
APPENDICES

*123rd
Maine
Legislature*

3 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0003
(207) 287-1540

May 7, 2008

Thomas Urquhart, Chair
Members, Board of Directors
Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund
37 Wiscasset Road
Pittston, ME 04345

Re: Androscoggin River State Park

Dear Chairman Urquhart and Members of the MOHF Board:

It has come to our attention that the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, in its effort to further the planning of the Androscoggin River State Park, is applying for a grant from the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund Program.

Earlier this year, the entire Androscoggin Legislative Delegation, in a fully bipartisan manner, endorsed the proposed park and is very excited to see planning begin (please see attached letter). We understand that it is in the very early stages and there is not current funding for the full project to go forward at this time. We also know, however, how important vision and good planning can be to the success of a project.

Maine has not established a new state park in many years and, because the State of Maine already owns the land on which it would be located, it seems to be the perfect opportunity to begin planning for its next one. The proposed site is centrally located to much of Maine; thus we would anticipate it to serve many Maine residents. Of course, as a state park, its potential to draw tourists is also significant. The recently completed Brookings Report states that a state park could inject several million eco-tourism dollars into the state's economy.

We enthusiastically endorse the Bureau's application for a Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund grant and hope you will give every consideration to their request proposal. We believe it will be a very good investment in our state, her people and our state's economy.

Sincerely,



Senator Margaret Rotundo
Senate District #16



Senator John Nutting
Senate District #17



February 7, 2008

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

Augusta, Maine 04333

Honorable Patrick McGowan, Commissioner
Maine Department of Conservation
22 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Commissioner McGowan:

Androscoggin County has a population of approximately 107,500 citizens, yet has one state park, located at Range Ponds. While it is a beautiful and well-maintained facility, it lies 12 miles from the Lewiston-Auburn area and is a 20 minute drive from there.

We, the Androscoggin County Legislative delegation, believe it is time to begin the exciting process of developing the 2,588 acres in Leeds and Turner owned by the Department of Conservation into an Androscoggin River State Park.

This large parcel of land offers a variety of recreational opportunities for area residents: boating, cross-country skiing, remote hiking, and motorized recreation such as snowmobiling and ATV use. We believe developing it to serve a variety of interests will have strong support from the local communities.

Located within 1 hour of 50% of the state's population, a park also would serve residents of Cumberland, Sagadahoc, Kennebec and Oxford Counties!

We recognize the financial challenges the State faces, but we urge the Department of Conservation to take steps now to begin the process so we are ready to act when there is funding available for the park's development. Specifically, we encourage you to explore all existing resources available to you for planning and the development of amenities, including: the Boating Facilities Program, the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Recreational Trails Program, and the Land for Maine's Future Program.

We also strongly encourage you to seek private funding, including ensuring that FPL Energy meets more than its minimal obligations for recreational enhancement and land and trail management when the Deer Rips Dam is re-licensed. The Department should also solicit financial support from Verso and New Page paper companies, the Trust for Public Land, Lewiston, Auburn and other surrounding communities.

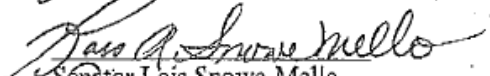
The Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center study found the economic impact of parks on neighboring towns to be \$100 million annually. We are extremely excited about the potentially positive impact of another state park in Androscoggin County and offer you our bi-partisan support in making this a reality. It is our bi-partisan hope that the Department's work will result in a plan that can be implemented in the fall of 2009 or when there is funding available.

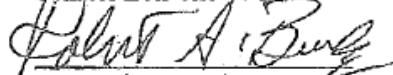
Many, many people and businesses have worked for years to ensure the cleanup of the Androscoggin River and we believe it is now ready to become one of the State of Maine's premiere state parks. It will serve citizens statewide and has the potential to become a strong tourist attraction, as well; bringing much needed economic stimulus to the area. We believe this project could, and should, be added to the list of Maine's ecotourism destinations.

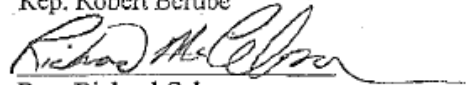
Thank you for your time and consideration. We welcome the opportunity to further discuss this with you.

Sincerely,


Senator John Nutting

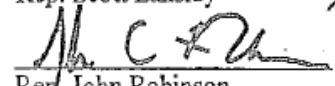

Senator Lois Snowe-Mallo

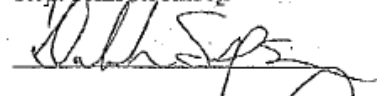

Rep. Robert Berube

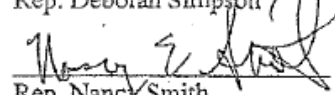

Rep. Richard Cebra

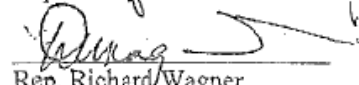

Rep. James Hamper

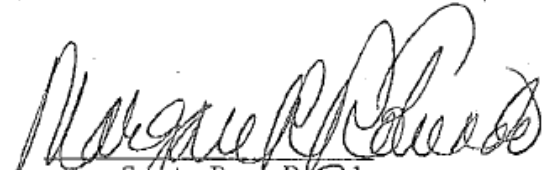

Rep. Scott Lansley

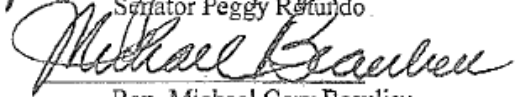

Rep. John Robinson

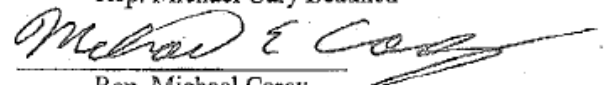

Rep. Deborah Simpson

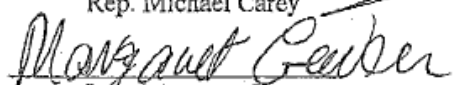

Rep. Nancy Smith

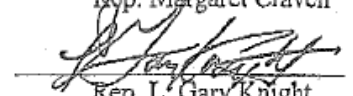

Rep. Richard Wagner

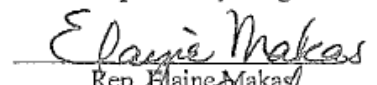

Senator Peggy Rando

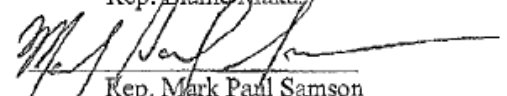

Rep. Michael Gary Beaulieu

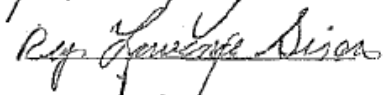

Rep. Michael Carey

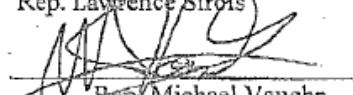

Rep. Margaret Craven


Rep. L. Gary Knight


Rep. Elaine Makas


Rep. Mark Paul Samson


Rep. Lawrence Sirois


Rep. Michael Vaughn

/dcs

Cc: Honorable John E. Baldacci, Governor

APPENDIX B

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES**

MEETING NOTES
Androscoggin Riverlands State Park

Advisory Committee Meeting #1
 April 29, 2009
 Leeds Town Office

ATTENDANCE:

Initials	Name	Interest Represented/ email
JG	Jody Goodwin	Town of Turner jodyike@megalink.net
JW	Jane Wheeler	Clerk, Town of Leeds townofleeds@fairpoint.net
CN	Charlie Noonan	Town Manager, Town of Leeds tmgreene@fairpoint.net
DB	Doug Beck	Auburn Parks & Recreation dbeck@ci.auburn.me.us
DH	David Hediger	City Planner, City of Lewiston dhediger@ci.lewiston.me.us
JLB	Jonathan P. LaBonte	Executive Director ALT jlabonte@androscogginlandtrust.org
FL	Fergus Lee	Chair AR Watershed Council flea@avcog.org
NW	Neil Ward	Director, Androscoggin River Alliance nward@fairpoint.net
ED	Ernie DeLuca	Recreation Manager NextERA Energy Resources Ernest.m.deluca@nexteraenergy.com
GD	Guy Desjardins	Sheriff Androscoggin County sheriffandyso@roadrunner.com
EM	Ed Morris	President, Turner Ridge Riders Morris1@megalink.net
LR	Larry Robinson	President, Turner Timberland ATV Club
MS	Mike Spugnardi	Trailmaster, Turner Timberland ATV Club spsigns@megalink.net
RB	Roy Boies	Interim Conservation Director, ME Bass Foundation bassinray@hotmail.com
JV	John Volkernick	Maine Bass Federation Nation - Alternate androscogginbassmasters@yahoo.com
SM	Stephen Mohr	Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects Inc. smohr@mohrseredin.com

TS	Tatyanna Seredin	Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects Inc. tseredin@mohrseredin.com
GP	George Powell	Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands George.Powell@maine.gov
RH	Ron Hunt	Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands Ron.hunt@maine.gov
WH	Will Harris	Director, Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands Will.harris@maine.gov
KE	Kathy Eickenberg	Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands Katherine.eickenberg@maine.org
JW	Joe Wiley	ME IF&W and DOC Joe.wiley@maine.gov
BF	Bruce Farnum	ME Bureau of Parks and Lands Bruce.farnham@maine.gov
BB	Brian Bronson	ME Bureau of Parks and Lands Brian.Bronson @Maine.gov

AGENDA

Welcome, Introductions - *Will Harris, Director, Bureau of Parks and Lands*

Presentations:

Overview of the Planning Process and Bureau Activities related to the Riverlands during 2008– *Kathy Eickenberg, Chief of Planning; Stephen Mohr, Mohr & Seredin, Landscape Planning Consultants*

Androscoggin River Coalition: A Vision for the Future of the River – *Jonathan LaBonte, Androscoggin Land Trust*

The Androscoggin River Water Trail – *Fergus Lea, Androscoggin River Watershed Council*

Questions/ Discussion: Interests of the Advisory Committee Members

Planning for the Public Scoping Meeting (May)

Next steps – Schedule for 2nd Advisory Committee Meeting (June)

1.0 Introduction and Presentations:

- 4.1 Will Harris (WH), Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands, began the meeting with a general introduction that noted that this will be the first new State Park created in over 20 years. The Bureau wants to make sure that the process for the design of the new park is public and inclusive so that the Bureau can learn from of the large coalition of recreational groups that have an interest in the park. WH wants to make sure that everyone with an interest has the opportunity to participate in the master planning process. The Bureau’s goal is to better serve all the various recreational needs and to create a facility that is designed to blend harmoniously with the natural environment.
- 4.2 Kathy Eickenberg (KE), Chief of Planning for the Bureau of Parks and Lands, presented a brief PowerPoint presentation that provided the Committee members with

an overview of the work to date, and the process that the Bureau wants to follow to create the master plan. KE expressed her opinion that the Riverlands are underutilized, and hopes that the planning process will help make the public more aware of this unpolished gem in close proximity to Lewiston and Auburn.

KE explained the Bureau's intent of having the public involved in the process to help define the scope of the park and to assist in creating a vision for the Riverlands. The Advisory Committee will be involved at key points to help shape and guide the master plan for the park. KE noted that the Bureau is open to designing the park to create a facility that meets the public's needs and may be totally different than traditional state parks. KE handed out project binders for all Committee members, and noted that they basically replicate what can be found on the new website for the riverlands which was noted on the agenda handed out at the meeting [www.maine.gov/doc/parks]. KE then explained the acquisition history of the parcel, touched on the natural resources information assembled for the parcel, and outlined the contents of the binder. It was noted that the Riverlands parcel is part of the largest block of un-fragmented wildlife habitat in Androscoggin County.

4.3 Stephen Mohr (SM), of Mohr & Seredin, spoke about the public nature of this process and how it differs from the planning process for parks that were created in the past. M&S will be working with the Committee to help the Committee and the public to shape a vision for the park and will develop a master plan for the Riverlands that synthesizes the ideas of the public and the Committee. The final work product will be a template for the general guidance for the development of the Riverlands Park. SM noted that the Riverlands is a unique property in that it has significant acreage, length, water frontage on the river and a unique context with the potential links to the urban centers of Lewiston and Auburn.

4.4 Jonathan LaBonte (JLB) spoke to the Committee and reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that puts the Riverlands in context, and explained the importance of the Riverlands as adding to the region's quality of place. JLB emphasized that one of the important elements of the Riverlands is its ability to attract people to this part of Maine as a place to live and work. JLB noted that it is nationally recognized that active communities that have significant opportunities like the Riverlands attract people as well as new businesses, families, and related economic opportunities.

JLB noted several important facts about the Androscoggin River which include the following:

- The river was noted in a national magazine as the best, and most overlooked, small mouth bass fishery north of Missouri.
- The Bates College crew boathouse is on Gulf Island Pond in Greene.
- A recent Olympic medalist in rowing trained on the Androscoggin River.
- The Androscoggin Land Trust (ALT) has been working on this parcel for 20 years and was one of the key players that helped to bring people together to get the Riverlands parcel acquired for public use.

JLB explained that the Riverlands is significant in the context that it provides to the nearby urban areas, and it provides land and water connections for the adjacent towns of Turner, Leeds and Greene. There are existing utility corridors that provide potential

connection for foot and bicycle traffic into the downtown areas, and the Riverlands has the opportunity to provide connectivity of Lewiston and Auburn to the areas upriver of the Androscoggin River Park.

JLB feels that the Riverlands is important as a place to reconnect the public with natural resources while also providing opportunities for the in-town residents of Lewiston and Auburn for recreational uses not found in the urban centers. JLB noted the neighborhood cleanup efforts of the immigrant population; the potential for a wellness and health awareness component as well as expanding other partnership opportunities like that of the water safety training with the Sheriff's Department.

- 4.5 Fergus Lea (FL) is the Chair of the Androscoggin River Watershed Council and he spoke about the history of the use of the Androscoggin as a waterway to connect the mountains to the ocean. This dates back to 1983 when the State and the County along with the Androscoggin River Council emphasized the potential for the river to provide economic, recreational opportunity and natural resource preservation. FL noted the funding in 1990 by the Maine DEP for a staff person, the 1990 conference on the Greenway/Water Trail associated with the river and the founding of the Watershed Council in 1999. Since 1995 there has been a paddle trek from Lake Umbagog to Merrymeeting Bay. There are 46 sites on the river that area available for the public's use and the Water Trail has been recognized as a significant factor linking portions of the Androscoggin River to other parts of Maine. FL spoke to need for a vision of a broader recreation corridor along the river that includes not just the Water Trail, but walking trails, multi-use trails and other recreational opportunities being linked to the river.

2.0 Interests and Concerns of the Advisory Committee Members:

With the above points as an introduction to the project, Kathy E. opened up the discussion to the rest of the Advisory Committee to learn about each committee member's vision and hopes for the property:

- 2.1 Ed Morris, President of Turner Ridge Riders, a snowmobile club based in Turner, Maine.
- The Androscoggin Riverlands has always been known, ever since he can remember, as 'The Game Preserve';
 - This parcel has very good groomed snowmobile trails in the winter;
 - He would like to see this area include some winter destinations for snowmobile riders. An example would be enhancements at the spring to fill canteens, or a scenic place to picnic.
- 2.2 Jonathan LaBonte, Executive Director of the Androscoggin Land Trust.
- JLB sees this parcel as being very important for its connectivity to surrounding areas;
 - He would like to see appropriate development at the southern end of the parcel due to its proximity to the urban centers of Lewiston / Auburn;
 - Would like to someday be able to get a shuttle from one end to the other for paddling on the river. He would like to see improved landings on the shore with picnic areas and hiking loops accessed only from the water.

- 2.3 Jody Goodwin, representing the Town of Turner
- Wants to make sure that the Community of Turner is not disenfranchised. This property has served as open / recreation space for a long time for the local population for traditional uses such as hunting, ATV's and snowmobiles, and she wants to make sure that these traditions are able to continue;
 - Loves the idea of a walking trail connecting to other areas, and being able to have a family outing to walk from this park all the way into L/A;
 - This property is a valuable wilderness area. More and more privately owned, undeveloped properties are not allowing access, and as the area is becoming more densely populated, less land is accessible;
 - This should always remain a place where families can go walk a trail, not see any houses, and see wildlife such as otters, eagles, etc. Wants her great grandchildren to enjoy these lands and the wildlife as she does.
- 2.4 Doug Beck, Auburn Parks and Recreation
- This area is very important for its proximity to the larger populations in L/A. Current recreation trends show that there are immediate needs for a day trip wilderness experience closer to home rather than week long trips elsewhere;
 - Family outdoor recreation is undergoing national growth, and this park will serve this need for the State.
- 2.5 Charlie Noonan, Town Manager, Greene
- There is a very large percentage of people in Greene who aren't aware that this is state-owned land;
 - Wants to make sure that this parcel isn't over-developed. He wants to make sure that it still serves the hunting and snowmobiling needs of the area;
 - He is excited about the potential for access via a potential new boat ramp at Cherry Pond opposite the state lands in Greene;
 - People are very excited about this new park, everyone wants to know 'when?'. The plan needs to move forward and be implemented. Expects the public will turn out and support this.
- 2.6 Guy Desjardins, Sheriff, Androscoggin County
- His department is a resource for water safety;
 - He is a pilot – flies out of Auburn;
 - He is concerned with public safety at this site;
 - John LaBonte (who is also a County Commissioner) added that the Sheriff's Department is the public safety organization for the small towns along the river. The surrounding public safety infrastructure from the state, county and municipalities will need to be coordinated to serve this park;
 - There are rescue boats available from Auburn and Poland, but only one access point on the river, on the Center Bridge Road in Turner. Another access point at the southern end would be helpful.
 - Guy mentioned that the River has improved and even he was not aware of what a great resource it was until he attended an event at the Rancourt Preserve last year (ALT land below the Deer Rips Dam in Lewiston).
- 2.7 Larry Robinson, President, Turner Timberland ATV Club

- He feels there will be opportunities in the future to increase the park lands further south to connect with trails in Auburn.
- He feels that the river is not used enough. Larry lives on the Waterman Road below the state lands near the river and is on the pond nearly every day in the summer in his boat; his kids even swim in the river. He notes that except for the bass fishing events, he hardly sees anyone else.
- He uses the river every season, including ice fishing in the winter. He noted you can see baby eagles from the river;
- He would like to see additional parking area developed at the south end to serve the park.

2.8 Neil Ward, Program Director, Androscoggin River Alliance

- Neil's focus on the river has been primarily water quality. People have historically turned away from the river due to the pollution, but that is changing.
- There used to be a stigma attached to the river because it was polluted, and it smelled bad. This stigma is very hard to overcome, especially for the generations who grew up with the river so polluted;
- A good example is Neil's wife who grew up on the river, but who had never experienced the river until being taken on a boat when she was an adult – and instantly fell in love with it;
- He would like to reintroduce the neighboring communities to the river, now that it's getting clean. He would especially like to attract the next generation to the river to begin a good, positive, sustainable relationship with it.

2.9 Ray Boies, Interim Conservation Director, Maine Bass Federation Nation

- He is representing several fishing organizations, the organizations are concerned with safety first.
- In 1990 held the first club bass fishing tournament on the river; now pike are in the river, and that is drawing more interest.
- The river has excellent small and large mouth bass fishing. The state fish-off is a 2 day event held here with 80-100 boats averaging two persons per boat. Up to five fish per boat – this is a very productive fishery to sustain this catch.
- This park will attract a lot of people who will bring revenue to the region; if tenting was an option, it would get used.
- This is a community oriented organization with a big focus on kids with lots of programs for them. This park will serve children and community.
- Ray remarked that he never knew much about the state lands, but he saw from the slides presented that it is beautiful and he will be doing some walks there..

2.10 Ernie DeLuca, Recreation Manager, NextEra Energy Resources, Inc.

- He can help, through NextERA with providing connectivity.

2.11 Mike Spugnardi, Trailmaster, Turner Timberland ATV Club

- Agrees with Jody, he thinks this park is going to be a positive step;
- There is more snowmobiling taking place on the parcel right now than ATV riding.
- There has been a drop in ATV riding because of access changes.

- 2.12 Ron Hunt, Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, acting Southern Regional Park Manager
- He is here to listen and to help;
 - His concerns have to do with how the Bureau will manage and maintain new amenities and increased use of the park.
- 2.13 John Volkernick, Maine Bass Federation Nation
- He would like to see water levels stay more consistent, especially from May through the 3rd week in June during spawning season;
 - Would like to see buoys to mark hazardous places in the river;
 - There are pike in the river up to 25 lbs. in size; ice fishing is taking the larger pike out of the river. He would like to see this fishery managed for large fish.
 - Would like to see habitat improved for spawning – such as brush piles;
 - Would like to see a boat launch and parking area at the south end of the park.

3.0 General Discussion

- 3.1 Neil Ward
- Noted the economic benefit of the fishery. The bass fish-off is a 100 boat event, with 2 people per boat, people will need places to stay such as hotels and camping spots;
 - He noted that the water draw-down kills lots of wildlife.
- 3.2 Jonathan LaBonte
- JLB wants to make sure that this process addresses the issues comprehensively and is not restricted by who governs activities on the water vs. the land. The Bureau, the Sheriff and the Game Warden all need to work together.
 - The planning process needs to respect private property rights of abutters.
 - JBL emphasized the need to engage abutters in direct communications, even walking the common lot lines with them.
- 3.3 Ron Hunt
- He was just at a meeting about the Saco River where people are trying to ‘take our river back’. He wants to make sure that this will be a family river, not a party river;
 - There is the need for a coordinated effort between all enforcement agencies as noted by JLB.
- 3.4 Jody Goodwin
- Wants the planning process to look sensitively at town’s contributions. Turner already has a motorized boat launch, and wants to be careful about adding another one;
 - The Turner folks on Conant Road are OK with a carry-in boat landing and parking, but not adding another motorized boat launch in Turner (they already have one at the Center Bridge Road);
 - She wants to make sure that it is a priority to retain the natural flora of Maine, and maybe add additional plantings where appropriate – maybe along the Homestead Trail?
- 3.5 Joe Wiley, IFW and DOC
- The connectivity to the north is critical for wildlife. He would like to make sure that a key wildlife corridor is unfragmented and undeveloped;

- Talawala Preserve in Livermore is another natural resource that the wildlife corridor runs through, and to;
- The riparian zone is fragile and needs protection from over use.

3.6 Jonathan LaBonte

- His vision for this park is to keep its wild character, and maybe we don't have to do everything on this parcel, but build around it with more conservation lands to serve the bigger agenda for large-block wildlife habitat connecting to important lands further north;
- JLB would like to see the property line marked and blazed;

3.7 Will Harris

- There is an increasing amount of outdoor recreation need for kids;
- Will noted that people support what they use;
- This property is inviting and offers good opportunities for a wide range of recreational uses;
- The use of state parks is down nationally from a high in 2002, but Maine has stayed fairly high. Use in 2007 was very high, and 2008 was down, probably due to rainy weekends.

3.8 Jody Goodwin

- This property could be used as an outdoor, ecology classroom, and could be used by the area schools. There are vernal pools, wetlands, etc, and the kids will value the resources if they learn about them;
- The Center Bridge Road parking lot is within 4 miles of all schools in Turner.

3.9 Ed Morris

- There is a lot of snowmobile traffic, but no dedicated/easement for a trail connection to the Riverlands at the north or south ends;
- What about access from the Old County Road at the north end? Presently is used, but would like to make improvements. JG to check on legal status of road. JW stated he does not think the State has an easement over the Old County Road;
- EM wants to make sure snowmobile use/trails and connections are considered.

3.10 Kathy Eickenberg

- spoke about the June 6th "Take a Hike" event. She hopes that those that can attend, will do so at AR.
- Noted Bruce Farnham will be the contact person from "Field" perspective of work on the ground at AR. He will be working with the Ameri Corps person at AR.
- Brian Bronson from the Bureau's Off-Road Vehicle is also a resource for issues related to the multi-use trails. He mentioned that there is dumping of trash occasionally at the parking lot.
 - Sheriff Guy Desjardins said that he can provide general work crews for trash pick-up with several months notice.

4.0 Moving Forward:

4.1 Public Meeting:

KE stated that the public scoping meeting would be the next issue for public involvement. After discussion it was agreed that it will be on May 20th at the Leavitt School in Turner.

Charlies Noonan agreed to arrange for this meeting to be broadcast to the four area towns on the community TV channel. The purpose of the meeting is to listen and gather more information on use and to understand the public's point of view. There will be boards set-up to provide background information on the resources at AR.

JG would like to see someone buy a flip chart and make notes of the public input during the meeting.

Ferg Leas offered to look into getting public transportation to the meeting from Lewiston/Auburn.

4.2 Next Advisory Committee Meeting and Site Tour:

Following the public scoping meeting there will be another Advisory Committee (AC) meeting to discuss the public input and review the AC's responses.

KE discussed an AC site visit and boat tour/walk. After discussing this it was agreed that this was a good idea, and a ½ day boat tour and walking tour would be planned for mid June. Larry Robinson volunteered the use of his boat and to look into borrowing another boat for the trip. Ernie DeLuca volunteered NextEra Energy's 20-foot Lund if needed. The possibility of landing at certain points to walk around or travel by ORV on nearby trails was also suggested. It was agreed that a date would be selected when the group convenes for the Public Meeting.

Meeting notes prepared by Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects. Please notify us within 7 days of any inaccuracies in these notes.

MEETING NOTES
Androscoggin Riverlands State Park
Advisory Committee Meeting #2
 October 20, 2009

Key Bank Business Service Center, Lewiston, Maine

ATTENDANCE:

Initials	Name	Interest Represented/ email
JG	Jody Goodwin	Town of Turner jodyike@megalink.net
CN	Charlie Noonan	Town Manager, Town of Greene tmgreene@fairpoint.net
DH	David Hediger	City Planner, City of Lewiston dhediger@ci.lewiston.me.us
JLB	Jonathan P. LaBonte	Executive Director ALT jlabonte@androscogginlandtrust.org
GD	Guy Desjardins	Sheriff Androscoggin County sheriffandyso@roadrunner.com
RB	Roy Boies	Interim Conservation Director, ME Bass Foundation bassinray@hotmail.com
JW	Joan Walton	Androscoggin Transportation Resource Ctr –Bicycle & Pedestrian Trail Planning, jwalton@avcog.org
BA	Brian Alexander	Mountain Biking Balexander1@roadrunner.com
SM	Stephen Mohr	Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects Inc. smohr@mohrseredin.com
TS	Tatyanna Seredin	Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects Inc. tseredin@mohrseredin.com
RH	Ron Hunt	Southern Region Parks Manager, Bur of Parks & Lands Ron.hunt@maine.gov
WH	Will Harris	Director, Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands Will.harris@maine.gov
KE	Kathy Eickenberg	Chief of Planning, Bureau of Parks and Lands Katherine.eickenberg@maine.org
RT	Rex Turner	Recreation Specialist, Bureau of Parks and Lands Rex.turner@maine.gov
BF	Bruce Farnham	Mount Blue State Park Manager, Bur of Parks & Lands Bruce.farnham@maine.gov
SV	Skip Varney	ORV Planner, Bureau of Parks and Lands Walter.e.varney@maine.gov
MA	Michelle Altamore	AmericCorps Intern, ME Bureau of Parks and Lands
	Michael Auger	Director, Land Protection & Stewardship Androscoggin Land Trust

A. AGENDA

Welcome, Introductions - *Will Harris, Director, Bureau of Parks and Lands*

Presentations:

Review of results of user surveys, use counts, and management issue and presentation of a slide show of the Riverlands– *Michelle Altamore, AmericCorps Intern*

Overall vision for the future of the Androscoggin Riverlands – *Stephen Mohr, Mohr and Seredin*

Questions/ Discussion: Interests of the Advisory Committee Members

Next steps

B. DISCUSSION

The following notes summarize the presentations and discussion points covered at the meeting.

1.0 Welcome, Introductory Remarks:

1.1 Will Harris (WH), Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands, began the meeting with a general overview of the work that had occurred over the summer, and where the development of the plan is headed. All of the AC members introduced themselves.

2.0 Presentations:

2.1 Michelle Altamore, AmericCorps Intern at the Bureau of Parks and Lands, presented a slide show of the Riverlands. Michelle has been active in researching the natural and cultural history of the area, identifying the public’s favorite spots and features, studying trail conditions/issues, damage from different uses, trail remediation (priorities), and dumping issues that have occurred. Some of the information/issues Michelle presented in the Power Point presentation is as follows:

- Presented results of a user survey gathered from on and off-site sources, noting:
 - o There is a need for signage and trail blazing: Hikers want more information about trail locations and allowed uses; ATVer’s stray from authorized trails most often when there is an apparent trail and no signage.
 - o Some users noted a desire to have restrooms at the park, improved picnic area with grills, and carry-in boat access
- Showed results of spot vehicle counts in the parking lot: consisted of mostly trucks, then trucks with trailers, and then passenger cars. A spot check vehicle count of the boat launch of FPL was conducted to assess potential crowding and overflow onto the parking area at the Riverlands; and to assess the amount of water-based recreation adjacent to the Riverlands.
- Presented a profile of number and types of users from user counts on two busy weekend days (Labor day weekend and Columbus day weekend). ATVers were the dominant user group, but also present were hikers, horseback riders, mountain bikers, and kayakers. The use of pie-charts, tables and information in the presentation will be printed and become part of the planning record.

Michelle explained that she was on-site at ARP throughout the summer and was able to be a “face” for BPL to provide a presence at the site.

Kathy Eickenberg (KE), Chief of Planning for the Bureau of Parks and Lands, thanked Michelle for all of the hard work and research she has performed to move the planning for the future of the forward.

2.2 Stephen Mohr (SM), of Mohr & Seredin, spoke about how M&S is working to shape a vision for the park and develop a master plan for the Riverlands that incorporates the ideas of the public and the Committee. Stephen presented the options for an overall vision for the future of the Androscoggin Riverlands and reviewed the presentation boards that summarize the proposed direction for the park plan.

- a. SM presented a summary of key comments from the public and AC (Attachment A).
- b. SM presented a list of objectives for the park distilled from Bureau, public and AC (Attachment B).
- c. SM presented several analysis boards: (see attached)
 - 1- Environmentally sensitive areas.
 - 2- Trail conditions and uses.
 - 3- Analysis of access
 - 4- Points of interest/destination.
- d. SM then presented a draft of the M&S proposed Master Plan for the Park (Attachments 5-7) and the M&S recommendations (Attachment C). The key points of this were as follows:
 - No additional trails or expansion of circulation system in ARP.
 - Primary park access/the park entrance/will remain from the north from Center Bridge Road.
 - Walk in access from the South at Conant Road.
 - Look for future access at the park mid-point from Upper Street.
 - Clearly sign and identify trail uses and restrict some trails to only low-impact uses.
 - Remove ATV use from selected trail sections to provide a better balance of uses.
 - Provide boat access at three points on the river.
 - Consider creating a non-development area (a preserve) on the southern end of the property, and at the Leeds property.

3.0 Questions/Discussion: Interest of the Advisory Committee Members

- 3.1 Joan Walton (JW)- had questions about cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing in the park. These uses must continue on the lot. SM noted that these will continue as currently located.
- 3.2 Charlie Noonan (CN) - had a question about what was meant by a preserve? Does the preserve area stay undeveloped and continue existing uses? SM responded that the intent is to do just that; continue existing uses but limit any future development.
- 3.3 Jody Goodwin (JG) - questioned why create a preserve and then allow ATV access through the southern area. It seems a conflict in her opinion.
- 3.4 Brian Alexander (BA) - asked why the Ridge trail was removed from bikers. There are not that many hikers on the ridge trail and suggested it would be compatible to have both hikers and bikers on this trail given the low use.
- 3.5 SM responded that it was part of the plan to allow some trail sections to be hikers only; and the trail on the back side of the ridge was, in his opinion, a very attractive trail for mountain biking including some challenging areas.
- 3.6 Stephen B. Mohr (SM), - provided additional explanation of the access diagram that proposes changes to the main entrance and from Conant Road. There are future proposed uses that include drive-in access, limited parking and a carry-in boat landing.
- 3.7 Bruce Farnham (BF) - stated that until this year, there has been no staff on-site to monitor activities.
- 3.8 Will Harris (WH) suggested perhaps finding a project person to provide this again next year, while the Bureau considers long-term options for this.
- 3.9 BA asked if the road is gated in the winter? It was stated that it was.
- 3.10 Jody Goodwin (JG), stated that parking for 6-8 cars should be considered at the south end (for hunters, hikers, potential future carry-in boat access).

- 3.11 Ron Hunt (RH) - stated that parking on Conant Road will be an issue with neighbors if it is an unsupervised lot will as it will attract undesired uses and serve as a secluded party spot, and this is not acceptable. A small parking area for hikers and hunters might be acceptable if it were visible from the public road.
- 3.12 Skip Varney (SV) - asked are there users at the southern end, and what are they?
- 3.13 Michelle Altamore (MA), replied to the question raised by SV that the most use is at the north. Most ATV users wanted to know how to get to Youly's, to the west and not how to get further south.
- 3.14 JG – Feels that from the Town of Turner's perspective that park is used mostly by hunters and they know where to park, and we would like assurance that hunting won't be disturbed. If it's a preserve at the south end of the park that might be the best option. JG conveyed the concerned that more uses and development at the park will bring more conflicts and it will eventually close to hunting.
- 3.15 Rex Turner (RT), - stated that there is no intent to close trails to hunting.
- 3.16 CN - There are areas of mixed use and areas of segregated use and maybe restricting the southern end for 4-6 weeks for hunting might be an option.
- 3.17 JG - liked the idea of having a "wilderness" (non-motorized) hiking area in the south end of the parcel.
- 3.18 David Hediger (DH) - agrees that there is no need for more uses or development in the park at this time, but there is a need for improvement of existing uses and trails. The AC needs to be conscious as to how the land was acquired over the years. If ATV funds were used to acquire some of the land, we need to be careful not to exclude this use. He asked if there should be a spot dedicated to ATV use. He noted that some ATVer's enjoy mud runs and wondered if an area should be designated just for this use. DH also asked if one solution to lack of funds for management of the park might be timber harvests, and if so shouldn't a forest management plan put in place?
- 3.19 Kathy Eickenberg (EK) - responded to some of the concerns raised:
- There are significant wildlife resources in the park and on the adjacent waters which require some sensitivity in planning for recreation uses. Cross country ski and snowshoe areas should avoid deer wintering areas as the human form scares the deer whereas the deer do not generally react to snowmobiles. If water access camping is to be considered, be sure to locate these away from waterfowl nesting and feeding areas, and where they will not disturb eagles (noting there are 3 eagles nests along the river from Lewiston to the top of Turner at the Twin Bridges).
 - Mudholes are a problem – the Bureau's own guidelines call for trails that get the water off the trails, first and foremost. Mudholes cause other users to avoid using the trail or to go around them, causing a widening of the trail and greater trail impacts. Because of the number of mudholes on the southern end of these lands, it will be very expensive to bring these southern trails back to serviceable condition. If the area is not suitable for trails possibly the plan should not try to put them there.
 - Current use is still low; however, BPL, Michelle and the Land Trust have attracted more users to the park this year by their efforts to publicize the park; and we should anticipate and plan for much greater use levels as word continues to get out about this park.
- 3.20 Michael Auger – stated, in response to DH's concerns about ATV funding for the lands, that the acquisition of the original parcel of land did not include ATV funds, and did not include plans for ATV's. He stated that the original intent for the park was to protect it as a natural resource area. He suggested we should consider the extent of current ATV uses in relation to the extent of ATV funding, and not view the use of the southern lands solely in relation to recent funding for the southernmost parcel.

- 3.21 JW - asked how is the park going to be promoted. Is there a marketing scheme, because this will affect use.
- 3.22 Will Harris (WH) responded that at the present time there is no plan, nor budget, for promoting the park and there is no staff available either to provide these services. (see also comments under 3.7) He suggested that this park will need to be managed in partnership with others to be successful. He said that there should be a plan first and then decide how best to proceed.
- 3.23 CN asked Will to clarify what funding there was for maintenance.
- 3.24 WH responded that there is some federal funding for trail improvements, and there are funds available through the off-road vehicle program. There are minimal park funds for maintenance and some signage. He believes that a fixed goal is needed before looking for funding.
- 3.25 CN suggested that the towns could potentially contribute to maintenance costs with available equipment and gravel.
- 3.26 DH asked what the lifetime for this plan would be – how long will this plan be for?
- 3.27 WH responded that the Bureau’s policy for planning sets a 15 year timeframe with 5 year reviews.
- 3.28 KE added that for this park we should be thinking of coordinating the term (and revisions) with the term of the recreation plan that is required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the surrounding area – which is about 30 years (expires in August 2048).
- 3.29 JG – There is a big foundation in the middle of the park and she would like to have maintained – maybe cut some trees and mow around; and provide a walking path from a boat pull-in somewhere close to it.
- 3.30 RT wants the Committee to look further at biking trail options. There are a lot of bikers that won’t want to be on multi-use trails and prefer single track. He would also like to see a winter use map.
- 3.31 JG said that cross-country skiing on snowmobile trails may not be the best option in her opinion, for this park, although many skiers like to ski on groomed snowmobile trails.
- 3.32 RH commented on the idea of no fees charged. This could be a problem for the Bureau in the future. Can forest management activities support recreation activities?
- 3.33 WH responded that he is not sure that this is the best parcel for starting/allowing forest management activities. If there are significant improvements made, perhaps a modest fee (with an unmanned collector) could be charged, but this is not a priority at this time.
- 3.34 JG suggested that perhaps through the surrounding Towns funds could be raised (such as per head charge) to avoid user fees.
- 3.35 CN agrees that maybe some-in-kind services could occur rather than fees. He would be willing to have the Town of Greene send a crew over for a day or two to help maintain the park.

4.0 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 CN would like copies of the materials presented at the meeting and also a winter overlay. These will be included with the minutes.
- 4.2 A draft document and conceptual plan to present to the public should be done, but after another review with the AC.
- 4.3 KE: presented the schedule and project timeline handed out to the AC. BPL needs to complete the plan by the end of the year.

Meeting notes prepared by Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects and reviewed by Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. Please notify us within 7 days of any inaccuracies in these notes.

MEETING NOTES

Androscoggin Riverlands State Park

Advisory Committee Meeting #3

November 18, 2009

Key Bank Business Service Center, Lewiston, Maine

ATTENDANCE:

Initials	Name	Interest Represented/ email
JG	Jody Goodwin	Town of Turner jodyike@megalink.net
CN	Charlie Noonan	Town Manager, Town of Leeds tmgreene@fairpoint.net
DH	David Hediger	City Planner, City of Lewiston dhediger@ci.lewiston.me.us
FL	Fergus Lea	Chair, AR Watershed Council flea@avcog.org
NW	Neil Ward	Director, Androscoggin River Alliance nward@fairpoint.net
RB	Roy Boies	Interim Conservation Director, ME Bass Foundation bassinray@hotmail.com
DC	David Chabot	Game Warden, Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife dave.chabot@maine.gov
EM	Ed Morris	President, Turner Ridge Riders morris1@megalink.net
LR	Larry Robinson	President, Turner Timberland ATV Club
MS	Mike Spugnardi	Trailmaster, Turner Timberland ATV Club spsigns@megalink.net
MM	Mike Moreau	Sportsman's Alliance of Maine
MA	Michael Auger	Director, Land Protection & Stewardship Androscoggin Land Trust
BA	Brian Alexander	Mountain Biking balexander1@roadrunner.com
SM	Stephen Mohr	Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects Inc. smohr@mohrseredin.com
TS	Tatyanna Seredin	Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects Inc. tseredin@mohrseredin.com

RH	Ron Hunt	Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands ron.hunt@maine.gov
WH	Will Harris	Director, Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands will.harris@maine.gov
KE	Kathy Eickenberg	Chief of Planning, Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands katherine.eickenberg@maine.org
RT	Rex Turner	Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands rex.turner@maine.gov
BF	Bruce Farnham	Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands bruce.farnham@maine.gov
SR	Scott Ramsay	Off-Road Vehicle Director, Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands scott.ramsay@maine.gov
JW	Joe Wiley	Wildlife Biologist, Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands joe.wiley@maine.gov

A. AGENDA

- Introduction – Will Harris
- 2. Draft Master Plan Review – Mohr & Seredin
 - Recommendations/Goals
 - Draft Master Plan
 - Review of Uses/Routes
 - Detailed Concept Plans
- 3. Advisory Committee Comments
- 4. Next Steps – Kathy Eickenberg

B. DISCUSSION

The following notes summarize the presentations and discussion points covered at the meeting.

2.0 Welcome, Introductory Remarks:

- 1.1 Will Harris (WH), Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands, began the meeting with a very brief status of the planning process to date and turned the meeting over to Mohr & Seredin for presentation.

2.0 Mohr & Seredin:

- 2.1 Stephen Mohr (SM), of Mohr & Seredin reviewed the goals for this Advisory Committee meeting: first to present the working draft master plan recommendations; next to provide a chance for every committee member to provide comments on the direction that the plan is taking, and finally to finalize the schedule/direction for completing the plan.
- 2.2 Stephen reviewed the draft master plan with the committee, including
 - Goals/Purpose*
 - Environmental Issues
 - Trail Issues

Draft Master Plan

Individual Route plans for: ATV, biking, hiking, horseback riding, boating, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing.

Detail plan for main park entrance

Detail plan for picnic area

Detail plan for Conant Road entry

3.0 Advisory Committee Comments:

3.1 Charlie Noonan – Charlie stated that he is worried that designating the north entrance as the main entrance for the Park could be problematic in creating congestion on the Center Bridge Road as the park grows and as use of the NextEra boat launch increases.

3.2 Ray Boies – Asked what the boat landings would look like – will they be docks with floats? What do the 75-foot buffer zones and the waterfowl habitats mean; will they impact ability to go fishing in these areas? Kathy, Joe, and Stephen answered that the buffer zones and wildlife habitat areas won't change any ability to fish in the river. SM responded that the boat landing areas within ARP will have signage and, at some point, improvements for safe landing.

3.3 Ernie Deluca – Pointed out that the boat launch proposed in Greene by NextEra is being contested by the abutters, so it is unknown if it will move forward. Mohr & Seredin will show it as a proposed carry-in launch.

Ernie also said that there are 4 islands in the river that currently have picnic areas on which NextEra will allow camping, provided the local municipality (Turner) issues a fire permit. He indicated NextEra would have to provide sanitation facilities to allow this. Discussion followed about the logistics of the Fire Department issuing a permit, then having to respond to an emergency on an island.

3.4 Dave Chabot – Asked if trapping is still allowed, as it isn't mentioned in the masterplan. SM responded that it still is a use planned for the Riverlands. DC thinks it is necessary to help keep the beaver population down.

Dave also has concern about the boat landings and the turtle habitat and fish spawning habitat, especially in the center picnic meadow area. Jody asked if it would be appropriate to close during turtle season? Joe W. indicated that turtles lay eggs 1st two weeks in June, and eggs hatch throughout summer into next spring, depending upon weather.

Dave expressed concern about future vehicle access/parking areas on the interior of the park, and his ability to monitor what is taking place.

3.5 Mike Auger – Echoed turtle habitat concerns. He also indicated that he is attending the meeting in Jonathan LaBonte's place, as Jonathan couldn't attend. Mike distributed a letter from JLB indicating the Land Trust's support for the direction that the master plan is taking. Mike indicated that the ALT supports the vision plan and that they feel that it strikes a good balance between the different uses.

3.6 Neil Ward – Stated that the camping on the island(s) has become an issue for him. He gets several phone calls a year from people wishing to camp on the islands, and he doesn't know where to send them for permission. There is definitely an interest in camping. It was noted that a permit from the Town of Turner is need for fires on the island. Neil supported the proposed plan.

3.7 Jody Goodwin – Overall the recommendations in the masterplan are great. She feels that we need to be careful with the Conant Road access because of the neighborhood. Looking to obtain an access point from Upper Street is good, especially as it may take the pressure off of the Conant Road access.

She suggested that perhaps only two boat access points into ARP would suffice because of the Turtles. The first priority of the plan should be protecting the animal life and the ecology of the property. She is especially interested in boat access to the historic Mower foundations at the middle of the property.

She was glad to see that maintaining hunting on the property is part of the plan – not only for hunters but to keep the deer population at a reasonable level.

She likes the southern part of the property as a preservation area - as off-limits to ATV's except for hunting season. She indicated that she heard that the hunters won't want ATV's in there because they will scare the deer, but that they will use the ATV's to retrieve the deer carcass.

JG is not in favor of banning mountain biking from the Homestead and Ridge trails.

1.1 Ed Morris – In regards to the recommendation to acquire access from Upper Street he is questioning where is the money coming from to purchase it? Others answered that a funding source isn't known yet, but the access could also come in the form of an easement.

EM stated that the southern end isn't often groomed for snowmobile use so it would be great for XC ski and snowshoeing. Scott Ramsay said that snowmobilers often travel right on the river. Jody said that skiers and snowmobilers can use the same trail – and it often makes skiers feel safer, in case there is a need to get help.

The M&S Plan should be marked to show groomed vs. primitive snowmobile routes.

1.2 Mike Spugnardi – Mike was not opposed to limiting ATV use at the southern end as it is not used that much any more. He wanted to know more about the unauthorized access points. How many are documented? SM responded that there are 7 or 8 that M&S have noted. MS and LR believe that these are from local landowners.

1.3 Larry Robinson – Would like to see if there's a chance to keep the unauthorized west access routes for ATV's open, because it will become an issue with people cutting new trails and going around if existing trails are blocked.

If the trails aren't used at the south end, LR noted that they will become overgrown and close in. The ATV riders can maintain the trail to keep it open, and thereby share expenses for maintenance with the State.

LR stated that there is very little use of the south end anymore, and he would like to see it as a preservation area.

- 1.1 Brian Alexander – State that most mountain bikers don't want the Ridge trail closed to mountain biking. Some people are worried about user conflict and erosion, but he doesn't see it happening. With the re-design of the trails it will be perfectly suited for both hikers and bikers. There are lots of bikers who are willing to help maintain trails. There are hardly any hikers using the trail right now. Did Michelle Altamore get data on how many people hiked the ridge trail? It was noted that she didn't get use trail by trail.

If there are no more new trails to be built, maybe the existing trails can be improved for all, then see how it goes. If there is a conflict, then look for remedies?

It was stated that this issue would be discussed in detail in a meeting set for November 24, 2009.

- 1.2 Mike Moreau – Would like to make sure that trapping is included as a continued use within the park. It was stated that trapping will continue, as long as a permit is obtained per Maine State Law. Ron Hunt added that, in order to help allay fears that hunting might not be allowed, the signs were posted at the park this year advising users that hunting is an allowed use on the land. Jody raised the concern about trapping and dogs, and that perhaps it would be a good idea to let people know via signage that dogs should remain on leash for their own protection.
- 1.3 David Hediger – Wanted to echo what Jody said regarding preserving the Homestead Trail and the Ridge Trail for both mountain biking and hiking. We should be providing for as many uses as possible. He doesn't see a problem now.

The river access points should be defined and designated to limit damage to the environment and habitat, avoiding sensitive areas like turtle nesting areas.

Overall David supported the balance achieved in the draft master plan which proposes minimal changes to the trails. Use will increase, and the plan should be revisited at some point, maybe in 10 years.

- 1.1 Bruce Farnham – BF noted that as more people use the park, it will be difficult to maintain the park as is and preserve its character. BF noted that it would be good to talk out some of the potential issues and conflicts now. Doesn't like the second parking area for hiking only at the north end. Maybe keep the one parking area and define where truck/trailer parking goes vs. cars, and utilize a kiosk to direct people where to go would be a better plan. He is nervous about a southern entrance becoming a problem area.

-
- 1.2 Joe Wiley – Just spent time at the park and it doesn't look much used. Joe stated that he has no issues except for some minor erosion issues, which can be fixed.
 - 1.3 Rex Turner – By virtue of being a state park, there will be at least some amount of publicity (web, brochures, etc.) which will start attracting new users – as it has already. The Advisory Committee needs to keep in mind that there will be people who are not skilled outdoorspeople at ARP.
 - 1.4 Scott Ramsay – The people who use the southern trail are those who live at the southern end. If it is closed to ATV's will they have to trailer their machines to the north or they will choose illegal entry. Another option is to keep the route/trail in a primitive condition – people enjoy the difficulty of the trail. The maintenance at the southern end hasn't been very good. ORV has been holding off until the plan was done.
 - 1.5 Ron Hunt – Bruce made a good point about conflicting uses between mountain biking and hiking. He's noticed that there is a central trail for hikers and a sine-wave trail weaving back and forth over the central trail for the bikes. This needs to be carefully looked at and coordinated in detail, as it is confusing the way it is right now, as it's unclear where the trail actually is.

4.0 Discussion:

- 4.1 Jody thought that there might be a need for accommodation for ATV use on the south.
- 4.2 Bruce noted that it might create more problems if ATV use was limited on the south end.
- 4.3 Charlie – state that he is worried about the proposed Auburn trail that it to be extended to ARP. It may be highly developed and it would lead to the undeveloped preservation area of the Riverlands.
- 4.4 Kathy Eickenburg noted that the purpose of this meeting was not to decide on the best plan, but to decide on what will be presented at the public meeting, which could include options.
- 4.5 Scott thought that there might be 3 options for use at the south end. 1-keep it primitive, 2-keep it improved, 3-allow use during hunting season as proposed in the draft plan.
- 4.6 Stephen indicated to the committee that we should revisit the issues of the hike / bike separation, and the ATV use on the south end of the park with the public.

5.0 Schedule:

- 5.1 After discussion it was agreed that the Public Meeting will be held on December 8th.
- 5.2 Kathy reviewed the schedule for the rest of the planning process. It is:
 - Public Meeting – December 8, 2009
 - Comment Period through December 23, 2009
 - Final Draft to Advisory Committee (AC) by January 15, 2010
 - Final Comments from AC by January 29, 2010
 - Plan Completion and Adoption by February 6, 2010

Meeting notes prepared by Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects and reviewed by Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. Please notify us within 7 days of any inaccuracies in these notes.



APPENDIX C
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

Androscoggin Riverlands Park
Public Meeting -Turner
May 20, 2009
6:30 pm to 9:30 pm.
Leavitt High School
Summary of discussions and comments:

Property History

- Turner Cove
- Smith and Allen Wilber
- Mill foundations under water
- Logging historic use

Current Uses

- ATV – LA Trails connect
- Snowmobile
- Hiking
- Biking
- Horse
- Camping for backpackers
- Trapping

Leeds parcel

- State owned
- Camping overnight
- Hiking
- Sawmill

Public Concerns

- Airport Sounds (Expected) ATV Sounds (Not Wanted)
- Emergency access along river (4 mile trek to the inner core of property)
- Additional boat ramp??? Needed (Ex. Higgins Sport Boat launch)
- Motorized boating on the river
- Hunting access will not be restricted
- Expand hike, bike & horse trails
- Volunteer base – local groups to maintain trails for use
- Friends of Bradbury
- Community assistance (volunteers for trail construction and maintenance)
- Land for Maine's Future (created original vision for property)
- Original vision of land use
 - Low impact uses
 - Concerns Conant Road access
 - Not over developed (visions)
 - Cross country skiing
 - Keep rural
- No fee access (for local residents)
- Trail skill levels be posted (signage)
- Stay open to hunting (continued use)

-
- Trapping (continued use)
 - Camping on river (continued use)
 - Hunting safety (crossing uses)
 - No ATV's allowed in Maine State Parks (only 2 parks with ATV use)
 - Conant Road abutters (ATV disturbance)
 - Boat-to or walk-to camping
 - Economic traffic in Turner (southern entrance by-passes Turner businesses)
 - Trail boundaries – signage
 - Motorized/separate non-motorized trails
 - More policing of trails (Conant Road complaints)
 - Warming huts (for extending existing Androscoggin Trail System)
 - Facilities throughout park (bathrooms)
 - Upper road “park boundaries”
 - Markers / signage (trespassing on abutters land)
 - Alternate park access (mid-parcel)
 - Park signage for direction
 - Blue trail
 - Separate hiking/biking
 - Local – hotel (none in Turner) Where do people stay?
 - Non- “asphalt”/paved roads (requested)
 -
 - ATV problem = issues access (don't know where to go)
 - Annual maintenance funding available for ATV/Snowmobile
 - Requests for bathrooms
 - 3-sided shelter for hikers w/fire
 - Recreational trail program
 - Overnight camping – designated areas for tents

Financial Concerns

- Funding source for development – no \$'s yet
- Planning first to get \$
- Phasing a possibility
- Bond and grant money available
- Concerns – boat traffic at ramp (Town of Turner to pay for maintenance??)
- State park revenues returned to towns
 - 7% Portioned back to Towns
- Town of Turner (does not pay for)
 - “Wear –n-tear”
 - Roads
 - Trash
- Town of Turner does not own boat launch- FL & Power owned
- Accessing the park via the river by-passes a fee system

Original Vision for the Park

- Limited uses for park (limit uses of park to bike, hike, snowshoe, camp and fish)
 - No camping
 - Selective uses (limited)
 - Trails park
 - Homesteads (historical aspects)

Example similar parks in Maine:

- Mt. Blue (Center hills)(for trails)
 - > Rustic/rural park
 - > Multi-use trail
- West Branch of Penobscot (water access)
 - > River access camping
 - > Sensitive to wildlife

Why do we need a state park?

- Unique park character
- 40% of population within 30 miles
- Androscoggin Corridor Development
- Active stewardship presence
- Bass tourney's very popular (parking issues)
- Non-traditional park (free mind of traditional designs of the past)

Androscoggin Riverlands Park

Public Meeting Lewiston, Maine

Date: June 30, 2009

Summary of discussions and comments:

Public comment included the following topics:

- Water access close to L/A is a wonderful attribute of this park and the new park is a nice opportunity.
- Trail access in this part of the region must be looked at carefully to avoid conflicts with trails over private property.
- Working with local municipalities is important.
- Minor changes to existing land are okay; keep it undeveloped which is its uniqueness.
- Conflict with hunting and trails must be avoided; keep an area set aside for hunting.
- Do not over-develop the property. The beauty of it is that is not developed.
- A comparison with Bradbury Mountain State Park was made to talk about hunting versus other park uses.
- Signage at entrance, and clean-up of signage, is all that is needed for improvements at ARP.
- Separate the trail uses (ATV vs hiking) so that conflicts are avoided and the park can be used by different groups at the same time.
- Horse trails should not be forgotten; maybe a separate trail system is needed or signage and controls.
- Multi-use trails (for all uses) are great, but trails for just hikers should be included.
- Bike racks need to be added at ARP.
- Cross-country trails separate from ATV trails, and controls for ATV uses are needed.
- Signage to prevent access to/from abutting private lands is essential.
- Wildlife field trips should not allow mechanical vehicles to view wildlife.
- The model of a Land Trust parcel was cited as a good model - no fees to access the ARP lands, was noted as preferable.
- The issue of boating access to the river was discussed. There was a desire to horsepower limits for water use put in place.
- Keep large areas of the park open to sportsmen because that has been the historic use.
- There is a need to maintain a gated entrance and to police for no dumping.
- Law enforcement and emergency services were discussed. It was suggested that a sub-committee consisting of LA police, Maine State Police, forestry and IF&W be formed to develop an enforcement/emergency services plans.
- Will there be a fee for park use? That is not known, but will be part of this plan.
- The issue of hunting at public state parks was raised; Ron Hunt discussed how it is handled at existing parks.
- A trail map depicting hunting areas will need to be developed.
- There was a question of the development of a park vision; this is what is being done now by the Advisory Committee.

-
- The Lisbon Beaver Park was cited as an example of a parcel where existing conditions were preserved and a park being not over-developed.
 - 4-season uses are existing uses at ARP and must be continued in the new park.
 - There was a desire to see a written management plan/trash pick-up/clean-up/which will be a part of the master plan for this park.
 - Preservation of wildlife habitat is important; it was felt that a good portion of the parcel needs to be left alone.
 - There was a desire to develop a trail maintenance system? The State will do this part of this plan.
 - Hunting uses must be allowed to continue at this parcel.
 - Are there records of existing trail uses? These are being gathered/worked upon this year.

**Androscoggin Riverlands Park
Public Meeting
University of Southern Maine Lewiston-Auburn Conference Facilities
51 Westminster Street, Lewiston, ME**

Date: December 8, 2009

- 1.0. Introduction - Will Harris (WH) spoke for Commissioner McGowan, as he was ill and unable to attend. He welcomed the public and thanked the Committee for a master plan for a “new type of state park.”
- 2.0. Kathy Eickenberg (KE) reviewed the background and history of the land, and described the process for the establishment of a plan for a new park.
- 3.0. Stephen Mohr (SM) of Mohr and Seredin presented the Master Plan for the park.
- 4.0. Public Remarks: Public comment included the following;
 - 4.1. SM started the public comment by relaying a comment that he received earlier in the evening: A community member indicated that there are occasions when there are problems with insufficient parking in the main parking lot, and he would like to see additional ATV and trailers parking at the south end of the park.
 - 4.2. Ed Plourde stated that he was pleased to see more boat access. However, he would like a bit more description about what is envisioned for the center of the park. SM described the detailed site plan and picnic area, including the seasonal carry-in/out boat ramp.
 - 4.3. Sean Savianano uses the park for mountain biking. He is feeling more optimistic about the master plan than he was at the last meeting. However, based on the mileage shown on the plan, he feels that the amount of trails is cut in half. SM indicated that the mileage shown on the plans is a one-way distance, so the travel would be twice that shown.

He also noted that the bikes are not allowed on the Homestead trail, and he proposed that the bikes be able to keep using half of the Homestead Trail, if not the whole trail.

He asked about who was in charge of constructing the new trail, as the biking group would like to volunteer to do this. KE indicated that the Bureau will have to be involved closely, as it would need to carefully lay out the trail and have the area reviewed by natural resource specialists to avoid environmentally sensitive areas.
 - 4.5. Senator Nutting – has gone hiking on the Leeds land and noted that hiking along snowmobile trails is a wonderful experience. He expressed the hope that someday the public would be provided access to the snowmobile trail on the Leeds property for hiking. He supported water access-only camping on the Leeds lands.

-
- 4.6 Jose Derocher - Introduced himself as a mountain biker, and indicated that he would like to be involved with layout of the new trails by helping to flag out the potential route.
- 4.7 (Unidentified) Said that he has been hauling deer on old tote road for 18 years. He leaves his ATV behind until he gets his deer and then uses the ATV to retrieve the deer. This year couldn't use the tote road. He stated that as long as you are not doing damage it should be ok to use the road for ATV retrieval of deer. Future gate is a control point and doesn't want to wait for gate to open for hunting. He likes it the way it is now.
- 4.8 Tom Berube –noted that the plan included trapping and hunting, but noted that it didn't specifically mention waterfowl hunting. He also recommended that it be illegal for people to construct permanent blinds for waterfowl hunting as it would destroy the aesthetics and is unnecessary in his view.
- 4.9 Jonathan LaBonte, Androscoggin Land Trust . Expressed that the natural resources are unique and fragile. Of utmost importance for ALT would be to protect the natural resources. He supports the direction proposed for the plan, which respects the original vision for these lands expressed in the original LMF application . It is important that this vision result in protection out into the future – that it has some permanence. He feels that it's a good solution to allow ATV use only during hunting season only in the south. In regards to the Homestead Trail, the Androscoggin Land Trust built it for foot traffic and snowshoeing only and it is signed for that now and as such, it should be respected for its intended use.
- 4.10 Ed Plourde – will there be proper trail signage installed at the same time that the entrance is fully signed?
- Will Harris – agrees that signage is key to making this park usable, and he understands that without good signage the Bureau could not expect recreational uses to be consistent with its Plans. Probably start marking from north to south. While funds are limited, we do have trails program funds (RTP) that can and should be used for this.
- 4.11 Jared Buckingham – stated that the ridge trail should be multi-use for hikers and bikers and wondered how it would be signed. Presently the hiking trail takes a straight up the hill approach, while the mountain biking trail has switchbacks, and wondered if the two paths would continue or be combined.
- 4.12 Ray Boies – Noted that dirt bikers are not mentioned. Will they be allowed?
- Scott Ramsay (State ORV) explained that the State does not make a distinction between ATV/dirt bikes, and that dirt bikes are considered ATV's and are allowed.
- KE – noted that the dirt bikes are allowed on ATV trails only.

4.13 David Hediger – questioned what is the opportunity to revisit this master plan in the future?

WH – This plan will be the overall guiding policy for the next 15 years, with a review approximately every 5 years.

4.14 Jonathan LaBonte – LMF funds were used for the purchase of the original portion of this park and it is important to understand if the Plan has to abide by the original intent expressed for the use of those LMF funds, or is any way constrained by that intention. There are other funds that have been used to improve the park and those should be checked as well to see if there are other intentions in place for the property.

WH – stated that our Plans do routinely reflect agreements and restrictions that were executed as part of the acquisition.

5.0 Closing Remarks:

5.1 Will Harris closed the meeting and stated that written comment are due by December 23.

APPENDIX D

RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL FEATURES

Prepared by

Ryan Williamson

Matt Ensner

Matt Schlobohm

Ethan Miller

Curtis Bohlen

at Bates College

Lewiston, Maine

1996

(Full Report: see Miller et. Al. 1996 in References)

TURNER LANDS Recreational and Archaeological Features

KEY

- Flooded Homestead
- Homestead Remains
- Flooded Schoolhouse
- Windmill
- Cemetery
- Flooded Cemetery
- Cistern
- Sawmill (abandoned)
- Boat Launch
- Picnic areas
- Homestead Trail (blue blazed)
- River Road (unflooded)
- River Road (flooded)
- Multi-Use Trails
- Roads
- Allen Pond Road
- Trails (unblazed)
- Caleb Gilbert Road (abandoned)
- Stone walls
- State property
- River Before Flooding
- Wetlands (national wetlands inventory)
- Mowed Fields

INHABITANTS OF HOMESTEADS

Based on 1873 Maine Atlas

- 1— A. G. Day
- 2— L. B. Gilbert
- 3— G. Harrington
- 4— S.S. Gould
- 5— A. Rose
- 6— S. Townsend Jr.
- 7— A. K. P. Gilbert
- 8— S. Townsend
- 9— N. P. Bryant
- 10— H. G. O. Mower
- 11— A. K. P. Mower



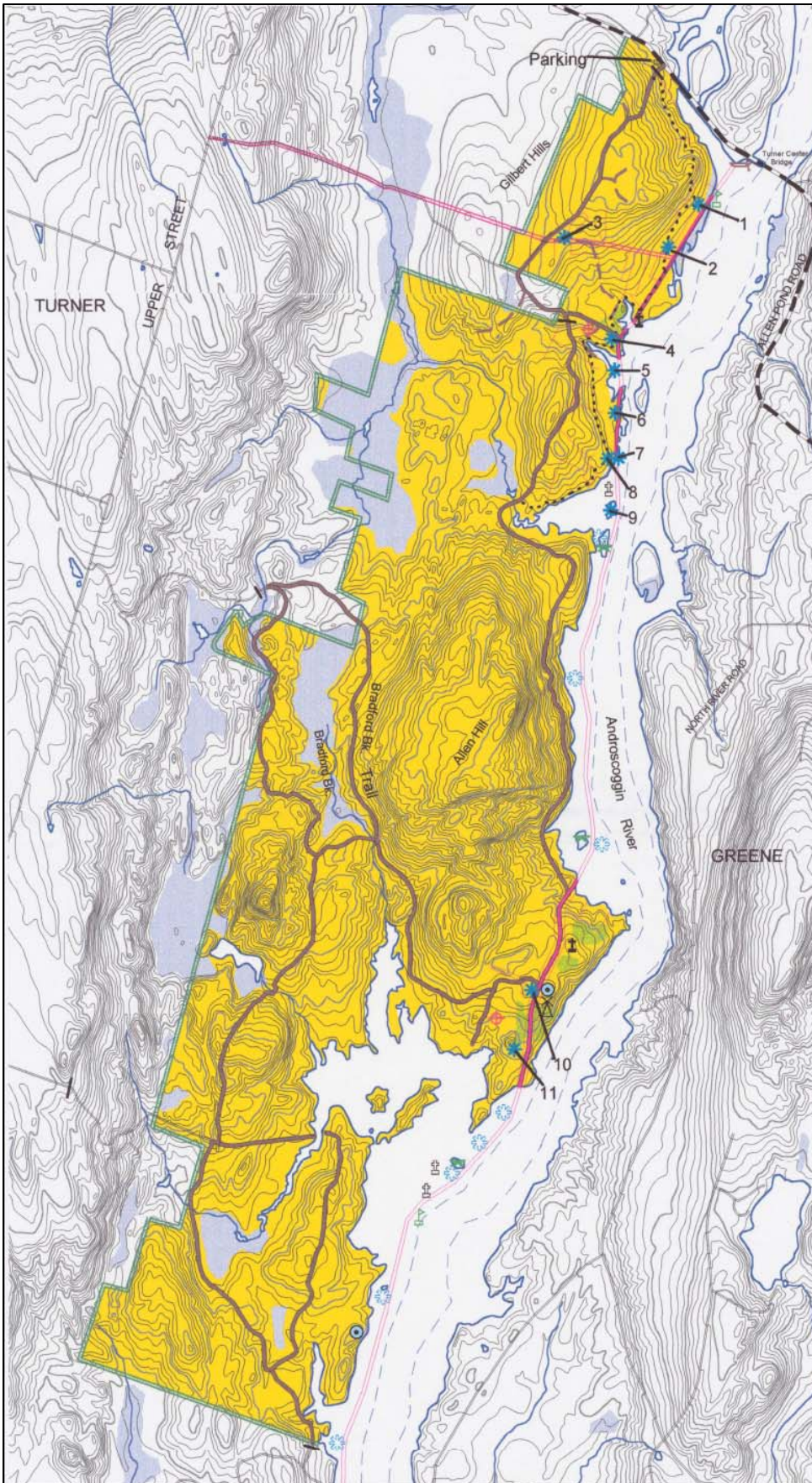
On the shore of the Androscoggin river above Lewiston, branching off the main highway just above Barkerville, once was a much travelled road called River Road. There were fertile farms on either side, happy homes, grand old trees of Elm and Oak, lush green meadows where at dusk the sweet sad call of the whippoorwill could be heard and the faint distant sound of cowbells as the cows came home.

Mostly the people who lived by the side of the old River Road were descendants of the old settlers—People whose ancestors were born there and whose life-roots were struck deep into the soil.

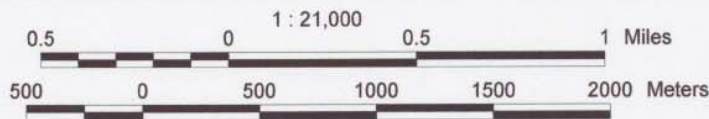
But in the march of progress a huge storage dam was built on the river just below this lovely valley. Farms had to be abandoned, houses were demolished and the beautiful shade trees destroyed. The lowlands were inundated, the water rising to the roof of the little schoolhouse on the hill. A few houses were left, the water coming up too quickly to be torn down. Windless with sagging sills and beams, they stand a mute protest against the ruthless advance of industry.

A part of the road is not covered by water and is now grass-grown and nearly obliterated, truly a sad sight to the many who lived and loved along the way of "The Old River Road."

—Maude Greenleaf
Born in house site # 8 (11/1/1824 - 7/4/1980)



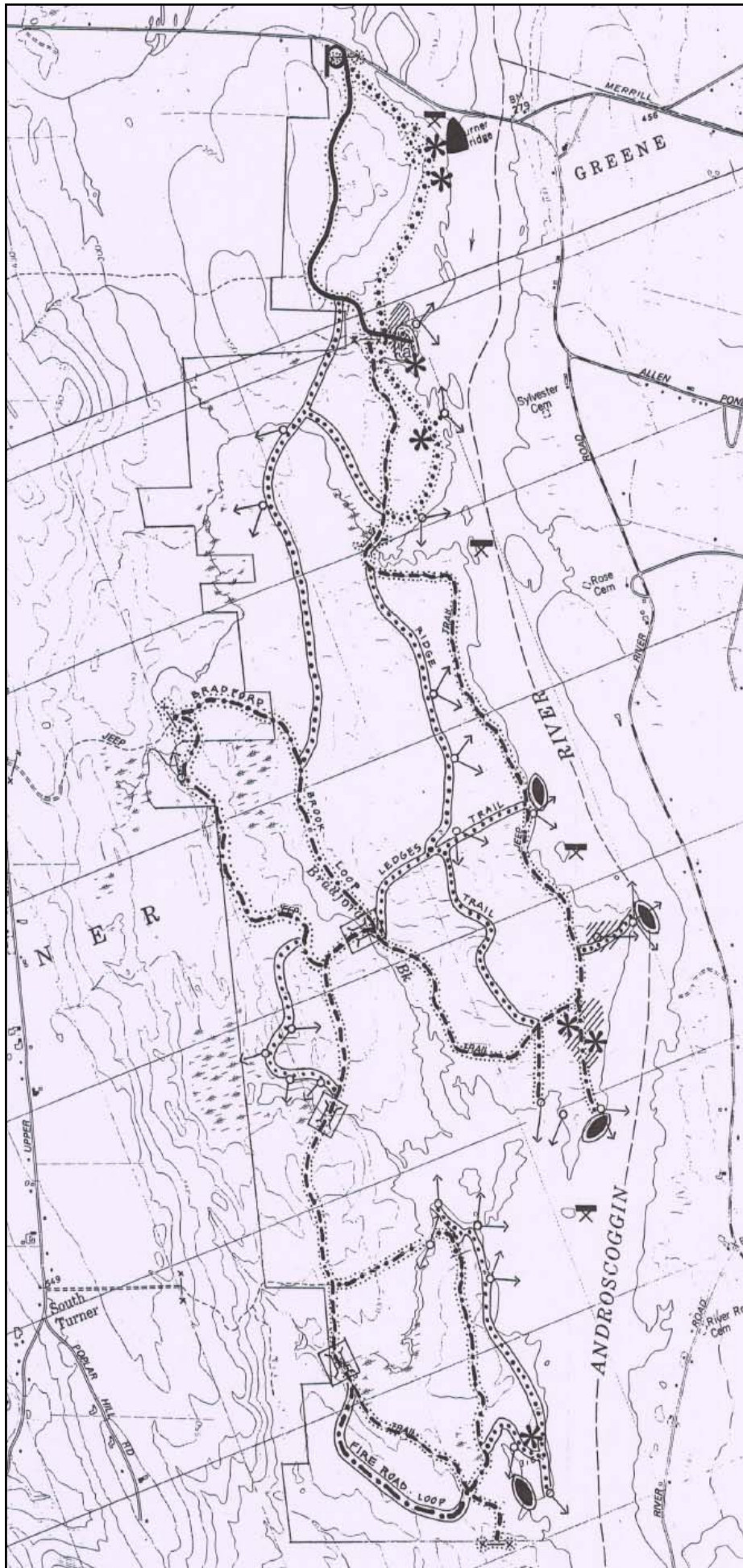
—Map prepared by—
Ryan Williamson
Matt Ensner
Matt Schlobohm
Ethan Miller
Curtis Bohlen



APPENDIX E

1996 TRAILS PLAN

Prepared for the Bureau of Parks and Lands
By the Androscoggin Land Trust
With assistance from the National Park Service
(Full report on file)



KEY	
x-x	Gate
	Bridge
- - - -	State Property Line
p	Parking
—	All-Vehicle Road (conditions permitting)
- - - -	Fire Road/Multi-Use Trail
- · - · -	Multi-Use Trail
- · - · -	Hiking/Cross-country
· · · · ·	Skiing Trail
(a)	Wheelchair Accessible Trail
●	Small Boat Landing Site
▶	CMP Boat Launch Area
✕	CMP Picnic Areas
///	Maintained Fields
*	Point of Interest: Homestead Remains
↗	Views
· · · · ·	Existing Feature
==	Proposed Feature

APPENDIX F

**1988 Land for Maine's Future Project Application
Androscoggin Riverlands**

Selected Pages

A PROPOSAL TO THE
LAND FOR MAINE'S FUTURE BOARD

FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE

**THE TURNER
DIAMOND OCCIDENTAL
LANDS**

SEPTEMBER 1988

LMFB PROPOSAL FOR ACQUISITION OF THE
TURNER DIAMOND OCCIDENTAL LANDS

1. Date of application: August 30, 1988

The Androscoggin Riverlands Preservation Council submitted a letter of intent in late August. (See Attachment 1)

2. Entity submitting proposal:

Androscoggin Riverlands Preservation Council

The Council is a citizens group dedicated to preserving the Diamond Occidental tracts along the Androscoggin in Turner and Leeds as open space for the unspoiled future enjoyment of the Lewiston-Auburn Region and the State of Maine. An informal steering committee of representatives from Turner, Leeds, Greene, Auburn and Lewiston guides the Council's efforts.

3. Address:

P.O. Box 157
Turner, Maine 04282

4. Telephone: Contact person-

John Maloney
783-9186(W)
225-2164(H)

5. Names of persons knowledgeable about site:

John Maloney (783-9186)
Paul Varney (224-7411)
Larry Robinson (784-3079)

LOCATION DATA

6. Site name:

Turner Diamond Occidental Lands

7. USGS Quadrangle Name:

Lake Auburn East- 1979
Turner Center- 1967

8. Town Tax Map No(s.):

Town of Turner:
Map 35 Lot 2
Map 35 Lot 1-2
Map 18 Lot 35-1-2
Map 33 Lot 35-1-2
Map 17 Lot 35-1-2

9. County: Androscoggin

10. Town: Turner

11. Maps:

Regional setting- Delorme Atlas Map 11 (See Attachment 2)
Site Map- USGS 7 1/2 minute base (See Attachment 3)

ACQUISITION DATA

12. Desired level of acquisition:

- a. Fee simple- Turner Diamond Occidental Lands
- b. Access easement to river- Central Maine Power Company

13. Timetable for acquisition:

Immediate acquisition.

James River Company has just agreed in principle to purchase 23 % of the common stock of Diamond Occidental with an option to buy the rest after November 1993. Under the terms of the agreement, James River will manage the timber and sawmill operations of Diamond and manage the sale of land "not strategic to the future of Diamond." (See Attachment 4) It is likely that James River will seek to sell the Turner Diamond Occidental Lands as soon as possible because the lands are too far from the company's mills to provide an economic timber supply.

Turner is the fastest growing town in Androscoggin County. Town ordinances allow the parcel to be divided into 2 acre residential lots. The Turner Diamond Occidental Lands offer prime space to a residential real estate developer. Several developers expressed an interest in this parcel when Diamond offered it for sale earlier this year as part of a 61,000 acre package.

14. Percent of matching funds available [if known]:

In-kind management contributions:
The Town of Turner has agreed to maintain the parking area. Local organizations have agreed to maintain existing

trails and to work with the state to develop management plans for the protection of natural resources. (see Management Considerations)

The Council is not aware of any matching funds.

15. Proposed lead negotiator:

Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

The Council has worked with the Department to develop this proposal. The Department's mandate, philosophy and expertise are ideally suited to management of this area for minimal impact recreation and habitat preservation. (See Attachment 5, letter from the Department dated August 31, 1988)

16. Degree of local and municipal interest:

Citizens, organizations and elected representatives from the towns of Turner, Leeds, Greene, Auburn and Lewiston enthusiastically support state acquisition of the Turner Diamond Occidental Lands. Letters of support from local organizations, a petition signed by over 400 citizens (including all members of the Maine legislature representing Turner, Greene, Leeds, Auburn and Lewiston and the Mayor and members of the Auburn City Council) and an editorial from the Lewiston Sun endorsing acquisition are attached. (Attachment 6, letters of support and petition; Attachment 7 newspaper articles)

The Androscoggin Riverlands Preservation Council was formed following a public meeting in Turner last May to discuss imminent sale of the Diamond Occidental Lands. The Council has coordinated acquisition efforts since then.

17. Degree of landowner cooperation:

On several occasions during the past six months, Bonnie Lounsbury, a member of the Council steering committee, has discussed local interest in state acquisition with Brent Halsey, Jr., a vice-president of James River in Richmond, Virginia. She has been assured that the company would be willing to deal with the state on a fair and reasonable basis and that the company would prefer state acquisition to development.

18. Preliminary estimate of market value/availability for sale:

The Council believes that James River would be willing to sell the Turner Diamond Occidental Lands to the state for their market value.

In the fall of 1987, Diamond Occidental valued these lands at \$1,242,270 as part of a package of 61,000 acres deemed suitable for development. Diamond asked \$27 million for the entire package.

The Council has no independent estimate of market value but is aware of several factors significantly affecting that value:

- a. To provide access to the water, a developer must obtain easements from Central Maine Power Company.
- b. To provide access to the site from the west or south, at least one of which is necessary, a developer must obtain easements for road construction from abutting landowners.
- c. A developer must pay penalties for taking the land out of Tree Growth Tax protection.

John Maloney, a member of the steering committee, has discussed state acquisition with several officials of Central Maine Power, including William Campbell, David Allen, Ann Finlawson and Bud Newall. All have expressed interest in and support for state acquisition and willingness to grant the necessary access easements.

19. Preliminary estimate of acquisition cost:

See answer to question 18.

James River, because it is a paper company, may be willing to exchange the Turner Diamond Occidental Lands for timberland owned by the Bureau of Public Lands.

20. Other relevant information:

The Turner Diamond Occidental Lands border Gulf Island Pond whose level is controlled in part by the Central Maine Power Gulf Island Dam. CMP owns the land between the normal pond level and the 265 foot elevation contour.

Diamond Occidental does not own one block of approximately 300 acres on the western side of the parcel. This block should be acquired both because it contains a unique wetland and because the resulting rectangular parcel would be easier to manage as a unit. The Town of Turner tax map numbers for the block are: Map 34 Lots 1,2,3,4,5,6,8, and 9.

Diamond Occidental also owns a 252 acre parcel with substantial river frontage in Leeds, on the north side of the Turner Center Bridge. The state may be able to acquire this parcel as part of a package with the Turner Lands so that the state could offer public land and access on both sides of the river.

21. Brief summary of property, describing its natural features and characteristics that would make it eligible for consideration by the LMFB:

The Turner Diamond Occidental Lands comprise 1818 acres of undeveloped land with 9.4 miles of river frontage, the largest block of undeveloped shore on the Androscoggin. Yet they lie only five miles from Lewiston-Auburn. The Lands are located in an especially scenic section of the river, Gulf Island Pond, where the river is dotted with islands and lined with a convoluted shore.

The Lands form a unique area which arose as a result of the geology and geologic processes that have occurred. The topography is varied with sections of flatland in peninsulas close to the river extending inward to a stepped topography, in some places with steep easterly slopes. These steep rock slopes are a result of glacial plucking of the thin bedded metamorphic Sangerville Formation. Several small streams descending from the hills to the west provide interesting little inlets and small bays between the flats of the peninsulas. One section (which should also be acquired) just out of the most southerly segment contains a unique bog caught in the middle of a bedrock basin. Because of the topography, the area is isolated from the farms and dwellings on Upper Street.

The Lands are primarily forested with both hard and soft woods. They also encompass five wetlands greater than ten acres each and scattered abandoned fields.

From 1937-1967 the Lands formed a State Game Preserve. Although Diamond Occidental has managed the Lands for timber production since then, the area remains significant wildlife habitat. Diamond cut a small area in the northern end several years ago, but that cut has minimal impact on recreational uses.

The entire parcel is served by a single jeep trail, making the Lands most appropriately managed for the low-impact recreational uses that have evolved: hunting, fishing from the banks, scenic viewing, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, hiking, horseback riding, nature study, picnicking, camping.

22. Describe the state significance of the property, referencing any supporting materials or testimony:

The Turner Diamond Occidental lands meet all three tests of state significance.

1. The Lands provide public access to outdoor recreation opportunity of state importance.

The Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments report, The Lower Androscoggin River Recreation and Management Plan (1983), ranked the potential high for the following activities in the Diamond Occidental Lands area: hunting, trail travel, natural study, boat fishing, bank fishing and general canoeing. Within the study corridor from Lewiston to Livermore Falls, a 40 mile stretch, AVCOG ranked the recreation potential highest in the area of the Diamond Occidental Lands.

Central Maine Power Company's Concept Plan for the Future Development and Management of Central Maine Power Company's Recreational Facilities finds that "Gulf Island Pond represents a significant recreational resource close to major population centers."

2. The Turner Diamond Occidental Lands offer multiple outstanding resources or recreational values of state importance in more than one category of lands.

The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has characterized the Lands as "significant" due to their size, riparian habitat, boat access, upland habitat, wetlands and deer wintering areas. (See attachments 8, 9)

The Natural Areas Inventory of Maine has identified Gulf Island Pond as a "natural area" because of its undeveloped scenic shoreline.

3. The Lands contain a single exceptional value.

The Lands offer passive and low-intensity active recreation for those in the Lewiston-Auburn population cluster.

23. Major land category:

Recreation lands.

Residents of the Turner, Greene, Leeds, Lewiston, Auburn region already use the Turner Diamond Occidental Lands and that area of the river for a variety of recreational activities: hunting, fishing, scenic viewing, hiking, nature study, picnicking, backcountry camping, cross-country skiing. (See also, the answer to question 31.) These activities are both appropriate for the Lands and much needed in the region.

The Council proposes that these traditional uses continue but that the opportunity to enjoy them becomes known and available to more people.

24. Single exceptional value:

The Turner Diamond Occidental Lands offer Lands near population clusters available for passive or low-intensity active recreation that is among the best in the state.

The Turner Diamond Occidental Lands lie just five miles from downtown Lewiston-Auburn. Lewiston-Auburn is the second largest population center in the state with a 1987 population of 71,281 (figures from the Lewiston-Auburn Economic Growth Council, LAECG). Within 20 miles of the Lands, 150,000 people reside.

From 1970-1980, Lewiston-Auburn experienced a net loss in population. Since 1980 the situation has changed dramatically. In 1987, for the first time, LAECG projected a net increase and a substantial increase in population:

	1980	1987	1996
Lewiston	40,481	44,642	50,008
Auburn	23,128	26,639	30,902
Lewiston/Auburn SMSA	83,186	87,984	101,273

Lewiston-Auburn lacks the outdoor recreation opportunities that the Turner Diamond Occidental Lands provide. Lewiston-Auburn ranks well below the state median for trail type parks, according to the 1988 draft Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCROP). The 1987 Concept Plan for the Future Development and Management of Central Maine Power Company's Recreation Facilities noted that the region including Lewiston, Auburn and Lisbon contained greater deficiencies than any other planning district in horseback riding, camping, picnicking, canoe access and nature interpretation. Inland swimming, boat access and bicycling deficiencies were the second greatest of the ten districts.

In its 1983 report, Lower Androscoggin River Recreation Study and Management Plan, the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments identified the Gulf Island Pond area as the area of the Lower Androscoggin with the greatest recreation potential. AVCOG also identified two principle reasons for the relative dearth of river-based recreation in the Lewiston to Livermore Falls corridor compared with other urban river corridors: a. poor water quality and b. public ignorance of the water quality improvement that had occurred and recreational potential that exists.

Both factors have changed.

Last fall a large and vociferous crowd of interested citizens- fishermen, hikers, boaters, persons who simply enjoy viewing the river, business people- gathered to tell the Department of Environmental Protection that they appreciate the river and want clean up to continue. In response, the Department of Environmental Protection is proposing a 50% reduction in color units in the Androscoggin within 3 years. Corresponding reductions in odor and foam will take place. The Department will also require that Boise Cascade and International Paper eliminate or reduce significantly all dioxin discharges as a condition of new water discharge licenses. As a result, the river will become both aesthetically pleasing and cleaner. The Department expects that Gulf Island Pond will meet all water quality standards except in rare situations.

The Lewiston-Auburn community perceives a need for open space and has turned to the river and its environs to fill that need. Lewiston and Auburn are sponsoring a joint design competition to develop plans for transforming the downtown riverfront into an area that invites activity. This focus has naturally lead to discussion of ways to create a greenbelt north to the city boundaries.

At the same time, the public has enthusiastically endorsed state acquisition of the Turner Diamond Occidental Lands as a way of preserving the spectacular scenic quality of the river and providing minimal impact recreation in a large natural habitat unavailable in the urban area of Lewiston-Auburn.

With the Turner Diamond Occidental Lands as an urban wilderness on the north and a downtown Lewiston-Auburn network of walkways and small green spaces, the river corridor could once again become the center of the community

25. Other land categories present:

In addition to providing opportunities for recreation in all categories of recreational lands, the Turner Diamond Occidental lands also contain:

- Lands supporting vital ecological or conservation functions and values-
 - wildlife habitat
 - wetlands, riparian areas
 - lands of special importance to specific species
- Areas of scenic interest and prime physical features-
 - undeveloped shoreline

- Farmland and open space-

land near population clusters

- Rare, threatened or endangered natural communities-

habitats which are naturally rare due to range limitations

26. Acreage:

The Town of Turner tax records indicate that the Diamond Occidental Lands comprise 1818 acres. In its sales information for the 61,000 acre package, Diamond stated that the Lands comprised 1990 acres. The reason for the discrepancy is not known.

27. Water frontage/road frontage:

The Turner Diamond Occidental Lands contain 49,883 feet or 9.4 miles of frontage on Gulf Island Pond.

The Lands have 1301 feet of frontage on the Turner Center Bridge Road.

28. Access:

The Turner Center Bridge Road forms the northern border of the lands. This is a paved road in good condition maintained by the town of Turner. There is a small parking area at this end of the site and a jeep trail through the parcel originates here.

As part of its Gulf Island relicensing, CMP plans to construct a parking area and boat ramp immediately adjacent to the Lands at the Turner Center Bridge. CMP has obtained all approvals for the ramp and will begin construction in the fall of 1988 or the spring of 1989.

CMP is also pursuing a commercial lease for a boat launch in Auburn just south of the Turner Diamond Occidental Lands.

With the completion of the boat ramp in Turner, access for water and land activities will be sufficient for the management proposed.

29. Proximity to other federal, state, private or locally held lands:

The town of Turner owns 10.2 acres of lands abutting the Lands. (Tax map 34, lot 7). There are no other federal, state, private or locally owned public lands near or adjacent to the Diamond Occidental Lands. The parcel by itself is larger than most individual state holdings.

30. Land cover:

The Diamond Occidental Lands are covered primarily by hard and soft woods and mixed woodlands. The town of Turner's assessment records classify the land as follows:

mixed woodland: 777 acre
hardwood: 598 acres
softwood: 333 acres
waste land: 102 acres

The Forest Stand Types Map (Attachment 3) provides a complete breakdown of species, composition, ground conditions, height of the top crown, density of crown closure and other features of the lands.

The Maine Geological Survey has mapped five wetland areas greater than 10 acres within the project area. These wetland areas are classified and located on Attachment 4.

Scattered throughout the proposed land are several small abandoned fields.

31. Current land use:

Diamond Occidental has managed its Turner Lands as commercial forest for about 20 years, but has done little cutting in recent years. Numerous recreational uses of the tract have evolved because it is large and contains more than 9 miles of river frontage. The following is a description of present recreational use:

Hunting: Waterfowlers, upland bird hunters and deer hunters use the area during open seasons. Having served as a State Game Preserve from 1937-1967, the Lands contain valuable wildlife habitat.

Trail use: The Lands currently hold 8 miles of club maintained snowmobile trails running the entire north-south distance of the tract. Major trail connections exist to Greene, Auburn and to the north, Snowmobile use is significant. Cross-country skiers also use the trail system maintained by the local snowmobile club as well as other smaller trails. Horseback riders use the trail system in the summer months.

Fishing: Areas within the Diamond Occidental Lands have become popular "river bank" fishing areas. Bass fishermen have discovered productive coves and bays along the shore. The Maine Bass Fishermen hold an annual tournament in Gulf Island Pond. As the water quality of the river improves, so will the fishery and number of fishermen.

Boating: Canoes and small motor boats in increasing numbers are discovering Gulf Island Pond and the Diamond Occidental Lands for the scenic value of undeveloped shore and abundant wildlife. Bates College hosted its second annual crew regatta last weekend on the Pond. One viewing site was from the Diamond Occidental Lands.

Nature study: The Turner Diamond Occidental Lands are rich in flora and fauna. A report of findings by one amateur naturalist is attached as Attachment . Bates College uses the Gulf Island Pond area for environmental education.

Other uses: Hiking, backcountry camping, both winter and summer.

32. Site improvements:

No buildings or structures exist on the Turner Diamond Occidental Lands.

APPENDIX G

REFERENCES

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