

III. The Planning Context

The purpose of this Plan is to identify management allocations and recommendations for the public reserved lands in the region. The Plan has been developed taking into account the context of the region’s other conservation lands and recreation resources. The following narrative provides examples of the major conservation and recreation resources, but this is not comprehensive—the full spectrum of resources in this region is rich and diverse and will not be fully described here.

Conservation Lands and Public Recreation Resources in the Central Penobscot Region and Vicinity

The Central Penobscot Region is made up of two of the grandest public reserved lands in the state, the Nahmakanta and Seboeis Lake units, and several smaller public lots, all being within the viewshed of Katahdin in Baxter State Park. The Central Penobscot Region possesses unique characteristics and qualities for visitors pursuing an experience of solitude and quiet recreation as well as exciting and various recreation activities. Bureau management celebrates not only this diversity of recreation opportunity that the Central Penobscot Region has to offer, but its natural resource abundance and forest production, all of which support the local economy.

Acquisitions beginning in 2004 have linked the Seboeis Unit to the larger “Katahdin Forest” Conservation Project. The Seboeis Unit serves as the southern anchor to the largest contiguous block of conservation land in the State of Maine, over one-half million acres. From the southern tip of Seboeis Lake, one can travel north along the shoreline, through the Katahdin Forest easement lands to the Nahmakanta Public Reserved Lands, through the northerly section of the so-called “100-Mile Wilderness” to Baxter State Park and on to the Allagash Wilderness Waterway and be on State of Maine conserved land (fee or easement), every step of the way. Thus recent additions to Seboeis Unit have garnered great support from this landscape context and funds have come from a great variety of sources including the Land for Maine’s Future Program, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy program, the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, and the Trust for Public Land.

Baxter State Park

Baxter State Park, administered separately from the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (based upon the deed and endowment conditions set by former Governor Percival Baxter), is a 209,501 acre wilderness park with approximately 200 miles of hiking trails. It is home to Maine’s highest mountain, Katahdin, and in total has 18 peaks with elevations exceeding 3,000 feet. Numerous scenic lakes, ponds, streams, and wetlands dot the landscape. Fourteen percent of the Park (in the northwest corner) is within the *Scientific Forest Management Area*, an area managed as a showcase of sustainable forestry best practices.

Insert 11 X 17 “50 Mile Radius” Regional Context Map

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[BACK SIDE OF 11 X 17 REGIONAL CONTEXT MAP]

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The park is a Mecca for hikers and backpackers. The northern terminus of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (AT) is on the majestic Katahdin, which is Maine's highest peak at 5,270 feet. The park is popular because the AT is used by *through hikers* (those who hike the entire AT in one season) and *section hikers* (who complete portions of the AT on multiple trips), and by people who climb Katahdin as a day hike. The park maintains eight rustic, vehicle-access campgrounds, two hike-in campgrounds, and six primitive outlying sites (hike or paddle access only). Lean-tos and cabins are available in some of the campgrounds. Rock and ice climbing, and other winter activities are gaining popularity.

Fishing opportunities abound in the park, with everything from drive-to experiences on lakes, to remote ponds which require a day's hike to fish. Canoeing and kayaking is a popular activity and the park provides these boats at many ponds for rental. Hunting is available on about 25 percent of the park. Five lakes in the park allow motor boating (though two have a 10 HP limit). Day use opportunities for picnicking and swimming are abundant. The park staff offers educational programs for children and adults periodically in the summer. In wintertime, the Park Tote Road is open for snowmobiling on an ungroomed surface.

Hunt Farm Easement

The Hunt Farm Easement was acquired from Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. in March 2011. The Hunt Farm parcel lies directly east of the East Branch of the Penobscot River and is across the river from the Bureau's Wassataquoik Public Lot. The easement covers 2,849 acres, protects the ecological, wildlife and recreational values of the property and grants the public pedestrian access across the property. In addition, the easement gives the Bureau the right to allow, maintain and manage the current segments of ITS 85 and 83 on the property for snowmobile and ATV use. Granting the right for public ATV use is unusual for a conservation easement—in most easements the landowner retains the right to decide whether or not to allow ATVs.

Debsconeag Lakes Wilderness Area (TNC, 2011)

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) owns and manages the so-called Debsconeag Lakes Wilderness Area (DLWA), 46,271-acres sandwiched between the Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit and the Penobscot River Corridor and the southern boundary of Baxter State Park. This large parcel is almost exclusively managed as an ecological reserve. The DLWA contains the highest concentration of pristine, remote ponds in New England, as well as thousands of acres of mature forests. To date, 215 plant species have been documented in the DLWA. Wildlife inhabiting the property's rich forests includes pine marten, spruce grouse, moose, bobcat, black bear, and boreal chickadees. The lakes for which the DLWA is named are home to lake and brook trout and rare freshwater mussels. Bald eagles are a common sight along the shoreline of the West Branch of the Penobscot River.

Recreational uses allowed include hunting and fishing, camping at designated sites, hiking, backpacking, paddling and snowmobiling. Vehicles are limited to designated roads and snowmobiles are restricted to designated trails. ATVs and bicycles are

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prohibited. DLWA shares two trails in common with the Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit--the Appalachian Trail runs through the DLWA after traveling north through the Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit, and ITS 85/86 snowmobile trail crosses from DLWA into the Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit south of Third and Fourth Debsconeag Lakes. Remote paddling is available on the Debsconeag Lakes, which are linked via portage paths.

The Appalachian National Scenic Trail

The Appalachian National Scenic Trail (AT) is a 2,181 mile long footpath, stretching from Springer Mountain in Georgia to Katahdin in Maine. Completed in 1937, the AT is enjoyed by *through hikers*, *section hikers*, and *day hikers*. Shelters and campsites are available throughout the length of the trail, which also passes through or near many towns and cities where hikers can re-supply. The AT is managed by the National Park Service, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, over 30 local AT clubs, the USDA Forest Service, and the other public agencies that host the trail (including the Bureau of Parks and Lands). The Appalachian Trail Conservancy, based in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, works to protect the trail and the trail corridor and coordinates the work of the local AT clubs, among other trail-wide management contributions. In Maine, the vast majority of the AT is managed by the Maine Appalachian Trail Club (MATC).

Maine Appalachian Trail Club (MATC, 2010)

The Maine Appalachian Trail Club (MATC) began in 1935, and is a volunteer, non-profit corporation that manages and maintains 267 miles of the AT in Maine, its facilities and corridor. Its responsibilities include trail design, construction and maintenance, and monitoring of corridor activities. The MATC coordinates volunteer opportunities, including: work trips, a trail maintainer program, and a corridor monitor program. The MATC hosts “care-taker/ridgerunners” in four locations. The MATC also publishes “The Official Appalachian Trail Guide to Maine.”

In the Central Penobscot Region, the AT runs through the Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit. Beginning at the *T1 R10 WELS/T1 R11 WELS* township line, the AT travels along Nahmakanta Stream to the confluence of the outlet of the Murphy Ponds and Rainbow Stream, before continuing north into the Debsconeag Lakes Wilderness Area. In the Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit, the land surrounding the AT—the Appalachian Trail Corridor—is owned by the National Park Service (NPS), and on-the-ground management of the AT is performed jointly by MATC and the Bureau under an agreement with the NPS. The Bureau manages recreation on this 1,923 acre parcel, which also includes a boating facility at the south end of Nahmakanta Lake and campsites on the east and west shores of the lake. The entire shoreland around Nahmakanta Lake is owned by the NPS, including a 103 acre lot¹ that is leased to the proprietors of “Nahmakanta Lake Camps” which is located on the north end of the 1,024 acre waterbody. This AT Corridor section is subject to a conservation easement in which the Bureau is a third-party holder of the easement. Only the developed shoreline portion of the leased lot is within the AT Corridor conservation easement area.

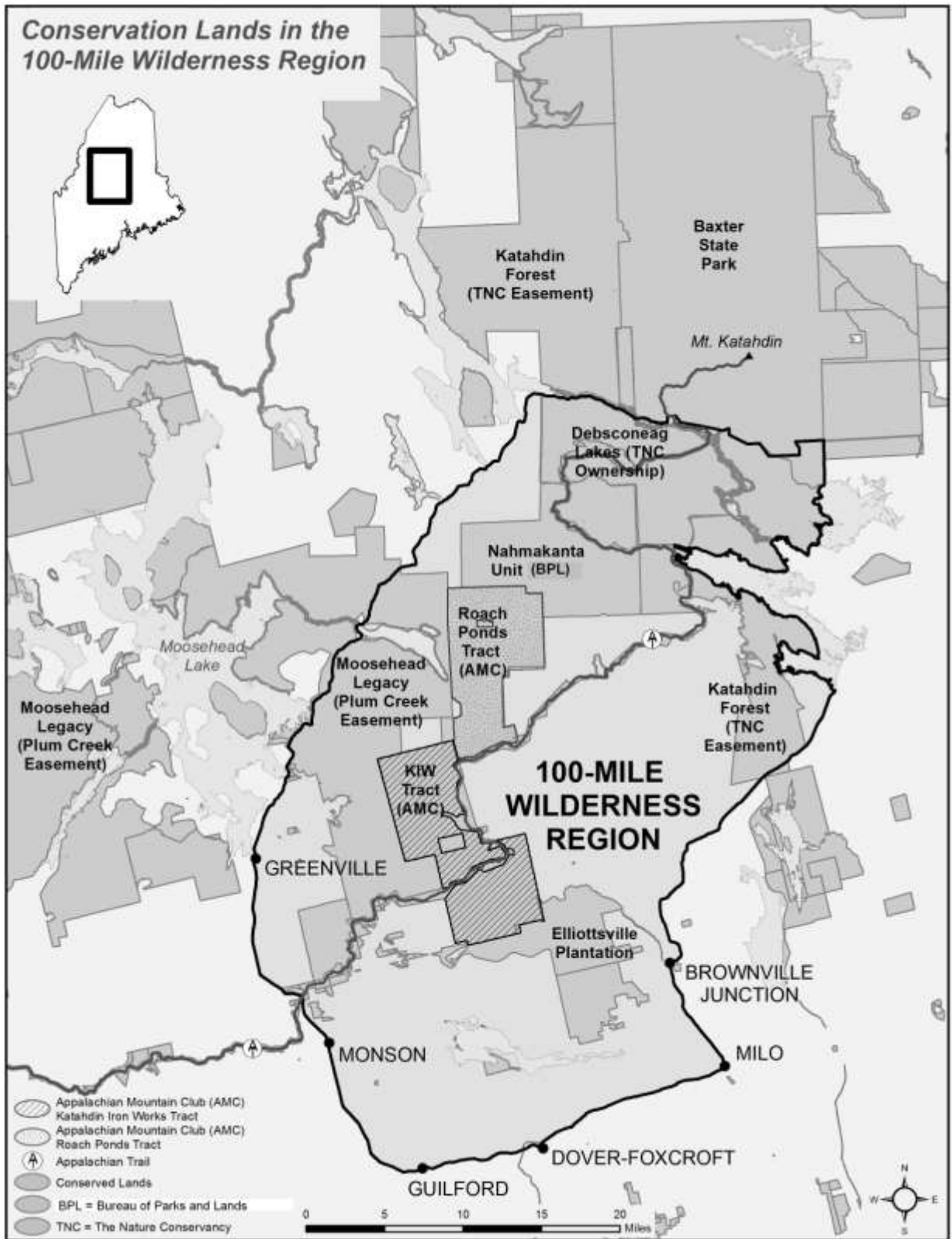
¹ The 103 acres were purchased by the National Park Service in 2004.



100-Mile Wilderness Region

The 100-Mile Wilderness Region is a popular name referring to the section of the AT and the land surrounding it between Abol Bridge, just south of Baxter State Park, and Route 16 north of the town of Monson. This section is generally considered the wildest section of the AT, as it is crossed only by graveled logging roads and does not cross through towns with opportunities for lodging and supplies. It consists of a narrow corridor of protected wilderness around the AT, which is surrounded by large tracts of land that have remained largely undeveloped due to ownership by timber landowners. The Appalachian Mountain Club, the Bureau (the Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit) and The Nature Conservancy have become recent landowners in the 100-Mile Wilderness Region.

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Maine Woods Initiative—AMC’s Conservation Initiative in the 100 Mile Wilderness Region (AMC, 2011)

The Maine Woods Initiative (MWI) is the Appalachian Mountain Club’s strategy for land conservation in the 100-Mile Wilderness region. The MWI combines outdoor recreation, resource protection, and sustainable forestry and community partnerships. The strategy represents the most significant investment in conservation and recreation lands in the AMC’s 130-year history. Thus far, the MWI has resulted in 66,500 acres of AMC-owned conservation land—the Katahdin Iron Works and Roach Ponds Tracts. The MWI seeks to address economic needs of the northern Maine woods region by supporting local forest products jobs (sustainable forest management occurs on the properties) and traditional recreation (hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing are available to the public) and creating new multi-day recreational experiences for visitors (four sporting camps are on the properties, offering camp-to-camp hiking and skiing on trails also open to the general public).

Katahdin Iron Works (KIW) Tract

AMC acquired the 37,011 Katahdin Iron Works Tract (KIW Tract) in December of 2003. This property is located between Moosehead Lake and Gulf Hags and straddles the AT as it crosses the Barren-Chairback Range, encompassing 16 great ponds and several mid- and low-elevation mountains. Approximately 10,000 acres in the northern part of the property is designated as *ecological reserve/non-motorized backcountry recreation area*. The remainder of the property is managed for a combination of sustainable timber, non-motorized recreation, snowmobile use and sporting camps. Hunting and fishing are also popular traditional activities that continue today. The KI Road, Katahdin Iron Works Road, runs through the property, which connects Greenville to Route 11 north of Brownville Junction (also used as ITS 110 snowmobile trail).

There is an extensive non-motorized trail system and a series of campsites and hiking shelters open to the public. AMC operates two sporting camps within the KIW Tract—the Gorman Chairback Lodge and Cabins and the Little Lyford Lodge and Cabins—both originally established in the late 19th century, and recently renovated. Groomed and un-groomed ski trails link the sporting camps with one another and other destinations.

The State of Maine holds a conservation easement on the KIW Tract, monitored by the Bureau of Parks and Lands, which guarantees public pedestrian access to the property at all times. This easement was acquired with U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy funds and matching funds from the Lands for Maine’s Future program. Designated vehicular access roads are included in a Recreation Plan required by the conservation easement, which includes a commitment to work with snowmobile clubs to approve trails for use and install signs along these trails. AMC has rights to retain the two existing sporting camps and to develop two additional full-service camps. The Ecological Reserve portion of the KIW Tract has a management plan (as a stipulation of the easement) which authorizes public pedestrian access and describes the natural communities, hydrology and other features of the Reserve, and AMC’s commitment to allow ecological processes to proceed, and maintain the land in a ‘forever wild’ state.

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Roach Ponds Tract

In late 2009, AMC purchased the Roach Ponds Tract to connect with their 37,000-acre Katahdin Iron Works property. Second Roach, Third Roach and Trout Ponds are among the lakes on the property. The Roach Ponds Tract expands on the recreational opportunities provided by the KIW Tract and includes a trail link to a privately-owned sporting camp, West Branch Pond Camps, and AMC-owned Medawisla Wilderness Lodge & Cabins, both part of the lodge to lodge skiing experience developed by AMC.

The State of Maine holds a conservation easement on the Roach Pond Tract, linked to and prompted by approval of the Plum Creek Concept Plan by the Land Use Regulation Commission in 2010. The easement guarantees non-exclusive pedestrian access for primitive recreation, allows for sustainable timber harvesting, and allows operations of up to three sporting camps (including the existing two), and development of a limited number of remote cabins and backcountry huts. The conservation easement describes a snowmobile trail easement (mainly on the Nahmakanta Road encompassing the ITS 85/86 trail) in Shawtown Township, which was triggered by the final approval of the Plum Creek Moosehead Region Concept Plan in early 2012. The conservation easement also allows the AMC to work with the Bureau on allowing an ATV trail north of the Nahmakanta Road onto the Nahmakanta Public Lands.

KI-Jo Mary Multiple Use Forest

KI-Jo Mary Forest is a region of approximately 175,000 acres of privately owned, commercial forest, located between Millinocket, Greenville and Brownville. The KI-Jo Mary Forest, managed by North Maine Woods, Inc., was formed through a consortium of forest landowners in 1986 to manage public demand for outdoor recreation on their lands. Within its boundaries, the KI-Jo Mary Forest covers 30 miles of the Appalachian Trail, the Gulf Hagas Reserve, the Hermitage, the east and west branches of the Pleasant River, White Brook, more than 50 lakes and ponds, and over 100 miles of brooks, streams and rivers. The KI-Jo Mary Forest provides roughly 70 primitive campsites. Hunting and trapping, paddling, fishing, and hiking are allowed, as is snowmobiling (on designated trails) and dog-mushing. Horse or other pack animals are generally not allowed within the KI-Jo Mary Forest. ATVs and mountain bikes are prohibited, though the AMC Maine Woods Inc. Recreation Plan lists mountain biking as a recreational activity. The KI-Jo Mary Forest manages the Jo Mary and Henderson checkpoints on Jo Mary Road, one of the two vehicular access routes to the Nahmakanta Unit.

Penobscot River Corridor

Located in the heart of Maine's undeveloped forest land, the Penobscot River Corridor (PRC), a section of the West Branch of the Penobscot River, provides outstanding opportunities for remote canoe trips, fishing excursions, primitive camping, and whitewater rafting (provided mostly by commercial operators). The PRC is a water trail with camping sites operated as part of the State Parks system. The river trips traditionally start at one of several locations. Both Roll Dam, located on Maine Public Reserved Lands in Seboomook TWP, and Lobster Stream in Northeast Carry TWP are frequent starting points for river trippers. These two access points, along with other points on the Upper West Branch are accessed by traveling from either Millinocket or Greenville. The

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majority of the corridor was established through a conservation easement granted to the State by Great Northern Paper Company in 1981. Managed by the Bureau in cooperation with several landowners, the PRC provides water access recreation along more than 67 miles of river and 70 miles of lake frontage. Some of this frontage is owned by the State of Maine, but the majority is owned privately, with the State holding conservation easements which limit development within 500 feet of the water's edge, and grants the Bureau the right to manage recreation.

The 'Lower West Branch' of the PRC is closest to the Central Penobscot Region. This section of river lies between Debsconeag Lakes Wilderness Area and Baxter State Park. This section begins below Chesuncook Lake, where the River enters the dramatic Ripogenus Gorge, a two-mile granite-walled canyon. A popular rafting trip begins at McKay Station, just below the Ripogenus Lake dam, which takes advantage of the challenging whitewater of the gorge. The Lower West Branch of the PRC continues downstream offering a combination of flatwater and whitewater. Past Debsconeag Falls the river becomes calmer with some scenic beaches.

Katahdin Forest Conservation Easement

The State of Maine holds a conservation easement on 194,751 acres of forestland southeast and west of Baxter State Park known as the Katahdin Forest Conservation Easement. The current landowner is Katahdin Forest Management, LLC. A portion abuts the Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit east of Tumbledown Dick Stream. The easement was first acquired by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) from Great Northern Paper Company in 2002. The State of Maine purchased the easement from TNC in 2006 using Land for Maine's Future and U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy funds.

The purpose of the easement is to protect the property's significant recreational, wildlife and ecological values while allowing the property to be managed as a working forest which provides a continual, long term source of forest products. Development and commercial uses (other than for forest management and commercial recreational guiding) are very limited. Protection of rare and endangered species and rare and exemplary natural communities, significant wildlife values and recreational values are part of the purpose of the easement. The easement guarantees public access for traditional, non-intensive outdoor recreation, which is defined as non-motorized recreation, but designates roads on which the public can drive vehicles to gain access for recreation. The landowner retains the right to allow additional motorized use at their discretion. Currently a variety of snowmobile trails traverse the easement lands, and most recently an ATV connector trail was authorized by the landowner to connect Millinocket with the State's Seboeis Public Reserved Lands Unit.

East Branch Sanctuary

The East Branch Sanctuary comprises over 74,000 acres east of Baxter State Park which is owned by Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. (EPI). EPI is a private foundation begun by Roxanne Quimby, former owner of the Burt's Bees Company. The East Branch Sanctuary, in the shadow of Katahdin, includes portions of four major river watersheds—Wassataquoik Stream, Sandy Stream, Seboeis River and the East Branch of the

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Penobscot River. A Natural Resource Inventory has been performed and many rare and uncommon plant species, exemplary natural communities and geological and biological diversity are among the property's greatest assets. The highest summits are Deasey and Lunksoos Mountains, both approaching 2,000 feet providing spectacular views of Katahdin (Elliotsville Plantation Inc. 2011).

The land is available to the public through landowner permission for backcountry camping, hiking, cross-country skiing, fishing and boating. Snowmobiling is on designated trails—ITS 85/86 and 83 pass through the property. The East Branch of the Penobscot River is used by groups and individuals canoeing and kayaking to campsites along the river in the East Branch Sanctuary. A section of International Appalachian Trail (IAT) has recently opened on the property, with three associated lean-tos. The IAT is a trail system envisioned to connect Katahdin with Mt. Carleton and Mt. Jacques Cartier in Quebec and New Brunswick.

The Katahdin Iron Works, the Hermitage and Gulf Hagas

A popular day use adventure is accessed from the KI Road (*Katahdin Iron Works Road*) shortly after it leaves Route 11 in Brownville. Visitors can view the site of the former Katahdin Iron Works Historic Site and pass through the Hermitage while hiking the Gulf Hagas loop trail.

Katahdin Iron Works (KIW) State Historic Site

A blast furnace and charcoal kiln are all that remain of Maine's only 19th Century iron works operation—Katahdin Iron Works—which ran from 1843 to 1890. Made possible by an extensive iron ore deposit on nearby Ore Mountain and readily available wood supply, the KIW at its peak produced 2,000 tons of pig iron annually. Sixteen (16) beehive kilns burned wood into charcoal, then the charcoal was used in the blast furnace to separate iron from other ore materials and produce 80 pound pig iron ingots, which were sent away by railroad to be sold for farm tools, machinery, and railroad car wheels. A town with houses for 200 workers sprung up nearby and the Silver Lake Hotel was built to serve tourists who were attracted to the area's natural beauty, local springs and easy railroad access.

Exhaustion of the local wood supply and outside competition contributed to the demise of KIW in 1890, and the abandonment of the settlement. Today, the blast furnace and one of the charcoal kilns are preserved as a State Historic Site which is open to the public.

Gulf Hagas

A popular Maine day hike is available northwest of Brownville near the AT. Gulf Hagas—sometimes referred to as the 'Grand Canyon of Maine'—is a series of waterfalls and pools, and a gorge along the West Branch of the Pleasant River. Approachable from an eight-mile loop trail that branches off from the AT, visitors can view the falls from several vistas, and swim in many pools. Screw Auger falls may be the best known and most easily accessible for those who do not want to hike the entire loop. Gulf Hagas is also designated as a *National Natural Landmark* and lies within the National Park Service's ownership along the AT.

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The Hermitage

Hikers also have the opportunity to walk amongst the giant white pines of *The Hermitage* while hiking to the Gulf Hagas trail. This site, designated as a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service, is home to one of the few undisturbed, old-growth white pine stands remaining in New England. The 35 acre forest is on NPS property and is open to the public.

Peaks-Kenny State Park

Encompassing the south cove of Sebec Lake north of Dover-Foxcroft, Peaks-Kenny State Park offers day visitors and campers a peaceful, wooded setting in which to enjoy boating, fishing, swimming, hiking and picnicking. With 56 sites set among stately trees and large glacial boulders near the lake, the campground fosters quiet and private enjoyment of a beautiful natural setting. The 839-acre park encompasses more than a mile of shoreline along Sebec Lake. A sandy swimming beach offers lovely views across Sebec Lake to Borestone Mountain, and a grassy area with playground adjoins the beach, providing picnic tables and barbecue grills enjoyed by both camping parties and day visitors. Peaks-Kenny State Park offers a 10-mile interconnected network of hiking trails where visitors can choose from hikes ranging from half a mile, to five and a half miles. The State Park is open to boaters and swimmers through the warm weather months, followed by hunters in October and November and ice anglers and snowmobilers in mid-winter. In 2010, this park became one of Maine's few State Parks to host a "Percent for Art" installation, a series of picnic tables built into trees and boulders by artist Wade Kavanaugh.

Snowmobiling

The Central Penobscot Region hosts hundreds of miles of snowmobile trails—both statewide Interconnected Trail System (ITS) trails and regional and local club trails. These trails contribute to the economies of both the Moosehead Lake region and the Katahdin region—both areas which are heavily reliant on tourism. ITS 85/86, which passes through the Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit, connects the Moosehead Lake region with the Katahdin region. These snowmobile trails are located on public and private lands, and are supported in part by the Bureau's Snowmobile Program which administers a grant program to help fund trail work, grooming and other needs. Grants cover approximately 300 miles of trail on or adjacent to the Nahmakanta Unit. Private landowners are critical partners, as are the numerous snowmobile clubs, who volunteer to groom trails, build bridges, and maintain signs, among other tasks.

Interconnected Trail System (ITS) 85/86

ITS 85 and ITS 86 merge into a single trail (labeled ITS 85/86) for about 200 miles in the Moosehead Lake and Katahdin regions. ITS 85 is a major North-South route, leaving Augusta and travelling north to Madawaska and the New Brunswick border, with a total length of approximately 470 miles. ITS 86 is a major West-East route—travelling from Coburn Gore on the Maine/Quebec border, east to Houlton on the Maine/New Brunswick border, with some sledders continuing across border checkpoints for international travel. The total length of ITS 86 is approximately 360 miles.

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ITS 85/86 is probably the most heavily used trail in the region, with as many as several thousand sleds passing through per weekend under good conditions.

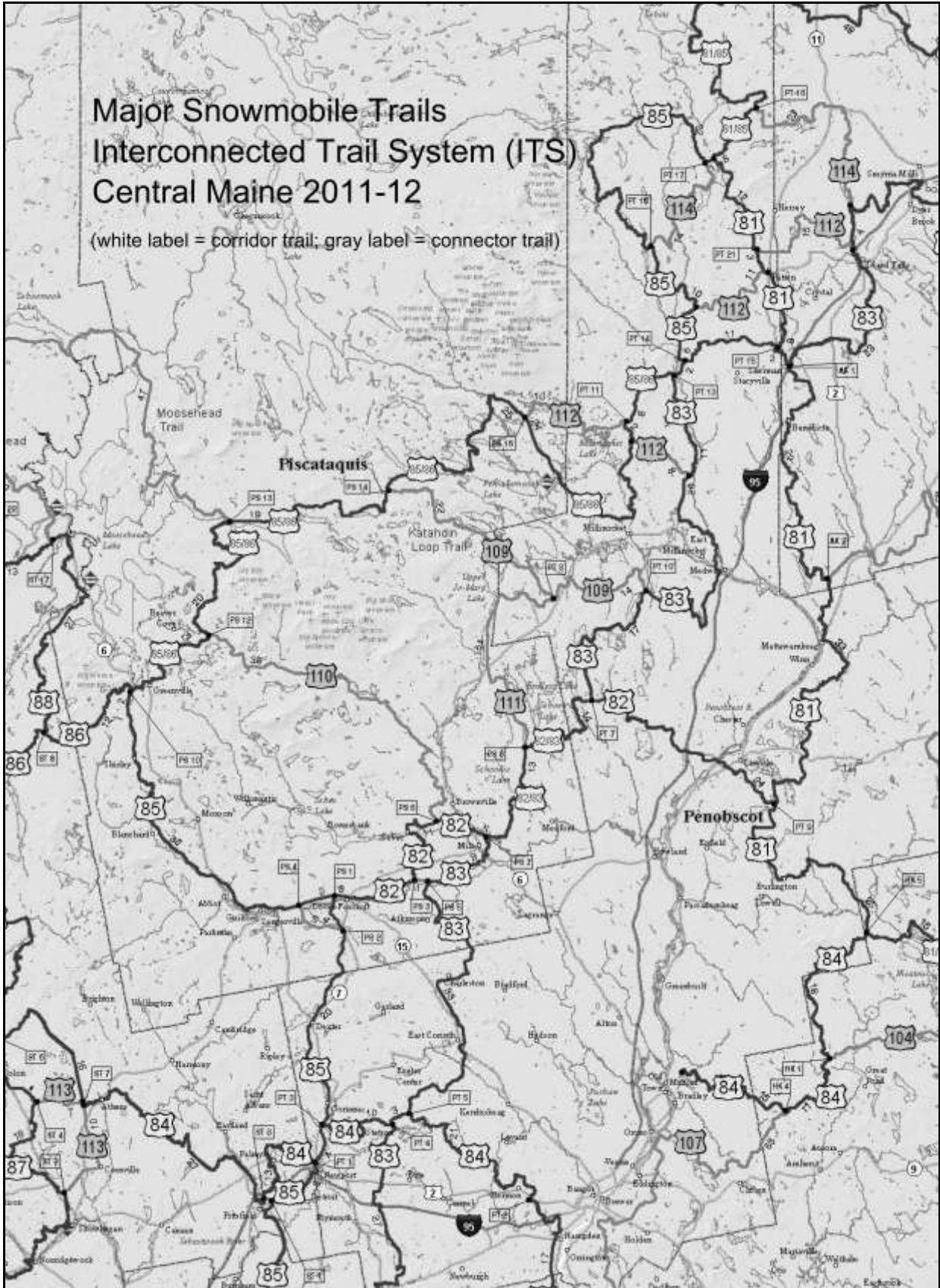
Snowmobile Clubs in the Central Penobscot Region

Club Name	Based in town of:
Brownville Snowmobile Club	Brownville
Cold Smoke Riders	Atkinson
Devils Sledders	Milo
Ebeemee Snowmobile Club	Brownville
Moosehead Riders	Greenville
Chesuncook Snowmobile Club	Greenville
North East Carry Snowmobile Riders	Rockwood
Piscataquis Valley Snowmobile Club	Dover-Foxcroft
Ragged Riders	T2 R13 WELS
E-ville Riders	Elliotsville TWP
Kokadjo Roach Riders	Kokadjo
Lincoln Snow Hounds	Lincoln
Bowlin-Mattagamon Snowmobile Club	Patten
East Branch Sno Rovers	Medway
Jo Mary Riders	Millinocket
Twin Pines Snowmobile Club	Millinocket
Twin Rivers Snowmobile Club	Howland
Rockabema Snow Rangers	Patten
LA Sledders	Alton
Northern Timber Cruisers	Millinocket

Katahdin Loop Trail (KLT)

The Katahdin Loop Trail (KLT) is a popular trail for visitors to the Millinocket area as well as local residents. Sledders can begin their journey in Medway and travel south to Medunkeunk Lake on ITS 83, then head west to Nollesemic Lake using the Rockabema Road for much of the way. The KLT continues west on ITS 109, crosses Route 11, and skirts the shore of South Twin Lake. Heading northwest, the KLT passes by Middle Jo-Mary Lake and enters the Nahmakanta Unit on its eastern side near Tumbledown Dick Stream. In Nahmakanta, the KLT travels east (jointly with ITS 86) and skirts the south shore of Nahmakanta and Fourth Debsconeag Lakes, and leaves the Unit travelling between First, Second and Third Debsconeag Lakes to the Golden Road. The trail then leaves ITS 86 and travels briefly into Baxter State Park’s southernmost end, then heads east, passing Millinocket Lake and leading back to Medway on ITS 83. Stunning views of Katahdin make this trail a popular destination. Destination resort businesses, and many other businesses in Millinocket, East Millinocket and Medway, support and benefit from the KLT.

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Other Regional Snowmobile Trails and Destinations

Another regional trail that is used for backcountry riding connects Millinocket and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. Developed in the 1960’s, this trail lies north of the Unit originating from Millinocket and travelling northwest to Second and Third Debsconeag Lakes, then to Rainbow Lake, Chesuncook Pond and Chesuncook Lake. Like many of the local trails in the region, this trail eventually empties into the ITS 85/86 system. In this instance, a short section of this more primitive backcountry trail enters the Nahmakanta Unit from the north at the Murphy Ponds.

Many sledders travel from the Millinocket area to Pittston Farm and Chesuncook Village (both a considerable distance from the plan area, to the north and west) and back, using various trails to create a long-distance loop experience. Many riders make use of the overnight accommodations and associated amenities at historic Pittston Farm. Riders also travel north from East Millinocket to Shin Pond and back on ITS trails, making a loop around the Shin Pond area on a club trail called the Sugarloaf Loop.

All-terrain Vehicle (ATV) Riding ²

ATV use in areas surrounding the Central Penobscot Region and within the public lands is increasing and subsequent development of new trails is on the rise, especially in creating critical links to destination trails from Brownville to Millinocket.

ATV Clubs in the Central Penobscot Region

Club Name	Based in the town of:
Bodfish ATV Riders	Elliotsville Township
KI Riders	Brownville Junction
Moosehead ATV Riders	Greenville Junction
Narrow Gauge Riders	Monson
Northern Lights ATV Club	Kokadjo
LaGrange Railroad Riders	LaGrange
Northern Timber Cruisers	Millinocket
Patten ATV Club	Patten
Penobscot Off Road Riders	Lincoln
Seboeis Stream ATV Club	Howland

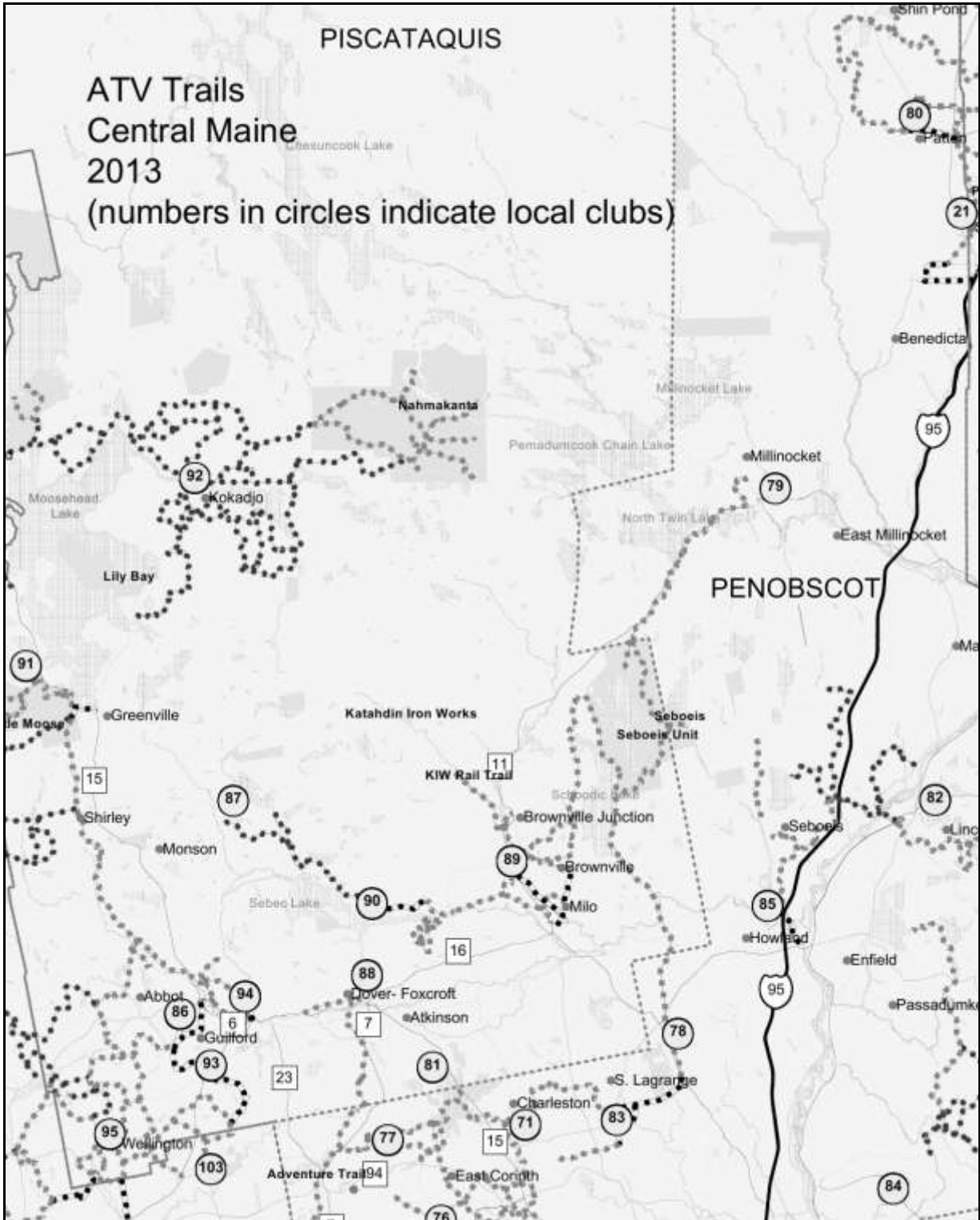
Trail System—Millinocket to Seboeis Lake and Points South

A new ATV, mountain bike, and snowmobile trail connects downtown Millinocket to the trail system at the Seboeis Public Lands Unit, and with State acquisition continues south and west to Schoodic Lake. The trail allows a connection from downtown Millinocket to Milo, Brownville, Dover-Foxcroft and other points south and west. This trail system is Millinocket’s first ATV network trail and a connector to points south. This trail connectivity promises to contribute significantly to the economy. The existing trail system at the Seboeis Public Lands Unit includes 12 miles of designated trail on shared-use roads that ATVers can enjoy. A portion of the new ATV trails within the unit

² This section describes ATV trails—some of which are also open to snowmobiles.

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follows the ITS 82/83 snowmobile trail, discussed previously, and an ATV trail has also been designated along several miles of ITS 111 along the west boundary of the property, connecting to a loop around neighboring Schoodic Lake.



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As part of this new trail system, a recreational bridge over the Penobscot River was built in 2009 just southwest of Millinocket. A combination of federal grants, Maine Department of Transportation funds, town funds and countless volunteer hours have gone into the development of the bridge and trail system.

Kokadjo ATV Trail Network

A network of ATV trails radiate from Kokadjo where riders can travel east to the Nahmakanta Unit and use trails within the Unit or northwest to Moosehead Lake and Day's Academy Grant Public Lands. The trail network also extends south along the shore of First Roach Pond to Prong Pond. These ATV trails provide opportunities for users to enjoy lodging, camping and rentals benefitting the local businesses serving trail users in and proximate to Kokadjo. The *Northern Lights ATV Club* in Kokadjo works with the Bureau, AMC, Plum Creek and others in maintaining this trail system. A connection to Greenville's ATV trail system is in the planning stages.

LaGrange to Medford Trail

The LaGrange to Medford Trail is an ATV and snowmobile trail that also serves as a trail for walking, biking, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, and picnicking. This 16 mile south/north trail of hard graveled surface runs from South LaGrange, through Medford Center and ends at the Piscataquis River in Lake View Plantation. The trail follows an old rail bed of the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad. Trail enthusiasts can also enjoy views of meadows, wetlands, farmlands and forests while riding.

Sherman to Patten Trail

The Sherman to Patten Trail is a six mile graveled surface trail located in the towns of Sherman, Crystal, and Patten and is used by ATVs and snowmobiles. It provides a direct north/south connection between the towns of Sherman and Patten. It is also used for walking, biking, cross-country skiing and horseback riding. This trail is somewhat remote, and meanders through open fields, forests, and along the perimeter of Thousand Acre Bog.

Katahdin Iron Works Rail Trail

The Bureau acquired approximately five miles of an abandoned railbed and converted it into a multi-use trail that is open to ATVs, snowmobiles, horseback riding, hiking, cross-country skiing, etc. The trail follows the west side of the West Branch of the Pleasant River from Brownville Junction and terminates at the Katahdin Iron Works Township town line. The Bureau also acquired over nine acres of land which has 2600+ feet of frontage on the river. The rail trail runs through this parcel, which affords the public more recreational opportunities (camping, picnicking, water access, etc.) while providing a river protection buffer.

Boating

An abundance of boating opportunities both motorized and non-motorized can be found in the Region. The Bureau's Boating Facilities Program provides boat access facilities throughout the State and owns and sponsors many access points in the Central Penobscot Region and its surrounding environs.

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Boating Facilities in the Central Penobscot Region

Minor Civil Bureau	Waterbody	Type of Ramp	Ownership
T1 R11 WELS	Nahmakanta Lake*	Hand Carry	NPS
T1 R11 WELS	4th Debsconeag Lake*	Hand Carry	DOC
T1 R11 WELS	Wadleigh Pond*	Hand Carry	DOC
Rainbow Twp	Pollywog Pond*	Hand Carry	DOC
T4 R9 NWP	Seboeis Lake**	Trailerable	DOC
T3 R9 NWP	Endless Lake**	Trailerable	DOC

State-Owned or State-Sponsored Boating Facilities Nearby the Central Penobscot Region

Minor Civil Bureau	Waterbody	Type of Ramp	Ownership
T2 R10 WELS	W. Branch Penobscot River Nevers Corner	Hand Carry	DOC
T2 R10 WELS	Debsconeag Deadwater	Trailerable	DOC
T4 Indian Purchase	So. Twin Lake	Trailerable	Brookfield Power
Long A Twp	Cedar Lake	Trailerable	Katahdin Forest
Lake View Plantation	Schoodic Lake	Trailerable	DIFW
Milo	Sebec River	Trailerable	Town
Medford	Piscataquis River	Hand Carry	DIFW
Howland	Piscataquis River	Trailerable	DIFW
Howland	Penobscot River	Trailerable	Town
Howland	Old Farm Pond	Hand Carry	DIFW
Seboeis Plantation	South Branch Lake	Trailerable	Plantation
T1 R9 WELS	Ambejejus Lake	Trailerable	Brookfield Power
T1 R9 WELS	Millinocket Lake	Trailerable	Brookfield Power

*On Nahmakanta Public Lands

**On Seboeis Public Lands

Motorboating

Many of the trailerable boat access sites proximate to the Central Penobscot Region are popular for motor boaters seeking fishing opportunities, accessing camps, enjoying recreational boating, or swimming and sightseeing. Some of the sites are fairly heavily used, such as the Millinocket Lake and Ambejejus Lake trailered boat facilities, which are easily accessed from Millinocket via the Millinocket Lake Road or the Golden Road.

Canoeing and Kayaking

The area surrounding the Central Penobscot Region is rich in canoeing and kayaking opportunity and has a long tradition of paddling heritage. The rivers, streams and lakes in this region were used as “highways” by native people for thousands of years and later gained notoriety partly from the writings of Henry David Thoreau, who canoed extensively in the region and wrote about his travels in *The Maine Woods*. Generations of "sports" came to have guides lead them as they paddled, fished, and camped on these waterways. Such traditions continue today.

In addition to single destinations such as a particular pond, there are interconnected paddling routes enabling paddlers to enjoy multi-day camping trips. For example, it is

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possible to paddle from the West Branch of the Penobscot River near Seboomook Lake, to Chesuncook Lake, up to Umbazooksus Lake and the Mud Pond Carry, into Chamberlain Lake, down to Telos Lake, and out the Telos Cut and Webster Stream to Grand Lake Matagamon and the East Branch of the Penobscot River. This linkage of over 75 miles follows much of Henry David Thoreau's Maine canoe travels and connects the Penobscot River Corridor, the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, Baxter State Park, and the East Branch of the Penobscot River.

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail (NFCT), a 740 mile inland paddling trail tracing historic travel routes across New York, Vermont, Quebec, New Hampshire, and Maine, runs through the planning area on its way towards its eastern terminus in Fort Kent. Perhaps most significant to the region considered in this plan is the section of the trail located in the Penobscot River drainage. The NFCT follows the Penobscot River Corridor from Seboomook Lake along the Upper West Branch of the Penobscot River to Chesuncook Lake and then northward before entering the Allagash watershed and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway.

Whitewater Rafting

Commercial whitewater rafting is popular with many guided trips available through local establishments. The West Branch of the Penobscot River is popular for such trips; many rafters put in at McKay Station below Ripogenus Dam. They make the challenging run through the Ripogenus Gorge, which is a dramatic granite-walled canyon with some of the Northeast's most challenging Class V whitewater. Names of rips and falls—such as the 'Exterminator' and the 'Cribworks'—are well-known by avid rafters. Below the Big Eddy, a mixture of flatwater and whitewater (Class III and IV) give less technical but still exciting opportunities; less experienced and younger rafters start their trips here. Below Debsconeag Falls, calmer water and scenic beaches lead to a relaxing ending to the trip, with swimming and picnicking opportunities.

Fishing and Hunting

Fishing and hunting are traditional and ever-popular uses of public lands and the Central Penobscot Region is no exception. Fishing opportunities abound in the Region's three largest lakes, Nahmakanta, Seboeis and Endless, with ice fishing, and cold and warm water fishing. The Region also has scores of remote ponds, especially within Nahmakanta Unit, for backcountry fishing. Hunting for bear in the Nahmakanta Unit is particularly popular. Deer, moose, and grouse hunting is found throughout the Region.

Tourism

The Maine Highlands

The Maine Office of Tourism recognizes the Central Penobscot Region as a part of the 'Maine Highlands', a region defined by the Office encompassing Penobscot and Piscataquis counties; covering Greater Bangor, Katahdin Area, Lincoln Lakes, Moosehead Lake, Sebasticook Valley and Piscataquis River Valley. Tourism promotion for the Maine Highlands region focuses on the iconic Moosehead Lake and Katahdin, the

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variety of outdoor recreation opportunities and attractions, and the amenities of Bangor as a gateway community.

Maine Nature Tourism Initiative

In September of 2004 the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development commissioned a study to assess Maine's opportunities in nature-based tourism. A nationally-known experiential tourism development consulting firm, FERMATA, Inc. worked with state agency representatives, members of various state level organizations, and stakeholders in three rural pilot areas, one of which was *The Maine Highlands*. FERMATA, Inc. identified sites of interest for tourism itineraries and evaluated 38 sites, recommending 35 of them for inclusion in future marketing efforts. The Nahmakanta and Seboeis Public Lands Units were among the sites recommended for inclusion, along with sites such as Gulf Hags, Ripogenus Gorge, Medway Recreational Park, the Patten Lumber Museum and many others. More road signs were recommended for the Nahmakanta Unit, and also improved access to trails and ponds. Signage on recreation opportunities, habitats and wildlife at the Seboeis Unit was recommended (FERMATA, 2005).

The FERMATA Report recommended that the Maine Highlands region publish an itinerary guide, linking together priority sites among the 35 FERMATA recommended sites. This itinerary guide would serve as a template for other regions to follow. Toward this end, the Piscataquis Tourism Task Force has developed a nature-based tourism itinerary in the Maine Highlands region comprised of fourteen sites. Interpretive signage has been placed at nine of the fourteen sites on the itinerary. The Seboeis Unit is included on this itinerary but Nahmakanta is not. The Maine Highlands website shows itineraries on the link titled 'The Great Maine Woods and Water Tour'. Further development may include a guidebook and additional sites.

Planning Implications

It is the Bureau's mission to plan for the protection and sustainable management of the public lands for a wide range of multiple purposes and benefits. These include natural, cultural, ecosystem, recreational, educational and economic benefits and opportunities. For Public Reserved Lands in particular, there is management emphasis on a broad spectrum of activities compatible with a more remote, less developed natural setting, which can range from unmanaged ecological reserves to actively managed forests.

Nestled within remarkable conservation lands, natural features, wildlife habitat, parks, motorized and non-motorized trail networks, and the famed Appalachian Trail, the Bureau will continue to manage its lands to complement the many features of the Central Penobscot Region for all of the public to enjoy. The Bureau celebrates this diversity and abundance of natural resources and recreation activities and their contribution to the local economy. This Plan will help to guide regional, cooperative planning with adjacent landowners, for the benefit of the Central Penobscot Region and in concert with the broader direction provided by the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), last updated in 2009. Of particular relevance in the SCORP is the topic of trail

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recreation, addressed as an issue of statewide importance. The SCORP emphasizes the need for and management of regional trail systems (land-based non-motorized, motorized, and water trails) and the necessity of working with other landowners to foster regional trail connections.

The Bureau will continue to seek opportunities for partnerships with adjacent landowners as well as conservation and recreation organizations to further both conservation, and development and stewardship of recreational opportunities on the Bureau-managed public reserved lands. These may include partnerships or cooperative agreements with AMC, NPS, MATC, TNC, KI Jo–Mary, Inc., local snowmobile and ATV clubs, municipalities, and others. These collaborative relationships are essential to good stewardship of the public lands.

As described above, over the past decade or so there have been a number of changes in ownership and management of much of the lands surrounding the Nahmakanta Unit: TNCs 2002 purchase of the Debsconeag Lakes Wilderness Area lands to north and east; the Bureau's 2006 purchase of Katahdin Forest easements on additional lands to east of the Unit; AMCs 2009 purchase of the Roach Ponds Tract to the south of the Unit, with easements donated to the state. With these purchases and easements, a contiguous conservation land system now exists linking nearly 650,000 acres of lands within the 100-Mile Wilderness region. Plans are now in development for trails and other amenities in the Moosehead region to the west of the Nahmakanta Unit as part of the Plum Creek Concept Plan implementation.

Taken as a whole, these changes represent a new regional focus on the outdoor recreation opportunities provided by these lands, although timber management will continue on much of the property. A primary result, developing gradually over time, is greater public access, amenities, and connectivity between lands in different ownership. The long term effects on the Nahmakanta Unit, although difficult to specifically predict, are likely to include more and diverse recreational uses on the unit, both motorized and non-motorized, given that the unit is situated near the center of this collection of large protected land holdings.