

**Summary of Advisory Committee Comments and Parks and Public Lands Responses
on the Downeast Management Plan 5-Year Review for 2017**

Comment Period Dec 8 - 29, 2017

(Some comments edited for brevity; does not include typographical, grammatical, or
formatting comments)

Comment	Response
<i>From: Jim Fisher, Hancock County Planning Commission</i>	
<p>I have reviewed the plan updates for the Donnell unit. It's good to see that progress is being made on many fronts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The many improvements of the trails, turnouts and signs have been very well received. • The Blackwoods Scenic Byway Corridor Committee meet on Tuesday in Cherryfield. We discussed the [BPL] management plan.... The Byway has some additional funds that we will direct to updating our corridor plan and improving interpretation along the byway. • The byway corridor committee hopes to create interpretive signage at key turnouts similar to the signs we have on other byways. Themes might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ salmon biology, ○ history of the salmon hatchery at Tunk Lake, ○ sustainable forestry, ○ flora and fauna, ○ origin of the name "Black" in Blackwoods and so on, ○ history of mining, (challenging due to risk of encouraging further digging at the sites) • The concept of creating hand launch access to Round Pond is supported. This would be consistent with our corridor plan. Would this open the possibility of a public hiking trail up Round Pond Mountain? I'm not aware of current trails or policies on this point. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment noted; BPL appreciates the feedback on these improvements. • As noted in the Review table, the Regional Manager participates in the Byway Committee. • The Bureau would be pleased to contribute to planning interpretive improvements along the byway, if requested. The Outcome Based Forestry project on the 1000 road might be a good subject for the sustainable forestry theme. • Although the original plan didn't include a boat launch at Round Pond, IF&W has recently approached the Bureau about this. They would stock the pond with Rainbow trout if there was equal public access. We are continuing discussions with the biologist. A hiking trail up Round Pond Mountain will be considered if one- or multi-day backpacking routes are developed on the Unit (see p. 42 of the Plan, Management Recommendations, 2nd bullet). There are some limitations to a

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are aware of the challenges of maintaining popular sites in this Unit. The byway site that causes us the most difficulty is the Tunk Lake boat ramp privy, trash and recycling. We hope that these services can be maintained through local maintenance contracts. I will see whether we can identify funds or in-kind support for this. In the past, we have organized small roadside cleanups, but we have not taken on maintenance. I cannot promise anything tangible yet. A few individuals are causing these problems, but it is difficult to identify and deter them. • If BP&L approves the use of herbicides, I hope that they will discourage aerial spraying from planes or helicopters. The problems of herbicide drift and water contamination are significant if poorly understood. I'm not sure the growers are prepared to use other means for application such as tractor pulled or backpack sprayers. These methods carry other risks, as does more aggressive burning. • One question that I would like to sort out is the possibility of building hiking trails in eco-reserve areas. In particular, we have been discussing the possibility of trail going from the hidden ponds on Tunk Mountain across to the outlet of Spring River Lake. Generally hiking trails have small impacts, particularly if they are not climbing steep, eroding slopes. Much of this trail would be low, hilly terrain when compared with the rest of the trails from Schoodic Mountain to Tunk Mountain. It would be nice if there was a trail connection to the existing shoreline campsites on Spring River Lake as well. 	<p>trail including a safe trailhead location and the fact that the Bureau does not own the whole summit of the mountain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tunk Lake boat ramp is owned by IF&W; BPL coordinated the maintenance and cleaning with IF&W on management of this site. The last two years BPL has given that responsibility back to IF&W. BPL has not had a Steward for several years, and relies now on Bureau staff to take care of BPL facilities. • As is Policy, BPL will work to minimize herbicide use, and the methods used, to address this concern and will formulate the most environmentally appropriate plan for management of the barrens going forward, in concert with the lessee. • The eco-reserve designation does not prohibit development of hiking trails. However, the first 5-Year Review reported that staff field investigations toward developing a portion of the route revealed some of its challenges: crossings of private property and wetlands and questionable quality/suitability of some potential segments for a backpacking experience. For these reasons, no action has been taken toward developing this trail, in favor of less challenging locations and other priorities in the region.
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From: Jeremy Gabrielson, Maine Coast Heritage Trust

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I concur with the Department's recommendation to temporarily discontinue organic management of some leased blueberry barrens for vegetative management. (Although, I am curious how the Department came to that decision; and if there was any evaluation potential of impacts on nearby ecological reserve areas). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The current holder of both of our blueberry leases at Donnell and Cutler requested he be allowed to go out of organic as necessary to reclaim barrens he is not keeping up with. The Lessee is Ben Perrin from Cherryfield, and he is a dedicated organic grower. Wording in any lease (these contracts are both due for rebidding this year) would give BPL the right to review his control plans in advance and would likely have them reviewed by the Extension Service Specialist. Agricultural leases are typically for a five-year term, so wording might require a return to organic status in order to renew the lease another five years. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The update mentions reviewing the arrangement with Cobscook Trails "in providing stewardship" (p 8). This may be captured in your update about DCC, but the option for trail stewardship through Cobscook Trails ended several years ago. Maine Coast Heritage Trust feels that a regional approach to trail maintenance in eastern Washington County brings additional capacity for conservation land managers in the region; and improves the user experience. We would like to be part of any conversations that may take place around this topic in advance of the next management plan. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are aware of the proximity to part of our ecoreserve land at Cutler Coast, and again would require a plan from the grower as to how any work was going to be carried out in those areas. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The update also mentions monitoring soil compaction and proliferation of social trails, but doesn't appear to offer any actions beyond monitoring. Whether now or in the next management plan, it would be nice to see some more concrete actions for addressing this resource concern, such as "trail hardening," "increased trail maintenance staff," or | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Eastern Region hasn't participated in the Steward program for several years. We cooperated with the Cobscook Trails Coalition for many years. We have used private contractors for trail work and plan to continue that route.• BPL agrees that trail maintenance needs to be strengthened. The Eastern Region intends to develop a contract for trail maintenance in 2018, to include the Donnell Pond and Cutler Coast Units. |

even directing regional staff to develop an action plan to address this resource concern.	
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