

MAINE DIVISION PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDS (DPPL)
Department of Conservation
22 State House Station - Augusta, Maine 04333-0022

MEETING NOTES

**CENTRAL PENOBSCOT REGION (CPR) MANAGEMENT PLAN
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AC) MEETING**

Dover-Foxcroft, Maine
May 1, 2013
1:00PM

COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND THE INTERESTED PUBLIC PRESENT

Tim Obrey, MDIFW	Greg Shute, Chewonki Camps
Bruce Grant, MATC	Steve Tatko, AMC
Wayne Dillon, Gunsmoke Lodge	Brett Gerrish, Prentiss and Carlisle
Gene Shields, Cole's Moosehorn Cabins	Dirk Dewley, TNC
Katie Vargas, Cole's Moosehorn Cabins	Rich Smith, Pleasant River
Ray Campbell, Fin and Feather Club	Al Cowperthwaite, North Maine Woods
Fred Michaud, MDOT	

DPPL STAFF PRESENT

Jim Vogel, Management Plan Coordinator	Jay Hall, Forester - Nahmakanta Unit
Kathy Eickenberg, Chief of Planning	Doug Reed, Forester - Seboeis Unit
Chuck Simpson, Lands Manager Eastern Region	Rex Turner, Recreation Planner
Joe Wiley, MDIFW Wildlife Biologist assigned to DPPL	Tom Charles, Chief of Silviculture
	Scott Ramsey, ORV Program Supervisor

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made by members of the Committee and DPPL staff, followed by a brief statement of the meeting's objectives and goals (i.e., to review the highlights of the Draft CPR Plan, with emphasis on the vision, resource allocations, and management issues/recommendations for each Reserved Land Unit addressed by the Plan) by the Plan Coordinator.

SEBOEIS UNIT

The **vision** for the Seboeis Unit and the proposed **dominant resource allocations** (Special Protection, Wildlife, Developed Recreation and Remote Recreation) for the Unit were reviewed, the latter with the aid of a large print of the Draft Resource Allocations Map. No comments were made.

The Plan Coordinator reviewed many of the **management issues** and **proposed recommendations** for the Seboeis Unit. In particular, the review covered recreation management issues and recommendations related to development of non-motorized trails in the unit, potential improvements to and expansion of both hand-carry and trailered boat facilities, and hike-to/water-access campsites. Also highlighted was existing limitations on deeded right-of-way for vehicle access on the west side of the unit (Railroad Bed Road). An AC member asked for an explanation of the difference between public use roads and management roads, which was explained by Chuck Simpson. Katie Vargas (Cole's Moosehorn Cabins) voiced a concern about

having campsites at or near a proposed carry-in boat access in the vicinity of their commercial camp. It was explained that the water access campsites being considered for the Northwest Pond area would be near the end of the “tongue” peninsula, across Northwest Pond from and south of the commercial camp, which would provide substantial separation. [No camping is intended at the proposed carry-in boat access site.] General support was voiced for increasing carry-in boat access to the south end of the lake, and the proposed addition of boat-in campsites within a short paddling distance to any new boat access.

SMALL LOTS

Review of the Small Lots began with **East Turner Mountain**. No comments were made about the proposed resource allocations or management recommendations (no Vision statements were drafted for the individual small lots); however, a question was asked as to whether Wassataquoik Stream (along the east boundary of the lot) was Atlantic salmon habitat. No definitive answer was available from MDIFW, but the opinion was that this was not likely due to downstream fish barriers. [Note: Post-meeting, it was confirmed that Wassataquoik Stream was federally designated as Atlantic salmon critical habitat in 2009, and is within the area managed by the Maine Dept. of Marine Resources for diadromous fish species, including Atlantic salmon. Atlantic salmon fry are stocked each year in Wassataquoik Stream downstream from this lot (Penobscot River Annual Report, 2011).]

During review of the **Wassataquoik Stream** lot, it was highlighted that the abutting landowner has stated that the loss of the bridge over Sandy Stream that cut off vehicle access to the lot from the south was due to a wash-out, not due to the bridge being intentionally removed. Fred Michaud commented on the existing primitive campsites on and near the unit along Wassataquoik Stream and the East Branch (mainly associated with the IAT now), and the possibility that Quimby (abutting landowner) may be willing to maintain the sites. Fred Michaud and DPPL staff confirmed that road access had formerly been available on old management roads near Deasey Pond, south of the Lot, and leading to the west end of the Unit. (This is in addition to former road access to the east side of the Lot, and the existing bridge over Wassataquoik Stream on the Lot.)

During review of the **Millinocket Forest Lot**, Fred Michaud described the proposal for development of a cross-country mountain biking trail that would begin at Matagamon and end at Kokadjo, potentially crossing some public reserved lands, including the Millinocket Forest. In general, the trail would follow in this area the former route of the ITS 85 snowmobile trail. Fred indicated that he would provide DPPL and GPS recorded/GIS mapped route for the proposed trail.

Review of the **Seboeis Plantation** and **Grey Ledge Deadwater** lots highlighted that there is no public access to the lots and limited access for timber management; no comments were offered on these lots. The **Bradford/LaGrange** lot was described as having limited public access, with a regional ATV trail network utilizing a management road entering the south part of the lot, but no road or motorized trail access to the north part of the lot. Joe Wiley commented that the lot is used as a MDIFW radio-collared black bear study area.

NAHMAKANTA UNIT

As with the prior units, the Nahmakanta Unit discussion began with reviewing the **vision** and proposed **resource allocations** for the Unit, including Special Protection, Backcountry Recreation, Wildlife, Developed Recreation, Remote Recreation, and Timber Management uses.

Regarding the recommendation aimed at **increased DPPL oversight of trails constructed to remote ponds**, Ray Campbell (Fin and Feathers Club) expressed the opinion that the states Great Ponds law (dating from colonial times, before Maine's separation from Massachusetts) guarantees sportsmen pedestrian access to Great Ponds across public (and private) land, and that it is only under the authority of MDIFW to control fishing in those ponds. Tim Obrey stated that MDIFW would regulate fishing pressure by changing bag limits at specific ponds, rather than limiting trails to ponds. He expressed the opinion that there should be trails to all ponds, and stated that he is not concerned with the number of stored boats at ponds. Dirk Dewley (TNC) responded to a question that TNC is open to discussion of a trail from the Debsconeag Backcountry to Moose Pond on TNC land.

Greg Shute (Chewonki Camps) offered support for the idea of preserving the **Wadleigh Mountain fire tower** as a view site, as has been proposed in writing by a friends group. The Plan recommends the State pursue the proposal further with the friends group, to determine its feasibility.

Regarding **storage of boats at ponds** within the unit, AC members commented that the observed trend toward chaining boats has occurred in response to increased theft. Fred Michaud made a suggestion for a registration system for stored boats, as done in some state parks. Ray Campbell noted problems with the example of Baxter State Park, which requires registration of boats left in the Park, where registration links the boat to a person (owner), making it difficult for heirs to continue the tradition when a registrant dies. Dirk commented that TNC has asked that boats left on their lands to be labeled, and further commented that stored boats left abandoned become a burden to the landowner, and suggested a broader discussion to develop a common, agreed-upon policy. He also expressed the concern that high numbers of stored boats can affect the ecology of ponds. Steve Tatko (AMC) commented that AMC is starting a boat registration program on their lands, and is going to provide boats for the public to use. Bruce Grant (MATC) commented that NPS usually requires that boats not be left more than 24 hours, but will abide by landowner policy in cooperatively managed areas such as the AT corridor crossing state lands. Al Cowperthwaite (North Maine Woods – KI-Jo Mary) indicated that his organization considered boat registration but it is an administrative burden; instead, they have started an education effort and asked boat owners to remove unusable boats and to pass on boats that they can no longer use.

Regarding the recommendation to develop a **signage plan for the unit**, Fred Michaud commented that Bucks Harbor Minimum/Medium Security Prison may offer services to build kiosks, and the DOT sign shop may be able to provide a designer/architect for signage work.

Fred Michaud described his **proposed mountain biking trail** in relation to the Nahmakanta Unit, which would route the bike trail on the existing snowmobile trail south of Fourth Debsconeag Lake. Jay Hall commented that there are several wet areas along that trail as well as two bridges that would need to be considered in routing bike traffic there. Fred expressed interest in visiting the subject area to evaluate the challenges for bike trail development. Scott Ramsey posed the question as to a more southward route on Katahdin Forest land would work, using the KI-Jo Mary road system. Jay inquired as to whether shared use of the bike route on management roads by ATVs would be a problem; Fred commented that he did not see a conflict between the two uses. The Division requested a map of the proposed route, understanding it is still very much in a developmental concept phase.

Regarding continuation of and changes to **motorized uses in the Ecological Reserve**, as guided by State law and policy, a majority of comments were related to the recommendation to install a seasonal gate near Pollywog Bridge that would allow motorized use of Murphy Pond Road only during May and June for angler

access and during winter for snowmobiles. Some AC members commented that fishing was still going on after June. The group was reminded that the 1995 plan sought to address the issue of limited access caused by having a gate at Pollywog Stream bridge, and that the need to maintain a half-mile buffer from Murphy Pond, a remote pond, was addressed in the previous plan by relocating the gate to its current location. Ray Campbell pointed out that Murphy Pond Road past Pollywog Stream is an uphill hike, which is a burden to older and limited mobility visitors. The group overall supported the option of blocking side roads connected to Murphy Pond Road to ATV use, and moving bear bait sites either to points accessible by the Murphy Pond Road or out of the ecological reserve (as presently proposed). It was explained that DPPL would add five replacement bear bait sites off Farrar Brook Road. It was commented that AT hikers are sometimes resupplied from the parking area at the existing Murphy Road gate, which would be blocked (other than during May and June) if a new gate were installed as proposed. Dirk expressed the opinion that the current situation worked OK, and blocking the side roads may be all that is needed. It was commented that the AT in this area has received publicity in Backpacker Magazine and similar outlets, which may increase the number of inexperienced hikers and increase the need for closer vehicle access to the Rainbow Stream segment of the AT, as now exists at Murphy Road gate.

Kathy and Steve Tatko (AMC) briefly described continuing discussions between the State and AMC regarding options for the State to obtain deeded road access or road ownership across the abutting AMC lands south of the Unit, an issue that has been of high interest to AC members and the public throughout the planning process.

OTHER COMMENTS

The Plan Coordinator mentioned that comments on the Draft Plan would continue to be accepted through May 17, and that the email and U.S. mail address for comments was provided on bottom of the meeting agenda.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:30 pm.

*Respectfully Submitted by
Jim Vogel*