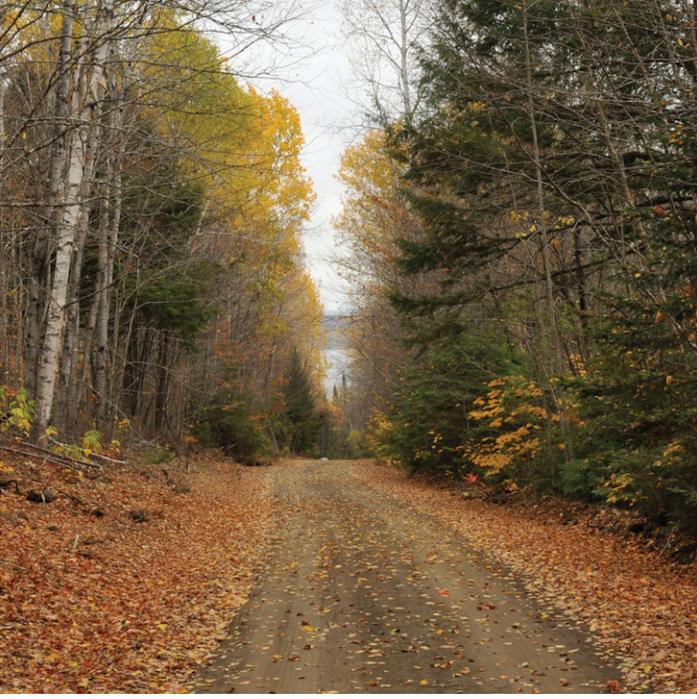


The Fish River Chain of Lakes Concept Plan Overview and Summary



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IRVING WOODLANDS, LLC

THE FISH RIVER CHAIN OF LAKES

The Fish River chain of lakes in northern Aroostook County is as special as any place in the State of Maine. Its special scenic values stem from the natural beauty of its lakes, rivers, and streams. The chain of lakes is a destination for ATV and snowmobile riders, boaters, hunters, and fishermen seeking trophy-size salmon or trout.

Long Lake, Mud Lake, Cross Lake, and Square Lake are largely unknown outside of the County. The Plan Area boasts a remarkable assemblage of places set against a matrix of working forestland and lakes. While the four water bodies are connected by a river-like thoroughfare, they all have unique scenic and environmental characteristics.

Residential development, recreational activities, and forestry have coexisted within the region for decades. The area is currently managed by Irving Woodlands to promote all of these activities.

THE CONCEPT PLAN

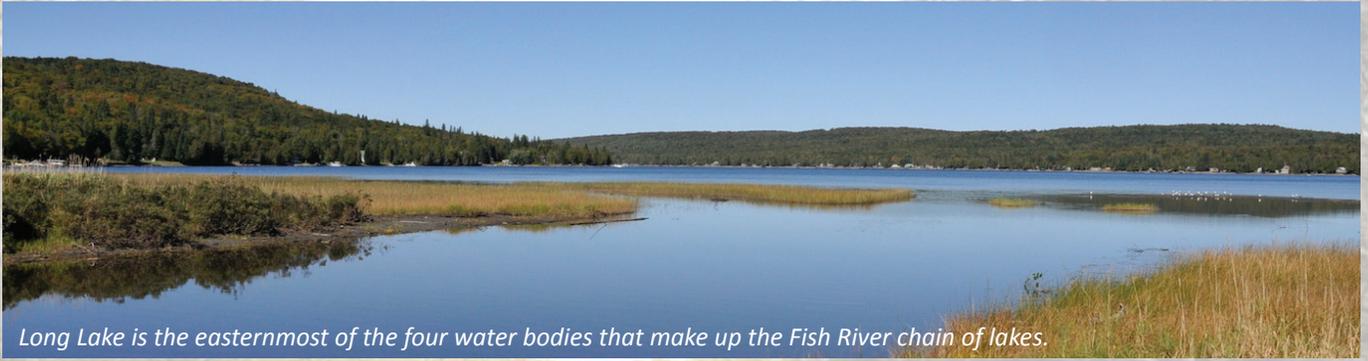
The Fish River Chain of Lakes Concept Plan is a long-term systemic vision that addresses ecological resources, working forests, recreation, economic development, and regional planning around four lakes in northern Aroostook County – Long Lake, Mud Lake, Cross Lake, and Square Lake.

In the Concept Plan, Irving proposes to re-zone over 51,000 acres to better protect and manage the existing uses and resources in the region. The Plan will be in effect for 30 years and establish a sustainable framework for both growth and conservation. More than 96 percent of the Plan Area provides significant long-term protection from development - including over 14,600 acres in a permanent conservation easement and 33,800 acres in restrictive zoning.

The Plan Area includes more than 400 camp lots, as well as campsites, forest management roads, and large blocks of working forest. Less than



Forest management activity will continue throughout the Concept Plan Area.



Long Lake is the easternmost of the four water bodies that make up the Fish River chain of lakes.

four percent of the Plan Area will be rezoned to focus opportunities for residential development, economic and community development, and recreational lodging.

CONCEPT PLANNING

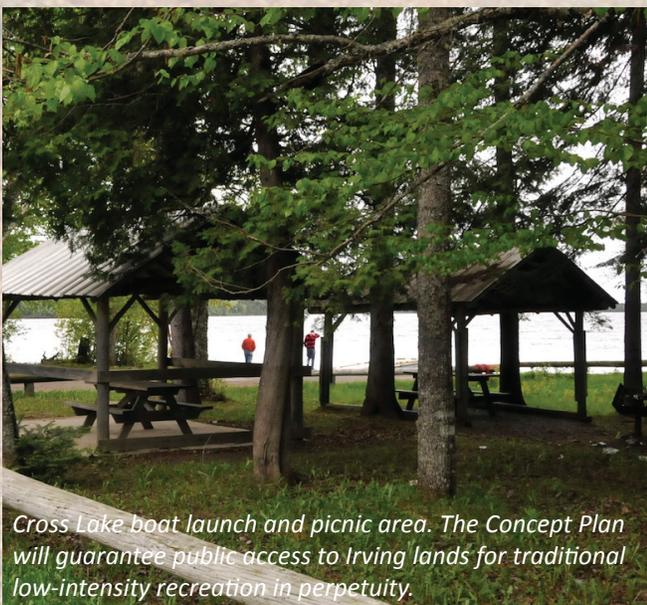
The Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC) established Concept Plans in 1990 as part of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The goal was to encourage meaningful long-range planning based on resource characteristics and site suitability, and to prevent haphazard, incremental development in the Unorganized Territories.

The planning process necessary to prepare a concept plan encourages landowners to chart the future of their ownership in a manner that is thoughtful and forward-looking. Development of the Fish River Chain of Lakes Concept Plan has taken over 3 years and includes a system-wide,

The Plan Area will be subject to sustainable forest management practices that are based on ecologically sound, economically appropriate, and socially responsible Outcome Based Forestry principles.

comprehensive approach to envisioning the future of the Plan Area. The process for developing the Concept Plan included:

- Holding more than 25 meetings with key stakeholders and the public to solicit both input on the important values of the area and feedback on the Plan.
- Compiling data on important habitats and cultural / natural resources to help understand the relationship between existing land uses and natural systems in the area.
- Working with experienced conservation professionals to form a manageable and effective permanent conservation easement area.



Cross Lake boat launch and picnic area. The Concept Plan will guarantee public access to Irving lands for traditional low-intensity recreation in perpetuity.

FORESTRY

Forestry is an important economic and cultural resource in the region and for Maine’s Unorganized Territories. One of the goals of the Concept Plan is to preserve the working forest. By ensuring that large blocks of productive forestland are maintained and protected, the Concept Plan improves the long-term viability of the forestry and forest products industries in the region.

The Plan Area will be subject to sustainable forest management practices that are based on ecologically sound, economically appropriate, and socially responsible Outcome-Based Forestry principles. These include watercourse and wetland buffer requirements that meet or exceed current LUPC and Department of Environmental Protection regulations, aesthetic timber harvesting practices to minimize the visual impact of harvest operations, maintenance of biological diversity to maintain healthy populations of flora and fauna, and promotion of overall forest health.



Existing Protection Subdistricts will be adopted throughout the Plan Area.

The Concept Plan enables Irving to make long-term decisions for forest management activities with a high degree of predictability by identifying those areas designated for future development.

CONSERVATION

Protecting the unique values of the Plan Area – including habitat, recreational access, and productive forestland – is a significant benefit to the region and to the general public. The 14,600 acre Conservation Easement is an integral part of the Plan. It includes nearly 17 miles of largely untouched shoreline on lakes and thoroughfares, including 10.6 miles around Square Lake, 2.1 miles on Cross Lake, 1.7 miles on Mud Lake, 2.0 miles along the Mud/Cross Lake thoroughfare, and 0.5 miles on the Cross/Square Lake thoroughfare (all numbers are approximate).

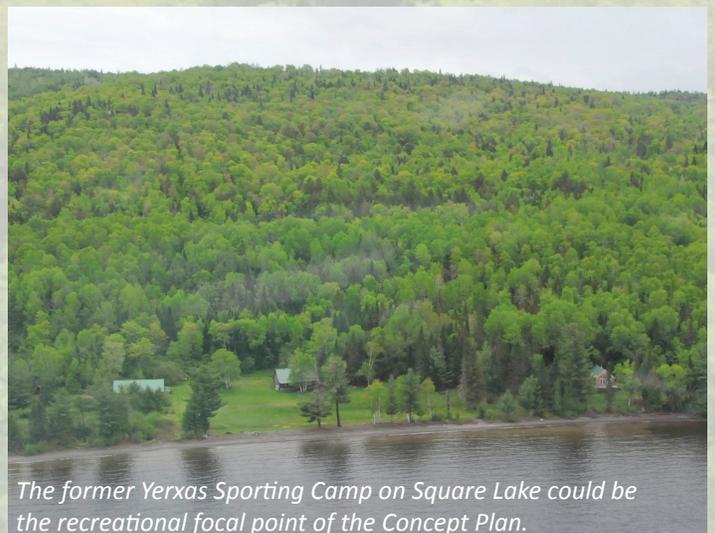
The easement area also includes over 600 acres of the Cross Lake Fens, all of the Cross Lake Bog (roughly 3,000 acres), plus thousands of acres of wildlife habitat.

The Conservation Easement will also ensure the continuation of sustainable forestry practices, prohibit all residential development, and guarantee the right of the public to access the lands for traditional low-impact recreation in perpetuity. When the easement area proposed as part of this Plan is combined with the Bureau of Parks and Lands' adjacent Eagle Lake Unit, over 38,000 acres (almost 62 square miles) of land will be in permanent protection while preserving the values and traditions of the working forest.

THOUGHTFUL DEVELOPMENT

One of the greatest risks to the Plan Area is the possibility of fragmented and incremental development. To protect against this, the Concept Plan creates the opportunity for thoughtful development in the future. Rather than proposing specific projects, the Plan identifies development areas (less than 4% of the Plan Area) and creates zones for residential or commercial development. The majority of these zones are natural extensions of existing developed areas, thus avoiding the possibility of traditional haphazard development that could otherwise occur.

The Plan creates a zone on Square Lake that allows the development of a recreational facility. This zone, focused at the former Yexas Sporting Camp, could be the foundation of a larger “Hub, Spokes, and Rim” recreational tourism system. As envisioned, the core (Hub) facility at Yexas would offer lodging and amenities, and be connected to a range of satellite facilities or outposts (Rim) through trails, roads, or water (Spokes). The Fish River chain



The former Yexas Sporting Camp on Square Lake could be the recreational focal point of the Concept Plan.

of lakes, by its interconnected nature and setting in an extensive woodland environment, is well suited to this type of development.

RECREATION

Land within the Plan Area is used for a wide variety of traditional recreational activities that are important for both residents and visitors alike. The Fish River chain of lakes is well known for some of the best salmon and trout fishing in Maine. Hunting for deer, bear, and other species occurs seasonally throughout the Plan Area. ATV riding and snowmobiling are very popular, with a series of marked trails maintained by local clubs.

No conversation about trophy land-locked salmon among Pine Tree anglers can occur without some reference to Long Lake of the renowned Fish River chain of lakes near St. Agatha. (Bangor Daily News. Jan. 31. 2009.)

The thoroughfares that connect each of the lakes offer the unique opportunity to canoe from Long Lake through Mud Lake, Cross Lake, Square Lake, and Eagle Lake to the Fish River and back nearly to the point of beginning.

The Concept Plan assures access for the public to continue these traditional activities and the possibility to expand them in the future. The Plan provides opportunities for:

- Providing new public boat access on Mud Lake and Square Lake, both of which were

recognized by Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in its 2000 Strategic Plan for Public Access as needing an access point.

- Continued public access to the Cross Lake boat launch, beach, and picnic area, and the beach at Van Buren Cove on Long Lake.
- Development of remote campsites and rental cabins as part of a larger recreational strategy.
- Redevelopment of recreational lodging on Square Lake at the site of a historic sporting camp.

WILDLIFE

The Plan Area includes a wide range of habitats and natural resource values that have been identified by both the State and by Irving as part of its Unique Areas Program. For example, the Cross Lake Fens near the west shore of Cross Lake is an ecological site of statewide significance.

There are also numerous designated deer wintering areas; inland waterfowl/wading bird areas; bald eagle and osprey nests; and a multitude of other significant natural features.

The Concept Plan ensures that these significant habitats will be maintained by placing over 14,600 acres of land in permanent conservation and adopting existing protection subdistricts throughout the Plan Area. In addition, deer wintering areas will continue to be monitored and managed to maintain or improve their quality through cooperative agreements with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.



The Concept Plan provides opportunities for new public boat access on Mud Lake (seen here) and Square Lake.

CONCLUSION

The Concept Plan promotes the values described in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan that define the distinctive character of Maine’s Unorganized Territories. Irving has attempted to integrate sound planning practices into the Plan that will maintain

and enhance the established forest economy, promote recreational and traditional uses, protect critical natural areas, and guide future development to maintain the intrinsic character of the Fish River chain of lakes.

FISH RIVER LAKES CHAIN OF LAKES • PLAN AREA

