



Land for Maine's Future Program
Minutes of the Meeting
February 8, 2011

State Planning Office
Baxter Conference Room, 19 Union Street
Augusta, Maine

Board Members Present:

Commissioner Norman Olsen
Commissioner Bill Beardsley
Tim Glidden, Acting Director

Diane Doyle
Ben Emory
Bucky Owen

Don Marean, Chair
Leon Gorman

Board Members Absent:

Commissioner Walter Whitcomb
Act. Commissioner Col. Joel Wilkinson

Jeff Thaler

LMF Staff Members Present:

Tim Glidden
Aline Lachance

Steve Brooke
Tom Miragliuolo

R. Collin Therrien

Others

John Boland, Dept. Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
Lindsay Bourgoine, Appalachian Mountain Club
Diano Circo, Trust for Public Lands
Sarah Demers, Dept. Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
Stephanie Gilbert, Dept. of Agriculture, F&RR
Carole Haas, Appalachian Trail Land Trust
Leslie Hudson, Woodie Wheaton Land Trust
Alan Hutchinson, Forest Society of Maine
Jennifer Irving, Sebeccook Regional Land Trust
Alex Mas, The Nature Conservancy
Nancy Perlson, Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust
Scott Ramsay, Dept. of Conservation, ORV
Jeff Romano, Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Tom Rumpf, The Nature Conservancy
Alan Stearns, Department of Conservation
Wolf Tone, The Trust for Public Lands

Minutes of the Meeting

A motion was made by Bucky Owen and seconded by Ben Emory to accept the December 14, 2010 Minutes of the Meeting. Vote was unanimous with Tim Glidden abstaining.

Presentation of Biennial Report materials

A slide show presentation was made to the Board and audience outlining the program's agenda, mission, and history along with the various types of LMF funded projects, overall structure, general principles, public notice and input, public access, program status since 1987, partnerships process, accumulated acreage, the State conservation easement registry, statistical data, and several case studies.

For new Board members, Tim gave a brief overview of Board policy, guidelines and various changes that have taken place since 1988 when the Program initiated its first Call for Proposals. Applicants seeking LMF funds can apply in 4 categories: Conservation & Recreation, Farmland, Water Access, and Working Waterfronts. The program works with willing sellers only; that a recent legislative requirement now requires a 1 to 1 match; that a purchase price (*fair market value*) is determined by an appraised value; that all lands acquired through LMF be open to the public with the exception of farms and commercial working waterfronts where access may not be feasible or desirable; that the Board publishes in advance of any acquisition Public Notice(s) via local newspapers and notifies those Legislators in the districts in which a parcel or parcels is being considered for acquisition; that once the Board selects finalists a series of due diligence must be completed and in addition the Board may place specific conditions which must be addressed before funds are made available; that applicants address stewardship and management costs as part of an application, that signage of LMF support is located on conserved properties; that all meetings are open to the public and public input is welcomed; and that municipal approval is required for LMF funding when property interests representing more than 1% of a municipality's state valuation are considered for acquisition.

It was suggested that LMF staff include in their next slide presentation wildlife management areas. Tim did, however, distribute a one page summary of LMF Deer Yards.

Tim also discussed briefly the functions of the Scoring Committee who review and score each proposal received, the Nominations Committee who recommends project finalists with funding allocation, the Appraisal Review Committee who review market value, and finally the Easement Review Committee who review the working forest easement language for compliance with the provisions of the policy objectives.

When asked, Tim defined the role of land trusts. Land trusts are non-profit organizations directly involved in the permanent protection of land and its resources for the public benefit. A trust may operate on a local, state, regional, or national level. A land trust is the private alternative to land preservation by public agencies or park districts. They give local citizens concerned about open space issues a way to work together to preserve areas important to the

community, and landowners interested in protecting their properties options to do so that would otherwise be unavailable. Some trusts refer to themselves by other names such as conservancies, foundations, or associations. Land trusts accept donations of properties, buy land, or help landowners establish legal restrictions that limit harmful use and development. They may own and manage properties, monitor the restrictions they have helped establish for land owners, and/or work in partnership with other agencies.

The State Planning Office is renewing its contract with Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (after competitive bid) to administer and implement the Working Waterfront Access Pilot Program (WWAPP). The Maine Department of Marine Resources, the Working Waterfront Team, and LMF staff work with applicants to protect significant working waterfront properties to ensure long-term availability of this economic sector as the increased demand for coastal waterfront lands are making it difficult for commercial fishing businesses to retain working access to the water.

Once LMF funds are awarded a Working Waterfront Covenant is completed providing a mechanism for permanent protection forever protecting and preserving the property to ensure its availability for commercial fisheries operations. The covenant is binding upon the grantor, its successors, and assigns in the event of any transfer, sale or foreclosure of the property.

LMF information can be found on SPO's web site: www.maine.gov/spo/lmf . Also, the Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks & Lands has a web site in which anyone can view in 3D, by installing Google Earth, LMF acquired sites; www.maine.gov/doc/parks/gis/LMF.

Review of Outstanding Projects & LMF Finances

A one page summary of pending LMF projects for which the Board is still holding funds was included in the Board packet; one working waterfront project still underway, four farm and two water access projects pending, and 17 conservation and recreational projects many of which are expected to close in this or the next quarter while a few may take longer. Distributed at the meeting was a financial summary of the overall 2010 funding availability.

2011 Board Schedule

February 8th
May 10th
July 12th

September 13th
November 8th

Several vacancies within the various LMF committees need to be filled. Tim asked new Board members if they preferred to be assigned to an individual committee that he would be happy to accommodate. Commissioner Beardsley indicated his preference to be including as part of the Scoring or Nominating Committee.

Revised LMF Workbook

The only change of real significance is an addition to the conservation proposal scoring process adopted by the Board at its most recent meeting to encourage LMF applicants to incorporate project design elements in their proposals that will generate direct economic benefits. While LMF projects have generated economic benefits for years, the scoring system did not have a category specifically aimed at this aspect. Maximum point allowed is 5.

- Vote to Accept revised LMF Workbook

A motion was made by Leon Gorman and seconded by Ben Emory to accept the revisions to the LMF Workbook. Vote was unanimous except for Commission Olsen who abstained.

As part of the overall discussion, it was suggested that in order to stretch available project funds the Board should look at reducing Access Improvement Fund. Tim stated that at the moment, not many applicants are applying for access improvement funds. The Board might consider this suggestion at a later date.

Also discussed were single parcel projects vs. projects with multi-parcels. It was suggested that experts give the Board a briefing as to how such multi parcels fit into the overall scheme of things.

Conservation & Recreation Projects

RIVERLINK, Pine Island Management parcel, Newcastle, Lincoln County, 49± acres in fee to the Damariscotta River Association under a Project Agreement with the Maine Department of Conservation.

➔ Public Notice

On January 6, 2011 published in the Kennebec Journal and on January 5, 2011 published in the Herald Gazette.

➔ Appraisal Review Committee Recommendation

The ARC recommends accepting an appraisal value of \$155,000 for this parcel and further recommends LMF funding of \$155,000 (not including transactional costs) for this parcel.

➔ Public Comments

None.

➔ Vote

A motion was made by Ben Emory and seconded by Bucky Owen to support acquisition of this parcel. Vote was unanimous.

PISGAH HILL, Arbuckle parcel, New Gloucester, Cumberland County, 45.1± acres in fee to the Royal River Conservation Trust under a Project Agreement with the Maine Department of Conservation.

➔ Public Notice

On January 27, 2011 published in the Kennebec Journal and on January 26, 2011 published in the Portland Press Herald.

➔ Appraisal Review Committee Recommendation

The ARC recommends accepting an appraisal value of \$90,000 for this parcel and further recommends LMF funding of \$49,854 (not including transactional costs) for this parcel.

➔ Public Comments

None.

➔ Vote

A motion was made by Bucky Owen and seconded by Leon Gorman to support acquisition of this parcel. Vote was unanimous except for Commissioner Beardsley who abstained.

KENNEBEC HIGHLANDS EXPANSION, Linkletter parcel, New Sharon, Franklin County, 265± acres of conservation easement to the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance under a Project Agreement with the Maine Department of Conservation.

➔ Public Notice

On January 27, 2011 published in the Kennebec Journal and Lewiston Sun Journal.

➔ Appraisal Review Committee Recommendation

The ARC recommends accepting a before appraisal value of \$159,000, an after appraisal value of \$72,000 and an easement value of \$87,000 for this parcel and further recommends LMF funding of \$50,000 (not including transactional costs) for this parcel.

➔ Public Comments

None.

Note: Representative Paul Gilbert did notify Tim by phone that he supports the project.

➔ Vote

A motion was made by Ben Emory and seconded by Diane Doyle to support acquisition of this parcel. Vote was unanimous except for Commissioner Olsen who abstained.

Project Amendment

FIELDS AND FOREST FOREVER, additional farmland conservation projects, one site located in Albion, Kennebec County [BULL RIDGE FARM] and one site located in Unity, Waldo County [CHEESEMAN FARM NORTH].

➔ Scoring Committee Report

After reviewing additional information, the Scoring Committee unanimously agreed to support both additional farmland projects as both projects have a high degree of readiness for closing in 2011 and offer a significant opportunity to enhance value of previous Fields & Forest Forever investment. These two parcels will conserve more than 660 acres of farmland in Albion and Unity while protecting key agricultural resources and ecological features of the Unity Wetlands Focus Area.

Existing funding allocation is adequate to cover this funding request.

➔ Dept. of Agriculture Recommendation

The Fields and Forests Forever initiative to protect critical mass farmland in Western Waldo and Eastern Kennebec counties has resulted in nearly 2,000 acres of working farmland at the center of Maine's dairy belt to be protected. The Department of Agriculture is requesting that the Board include two more farm projects in this historic initiative. The **Bull Ridge Farm** is comprised of prime and statewide significant farmland and has operated as a dairy since the 1920's. The farm's size, excellent soils, level fields and well maintained infrastructure, as well as proximity to local markets should make it a success operation. The **Cheeseman Farm** has been operating for more than 100 years. Half of the property (95 acres) is comprised of farmland of statewide significance. This farm is a keystone parcel in the Unity Wetlands Complex.

The Department of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources respectfully requested the Board's approval of both projects into the Fields & Forests Forever initiative.

➔ Vote

A motion was made by Ben Emory and seconded by Diane Doyle to support this project amendment. Vote was unanimous except for Commissioner Olsen who abstained.

Other Business

LMF Biennial Report

The above slide presentation will also be presented next week to the Legislative Committee on Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry. Tim is also putting together a report to the Legislature on Maine Conservation Easement Registry.

Proposed legislation impacting LMF

LD 599 an ACT to Move the Land for Maine's Future Board to the Department of Conservation. Another bill suggests moving LMF to the Department of Agriculture.

Report on Training Session for new fund of funding co-sponsored by Maine Land Trust Network and LMF Program.

On January 20, 2011 over 35 representatives of municipalities and land trusts from all across Maine came to Augusta for an all day workshop focusing on LMF's land conservation objectives and a series of informational presentations about the application process. The workshop was designed for both first time applicants as well as for those who want to improve their applications in the upcoming round of funding. Tim stated that the workshop was a great success.

The approved revised Proposal Workbook will be posted on the Land for Maine's Future web site within the next few days.

Next Scheduled Board Meeting

May 10, 2011
State Planning Office
Baxter Conference Room
19 Union St., 3rd floor
Augusta, Maine

Adjourned: 4:10 p.m.