

ALLAGASH WILDERNESS WATERWAY

MANAGEMENT PLAN

DECEMBER 2012



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION, AND FORESTRY

DIVISION OF PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDS

ALLAGASH WILDERNESS WATERWAY MANAGEMENT PLAN

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The production of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway involved the combined efforts of Division of Parks and Public Lands staff, Advisory Committee members, Advisory Council members, partner agency personnel, and the larger public as a whole. Appendix A lists the Advisory Committee members who thoughtfully considered the various management decisions and issues arising as part of this substantial update to the prior Waterway management plan. A tremendous debt of gratitude is owed to all those who contributed to this plan, including those who took the time to show up for public meetings.

It should also be noted that the Allagash Wilderness Waterway rangers deserve a special thanks not only for their ongoing service but also their hospitality and insight during staff planning visits to the Waterway.

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Sun Sets on the Allagash below Michaud Farm

ALLAGASH WILDERNESS WATERWAY MANAGEMENT PLAN - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT IS THE ALLAGASH WILDERNESS WATERWAY?

The Allagash Wilderness Waterway is a state-administered waterway federally designated as a wild river in the National Wild and Scenic River System. This 92-mile necklace of lake and river segments is surrounded by a vast, privately owned commercial forest. The Waterway was established in 1966 and became the first state-administered component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 1970.

The Waterway includes four distinct zones. The state-owned and managed Restricted Zone surrounds the watercourse and is central to the wilderness recreation experiences provided by the Waterway. Spreading outwards from the Restricted Zone are the New Construction Area and the One Mile Area. Finally, there are defined Visible Areas north of Churchill Dam. The New Construction, One Mile, and Visible Areas are largely privately owned with specific authority given to the Bureau regarding construction and forestry activity.

Three functioning dams owned by the Bureau of Parks and Public Lands are used to manage water flows for fisheries and wildlife as well as recreational purposes. These dams were established well before creation of the Waterway and were recognized in the process of acceptance as a federally designated, state-administered wild river in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

PLAN PROCESS AND POLICY BACKGROUND

The Allagash Wilderness Waterway Management Plan, prepared by the Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Public Lands, presents policies, goals, objectives, and strategies for the management of recreational use and the natural, historic, and cultural resources of the Waterway for the next 15 years. Five (5) year plan check-ins will include public participation and Advisory Council review if substantial changes are required. Changes or additions to the rules for the Allagash Waterway will be adopted in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, which also requires opportunities for public review and comment.

An Advisory Committee (**Appendix A**) was created in March, 2011, to provide assistance to the Bureau during the process of developing the management plan. The Advisory Committee met three times leading up to the publication of the draft plan. Additionally, the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Advisory *Council*, an ongoing, separate

entity from the management plan's Advisory *Committee*, was briefed repeatedly regarding the management plan's progress. Public meetings discussing the draft plan were held in August, 2012 in both Fort Kent and Bangor.

This plan represents a required update of the 1999 management plan. This ten year update was held back slightly in anticipation of completion of the *Allagash Wilderness Waterway Strategic Plan*, produced by the Advisory Council and adopted on November 29, 2010. The strategic plan, while not a binding document like the Allagash Statutes, nonetheless is rooted in the Governor's Allagash Wilderness Waterway Working Group established in P.L. 2007, c. 146). As such, and given the deliberative, diverse, and thoughtful process involved in preparing the strategic plan, the strategic plan is a source of broad guidance for this management plan.

This plan also reflects changes made to the Allagash Statutes since adoption of the last plan, in 1999. Specifically, Maine State Title 12, §1882 now codifies access to the watercourse, thereby directing policies related to that access. Another formal development directing at least some aspects of Waterway management is the 2002 Memorandum of Agreement between the Maine Department of Conservation and the National Park Service regarding after-the-fact permitting for the reconstruction of Churchill Dam. While most if not all of the actions agreed to in the MOA have been undertaken, it is noteworthy to recognize that this agreement has guided and continues to guide select Waterway management policies.

POLICY REVISIONS / ADDITIONS

Nine policies containing over 150 strategies are presented in the plan. Significant changes or additions to the 1999 plan include the following.

Restricted Zone Access

- *Consistent with state law*, maintain access at John's Bridge (*see Strategy 1.1.D*).
- The designated float plane landing site at The Jaws is moved to near Churchill Dam (*see Strategy 1.1.I*). *Pending ammendment of existing rule.*
- The maintenance *and use* of unapproved trails to the watercourse is not allowed (*see Strategy 1.2.E*).
- Pending ammendment of existing rule, all-terrain vehicles will not be allowed in the Restricted Zone of the Waterway, where they previously were allowed from January 1 to March 31 (except within one-mile of Allagash Lake and Stream). However, the Waterway Superintendent may post the designated snowmobile access points and the portions of the watercourse open to snowmobile use as open

to ATV use should conditions merit, such as when poor snowcover limits ice-fishing access (*see Strategy 2.1.D*).

- The majority of snowmobile access points have stayed the same, though several changes are put forth. Past access points proposed to be closed to snowmobiles include Indian Stream Trail and Burntland Brook. Additions include Nugent’s Camps access and Smith Brook. The table below lists the 19 designated points providing snowmobile access to the watercourse.

AWW Watercourse Authorized Snowmobile Access Points		
Trail Name	Township	AWW Water Body
Telos Dam	T6R11	Telos Lake
Mud Pond Carry	T6R12	Chamberlain Lake
Chamberlain Thoroughfare	T6R11	Chamberlain Lake, Round Pond
McNally Brook	T7R11	Chamberlain Lake
Nugent’s Camps*	T7R12	Chamberlain Lake
Upper Crows Nest	T7R13	Chamberlain Lake
Smith Brook*	T8R12	Eagle Lake
Lock Dam	T7R13	Chamberlain Lake, Eagle Lake
Island Road	T7R14	Allagash Lake**
Carry Trail	T7R14	Allagash Lake**
Ledge Campsite	T8R14	Allagash Lake**
Zeigler Trail	T8R13	Eagle Lake
North Twin Brook	T9R12	Churchill Lake
Churchill Dam	T10R12	Churchill Lake
Reality Road	T11R13	Umsaskis Lake
Ross Stream	T12R13	Long Lake
Henderson Brook Bridge	T13R12	Allagash River, Round Pond
Michaud Farm	T15R11	Allagash River
Twin Brook***	Allagash Plantation	Allagash River
<p>* Pending ammendment of existing rule. **Access to shoreline only (snowmobile use not allowed on Allagash Lake). ** The Twin Brook access point covers snowmobiles entering the Waterway by riding southward, up the river from north of the Waterway boundary.</p>		

Camping and Campsites

- Develop quantitative standards below which campsite conditions will not deteriorate (*see Strategy 1.7.A*).
- Develop a walk-in, multi-cell campsite outside of the Restricted Zone on Bureau-owned public land near the northwest corner of the Chamberlain Bridge parking lot. Develop at least one handicap-accessible cell. Operate this campsite primarily as a camping option for those arriving at Chamberlain Bridge and the AWW late in the day/evening (*see Strategy 1.7.F*).
- Make special use permits potentially available upon request for groups or individuals needing to camp at undesignated sites during the winter months (*see Strategy 2.2.E*).
- Identify and share information regarding campsites better suited for larger parties (6+ persons, multiple tents) and those well-suited for smaller parties (*see Strategy 1.9.C*).
- Minimize the impact of consecutive night stays at individual campsites (*see Objective 1.11*)

Enhancing Wilderness Character

- Remove the remaining buildings at Telos Dam and encourage the naturalization of the areas surrounding the buildings (*see Strategy 1.3.C*).
- Limit the number and impact of Signs located in the Restricted Zone (*see Objective 1.5*).
- Identify campsites where less intensive maintenance can be employed in order to enhance wilderness character (*see Strategy 1.7.C*).
- Identify campsites where there is opportunity to better screen tents and tarps from view on the watercourse (*see Strategy 1.9.B*).
- Construct alternative management access to Telos Dam and put to bed approximately 3250 feet of access road along the south shore of Telos Lake (*see Strategy 1.4.B*).
- Close the existing parking area at Michaud Farm (next to the ranger station) and replace it with a 50' X 90' handicap accessible parking lot screened from the river (*see Strategy 1.1.G*).

Restricted Zone and Watercourse Character in the Winter Months

A focused effort was undertaken to consider winter issues in the Waterway. Resulting objectives target objectives aiming to “Manage winter access to facilitate snowmobiling, ice-fishing, and non-motorized recreational uses while also protecting the wilderness character of the Restricted Zone during winter” (*Objective 2.1*), and to “Continue to support ice fishing and snowmobiling while ensuring opportunities abound for solitude in primitive settings” (*Objective 2.2*).

Natural Resource Management

- Develop standards defining desired resource conditions and the acceptable level(s) of recreation impacts (*see Strategy 4.1.E*).
- Work cooperatively with partners including but not limited to the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to combat existing or potential exotic, invasive species located in the Restricted Zone or the watercourse (*see Objective 3.3*).

Historical/Cultural Resource Management

- Maintain the historic nature of Telos Dam as a timber-crib structure (*see Strategy 3.4.C*).
- Seek financial support to enhance the historic nature of Lock Dam by replacing the current culvert system with a functioning section of timber crib dam complete with a functional gate. Any such development should address the current difference in sill elevations between Telos and Lock Dams that limits water management ability. (*see Strategy 3.4.D*).
- Document remaining structures at, retrieve artifacts from, and interpret the Moir Farm (*see Strategy 3.4.E*).
- Complete renovation of the Henry Taylor Camp and manage the camp site as a complimentary structure enabling interpretation of not only the former Henry Taylor Camps but also the earlier, adjacent Moir Farm. The site shall remain as day-use only destination (*see Strategy 3.4.F*).

Public Information and Resource Interpretation

This plan includes a new policy section emphasizing the need to further inform, educate, and inspire visitors and potential visitors. *Policy 9* directs Waterway Management and the broader Bureau to, “Provide a Variety of Public Information and Interpretive Materials/Services in Order to Facilitate Visitation, Enhance Resource Appreciation, and Bolster Stewardship”.