based on GIS metrics rounded to the nearest 5 acres, and do not sum to the total Unit acreage due to measuring error and limits of GIS precision.

\* Preliminary estimate, to be refined in the field as part of forest prescription process.



## **T14 R11 and T15 R11 Public Lots**

These two original public lots of approximately 500 acres each lie about 0.6 miles apart, both located on the boundary between the two townships (see Map Figure 24). The management roads on the lots are open to the public; however, the private roads leading to the lots are rough. No recreation facilities exist on either lot. No exemplary natural communities or rare plants have been identified on the lots, nor are there significant habitats such as deer wintering areas or waterfowl and wading bird habitats.

### *Character of the Land Base*

The T14 R11 lot is rolling hills with some minor drainages. The T15 R11 lot is quite hilly on its northerly half, with some inoperably steep land, and with much lesser slopes on the south half. All but 14 acres of the T15 R11 lot are within the AWW one-mile zone, while just 21 acres of the T14R11 lot are within that zone. About one-third of the T15 R11 lot is mapped at AWW Visible Area (see Appendix D).

### *Timber Resources*

The T14 R11 lot was heavily harvested in the early 1970s by the previous manager. The T15 R11 lot was also heavily harvested, taking place in the late 1970s at the height of the last spruce budworm outbreak. In 2006 the abutter crossed the poorly marked line and harvested 672 cords from T15 R11, mainly spruce and fir, from 43 acres of overstory removal. This trespass was settled amicably.

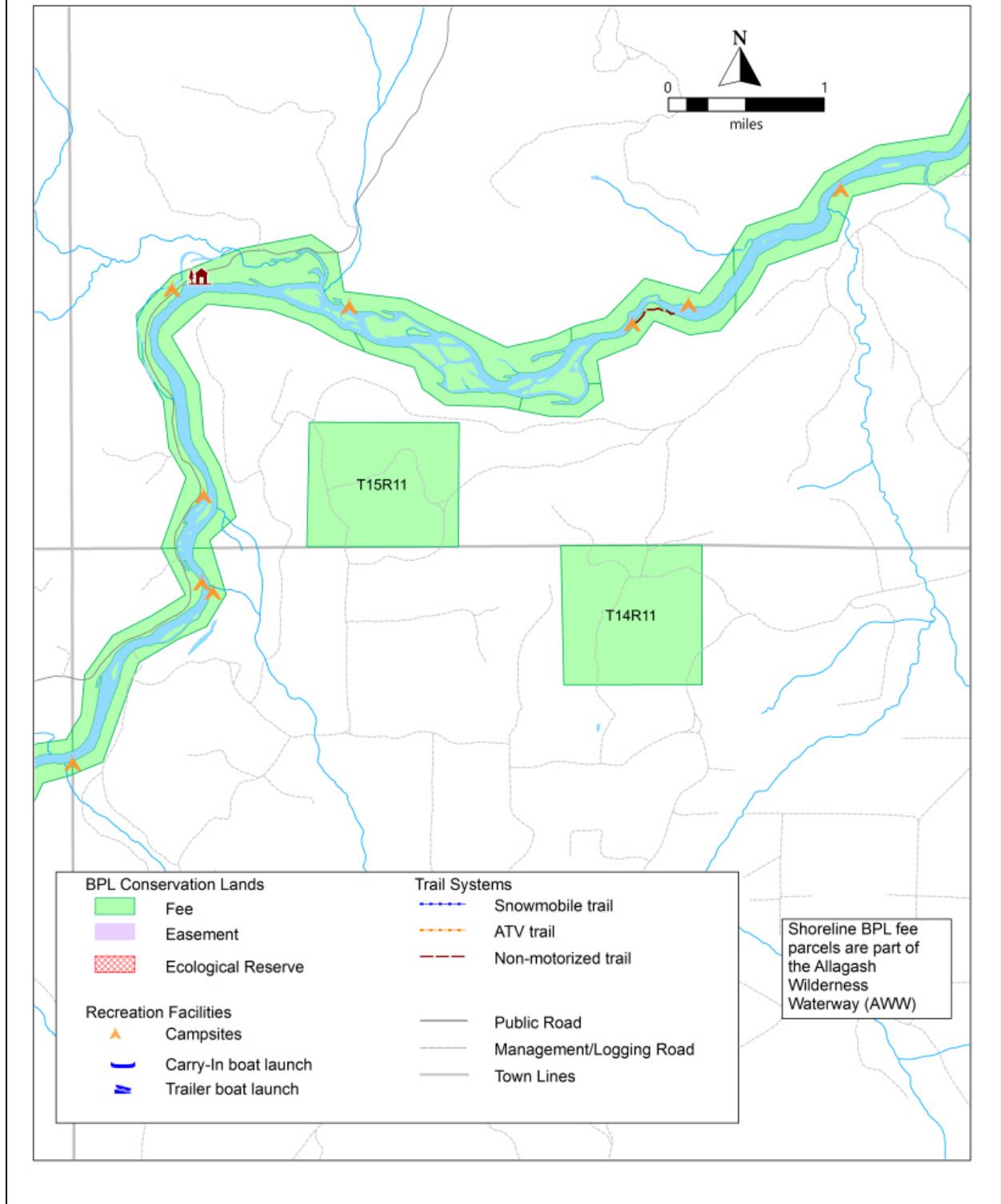
The Bureau conducted a harvest on both lots in 2011-12 that produced 6,400 cords, 53% softwoods and 47% hardwoods, the latter 92% pulpwood. This included selection and improvement harvests, and -- in some softwood stands -- overstory removal of unhealthy residuals from the 1970s harvests. Current timber types are 22% softwoods, 36% mixedwoods, and 42% hardwoods. Stocking volume is modest, at 15 cords per acre, but with abundant good quality saplings and small poles established by the earlier harvests. The species mix is 24% sugar maple, 16% each spruce and fir, 15% yellow birch, and about 10% each of cedar and red maple. Quality of the older trees is variable, some fair to good and some quite poor but with value for wildlife and as legacy trees.

Summer access to these tracts is limited to a road crossing the extreme southeast corner of the T14 R11 lot. The remainder of both lots is well accessed by winter roads. Because of this, future harvests will likely be winter only (as with 2011-12) even though half or more of the forest is on ground suitable for warm season operations, this because of the expense of upgrading to summer status many miles of end-of-the-line road.

### *Management Issues*

Heavy harvests in combination with spruce budworm have resulted in lower than average merchantable volume on these lots, while good quality saplings and small poles of desirable species are abundant on nearly all acres. Access to almost all acres is winter only, limiting both harvest flexibility and recreational use. However, this fact also allows avoidance of any noise issues during the AWW's high use season.

## T15 R11 & T14 R11 Lots - Access and Recreation Facilities



MAP FIGURE 24.

About half of the total acreage of the lots lie within the AWW one-mile zone and a portion of T15 R11 is in an AWW visual zone (See Appendix D for map of these zones), and will thus require contact with managers of the Waterway before timber harvests on those areas.

#### Management Recommendations for the T14 R11 and T15 R11 Lots

##### **Timber Management**

- Coordinate with AWW prior to timber harvests within the AWW visual zones.

##### **Resource Allocations for the T14 R11 and T14 R 11 Lots**

The following “allocations,” as shown on Map Figure 25 – T14 R 11 & T15 R11 Lots Dominant Use Allocations, define general management objectives and direction for specific areas within the Unit. (Secondary allocations are not shown on the map.) See Appendix C for a description of designation criteria and management direction for the various allocation categories.

##### **Wildlife Management Areas (Dominant Allocation)**

- A total of about 30 acres as a dominant allocation within the minor riparian zones on the lots. Remote Recreation is a secondary allocation in these riparian areas.

A secondary Timber Management allocation is also designated for the riparian buffer areas, subject to wildlife, recreation, and visual resource concerns.

##### **Remote Recreation Areas (Secondary Allocation)**

- Remote Recreation is a secondary allocation in the riparian areas with a Wildlife dominant allocation, as described above.

##### **Visual Consideration Areas (Secondary Allocation)**

- Visual Class II areas will be defined as a secondary allocation in areas beyond the immediate foreground, such as background views of forest canopies from ridgelines and background hillsides viewed from public use roads, or interior views beyond the Class I area likely to be seen from a road, trail or water body; on this lot, this includes timber management areas that are visible from the AWW.

##### **Timber Management Areas (Dominant Allocation)**

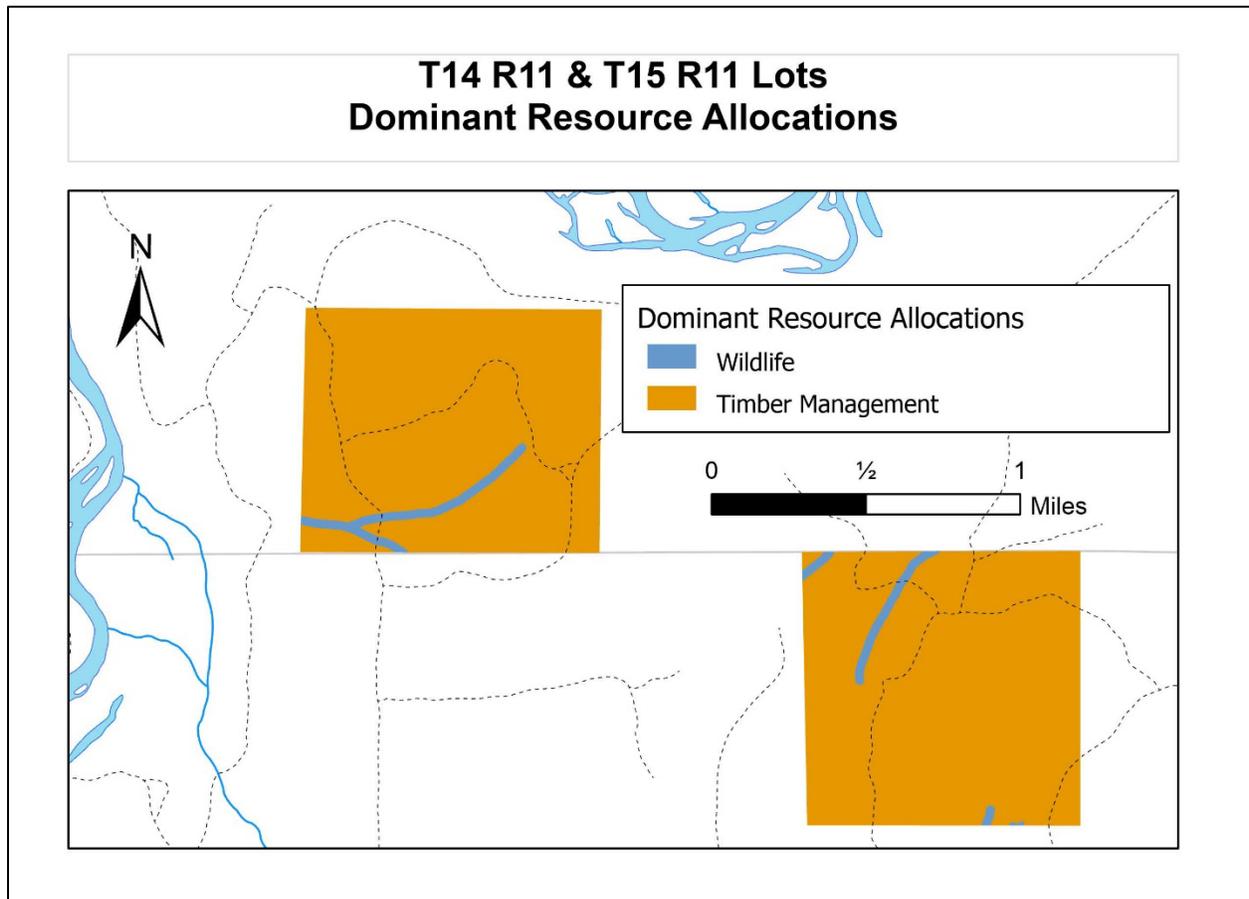
- All other areas not allocated above are designated Timber Management dominant (approximately 965 acres); includes all acres except the minor riparian areas allocated to Wildlife. Recreation will be recognized as an important secondary use within the timber dominant allocation.

### T14 R11 and T15 R11 Lots Allocation Summary

Allocation	Number of Acres			%
	Dominant	Secondary	Total	
Special Protection	0	Not applicable	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Wildlife Management	30	Not applicable	<b>30</b>	<b>3.0</b>
Remote Recreation	0	30	<b>30</b>	<b>3.0</b>
Visual Consideration – Class I	NA	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Visual Consideration – Class II	NA	165	<b>165</b>	<b>16.6</b>
Developed Recreation – Class I	0	Not applicable	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Timber Management	965	30	<b>995</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Acreages are representations based on GIS metrics rounded to the nearest 5 acres, and do not sum to the total Unit acreage due to measuring error and limits of GIS precision.

\* Preliminary estimate, to be refined in the field as part of forest prescription process.



MAP FIGURE 25.

## V. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are needed to track progress in achieving the management visions, goals and objectives for the Units, and effectiveness of particular approaches to resource management. Monitoring and evaluation will be conducted on wildlife, ecological, timber, and recreational management efforts in the St. John Uplands Region.

### Implementation of Plan Recommendations

The Bureau's Northern Region is responsible for implementing, accomplishing, and tracking the management recommendations put forth in the Plan. This generally includes determination of work priorities and budgets on an annual basis. The Bureau will document, on an annual basis, its progress in implementing the recommendations, its plans for the coming year, and adjustments to the timing of specific actions or projects as needed.

### Recreation

Data on recreational use is helpful in allocating staff and monetary resources for management of the Public Reserved Lands, and generally determining the public's response to the opportunities being provided. It also provides a measure of the effectiveness of any efforts to publicize these opportunities. Use data for the St. John Upland Region does not exist. Fees are not charged for the use of these lands, so this avenue for use data, available to the Bureau's Parks system, does not exist for the properties. However, indirect use data for individual management units may be gleaned from the day-use and campsite fees collected by NMW at their checkpoints. AWW use data and staff observations are also relevant for some units and sites, such as the Chamberlain parking areas and campsites, the Tramway portage trail, and the fire tower trails.

The Bureau will generally monitor recreation use to determine:

- (1) whether improvements to existing facilities or additional facilities might be needed and compatible with general objectives;
- (2) whether additional measures are needed to ensure that recreational users have a high quality experience (which could be affected by the numbers of users, and interactions among users with conflicting interests);
- (3) whether use is adversely affecting sensitive natural resources or the ecology of the area;
- (4) whether measures are needed to address unforeseen safety issues;
- (5) whether changing recreational uses and demands present the need or opportunity for adjustments to existing facilities and management; and
- (6) whether any changes are needed in the management of recreation in relation to other management objectives, including protection or enhancement of wildlife habitat and forest management.

### Wildlife

The Bureau, through its Wildlife Biologist and Technician, routinely conducts a variety of species monitoring activities statewide. The following are monitoring activities that are ongoing or anticipated for the St. John Uplands Region:

- (1) The Bureau will cooperate with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in the monitoring of game species, including deer, moose, and black bear;

- (2) The Bureau will identify and map significant wildlife habitat such as vernal pools and den trees in the process of developing its detailed forest management prescriptions. Working in cooperation with MNAP, the boundaries of any sensitive natural communities will also be delineated on the ground at this time. Any significant natural areas or wildlife habitat will then be subject to appropriate protections.

### **Timber Management**

Unit work plans, called prescriptions, are prepared by professional foresters in accordance with Bureau policies specified in its *Integrated Resource Policy*, with input from other staff. These documents are then peer-reviewed prior to approval. Preparation and layout of all timber sales involve field staff looking at every acre to be treated. Trees to be harvested are generally hand marked on a majority of these acres. Regional field staff provides regular on-site supervision of harvest activities, with senior staff visiting these sites on a less frequent basis. After the harvest is completed, roads, trails, and water crossings are discontinued as appropriate, although some management roads may remain open to vehicle travel. Forest managers assess harvest outcomes on all managed lands, including water quality protection and Best Management Practices (BMP's) utilized during harvest activities. Changes in stand type resulting from the harvest are then recorded so that the Bureau's GIS system can be updated.

Third party monitoring is done mainly through the forest certification programs of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). Each program conducts rigorous investigations of both our planning and on-ground practices. The Bureau's forest management program successfully underwent full recertification audits in December of 2011 and December of 2016 and will host annual surveillance audits until the next full audit in 2021. Most recently, concurrent annual surveillance audits were conducted in the North Region in October 2017.