

**Bureau of Parks and Lands**

**Flagstaff Region Management Plan  
5-Year Review and Update #2  
with  
Plan Amendments**

**March 5, 2018**



## AMENDMENT ADOPTION

In accordance with the procedure outlined in the 2007 Flagstaff Region Management Plan for five-year reviews of the Plan and consideration of proposed Plan amendments, the amendments presented on pages 3-4 of this report is hereby adopted.

RECOMMENDED: Douglas Denico DATE: 4-20-18

Douglas Denico  
Director  
Maine Forest Service

APPROVED: Randy Cloutier DATE: 4/25/18

*for* Walter E. Whitcomb  
Commissioner  
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry



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# **1. Summary of the Flagstaff Region Review Process and Background to the Proposed Plan Amendments**

## **Summary of Review**

The Flagstaff Region Management Plan adopted in June of 2007 guides the management of public lands at Chain of Ponds, Bigelow Preserve and surrounding properties on Flagstaff Lake, Mount Abraham and several small lots in Somerset and Franklin Counties. The Bureau is required to report to the Advisory Committee (AC, Appendix A) at five-year intervals on accomplishments and changing conditions that may warrant amendments to the plan. The second Five-Year Review was initiated with an email message to AC members on November 16, 2017, with an invitation to a committee meeting to be held on December 6, 2017.

The message included as an attachment the Five-Year Review table summarizing actions taken to implement the Plan recommendations (Appendix B), and requested comments on the table. The Bureau also identified the new issues that would be the primary focus of discussion: requests from the Carrabassett Valley Trails Committee (CVTC) for new sections of mountain bike trail (part of a longer trail) on the Carrabassett Valley Lot and mountain bike use of the Approach Trail on the Carrabassett Valley lot and Bigelow Preserve. The CVTC letter requesting these trails and a trail map was also attached.

The AC was informed that we would also discuss a Maine Huts and Trails (MH&T) request for a non-motorized hiking and skiing trail (with motorized grooming) across the Redington Lot, with a crossing of the AT on an existing management road. However, the Bureau stated that no decision on this trail nor Plan amendment would result from the review, as landowner approval for the trail had not been obtained for an adjacent private parcel and was not anticipated within the timespan of the review. (If the necessary landowner approvals are obtained following the review, the Bureau will correspond with the committee and make a decision regarding this trail.) Finally, AC members were invited to identify any such new issues or circumstances they believed may warrant committee input or Bureau action.

One AC member responded prior to the AC meeting with comments on the MH&T trail request. Five AC members and four interested members of the public attended the meeting. Appendix C provides the AC meeting notes and attachments, including a presentation providing details on the trail proposals, preliminary Plan amendments, and the comment letter referenced above.

## **Plan Amendments**

The proposed mountain bike trails would represent a new use of the existing pedestrian trail as well as new trail construction not called for in the 2007 Plan nor addressed in the first Five-Year Review. Therefore, amendments to the Plan are required to permit the new use and new trail to be constructed. The Bureau prepared two proposed Plan amendments that would allow the bike use of the existing trail and development of the new bike trail sections. A third proposed Plan amendment set forth a plan for monitoring bike and other use of the Esker Trail in the Bigelow Preserve, the portion of the preserve most directly affected by the proposed new bike trail and expanded trail use. On January 24, 2018, the AC was sent the proposed Plan amendments for review and comment, and informed of a public meeting at which the proposed amendments

would be presented for comment from the general. No AC members provided comments. Section 2 presents the Plan Amendments.

### **Public Meeting**

A public meeting was held in Farmington on February 13, 2018 to allow the Bureau to hear public comments on the proposed Plan amendments. As noted above, AC members were informed of the time and place of the meeting in advance. Several AC members and members of the public attended. The meeting agenda and sign-in sheet are provided in Appendix D.

The attendees gave verbal comments in support of the Plan amendments; there were no comments in opposition to the mountain bike trail proposals or the Plan amendments. One member of the public submitted written comments proposing broader monitoring than the recreation use monitoring proposed in Amendment C. The comments and the Bureau's response are provided in Appendix E.

The meeting was followed by a two-week period during which written comments could be submitted; no comments were received.



## **2. Flagstaff Region Management Plan Five-Year Review #2 – Plan Amendments**

*The following amendments to the 2007 Flagstaff Region Management Plan are adopted in response to the new mountain bike trail proposals discussed during the Five-Year Review process.*

### **Amendment A: Mountain Bike Use of Existing Hiking/Snowshoe Trail**

**Amendment to Flagstaff Lake/Surrounding Properties Management Recommendations (pages 166-167 of Plan), under “Land Based Recreation”:**

*(Note: This amendment also affects lands within the Bigelow Preserve, and therefore is also appended to the Management Recommendations for Bigelow Preserve [pages 162-163 of Plan], under “Hiking, Biking and Camping Opportunities.”)*

Allow mountain bike use of the 1.5-mile Approach Trail, a hiking/snowshoeing/ungroomed ski trail crossing the Carrabassett Valley Lot and the Bigelow Preserve (northernmost 0.25 mile of trail). The purpose is to provide riders a connection between the Esker Trail, a multi-use non-motorized trail open to bikes within the Bigelow Preserve, and the Maine Huts and Trails (MH&T) Stratton Brook Hut and bike touring network in the vicinity of the hut on abutting lands. MH&T completed construction of the Approach Trail in 2016, and is responsible for the trail’s maintenance and signage. The Carrabassett Valley Trails Committee (CVTC)<sup>1</sup> will monitor the trail for indications of off-trail riding and any adverse resource impacts that may result from bike use, and will address any impacts observed, in consultation with the Bureau.

Before bike use is allowed, CVTC will:

- Post appropriate signage instructing bike riders to yield to pedestrian trail users,
- Post signage warning of crossing bike/motorized traffic on both the Approach Trail and the ATV/Snowmobile trail where the trails cross on the Carrabassett Valley Lot.

### **Amendment B: New Mountain Bike Single-Track Trail**

**Amendment to Flagstaff Lake/Surrounding Properties Management Recommendations (pages 166-167 of Plan), under “Land Based Recreation”:**

Allow construction of ~2,000 feet of new single-track mountain bike trail on the west side of the Carrabassett Valley Lot, part of a ~1.0 mile trail connecting the Oak Knoll bike trail (on abutting Carrabassett Valley Sanitary District land) to the Approach Trail. The purpose is to provide riders a connection, with the Approach Trail, between the Esker Trail in the Bigelow Preserve

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<sup>1</sup> Members include Carrabassett Region chapter of New England Mountain Bike Association (CR NEMBA), Town of Carrabassett Valley, Maine Huts and Trails, and Sugarloaf Mountain Corporation.

and the bike trail network on lands abutting the Bigelow Preserve and the Carrabassett Valley Lot.

The trail will be constructed by CVTC, with the following requirements for final approval:

- 1) BPL approval of the portion of the final trail route on the public land,
- 2) Abutting landowner (Carrabassett Valley Sanitary District) approval for the trail segments linking the two trail segments on BPL property,
- 3) Posting of signage warning of crossing bike/motorized traffic on both the new bike trail and the ATV/Snowmobile trail where the trails cross west of the Carrabassett Valley Lot, and
- 4) Development of a long-term agreement between BPL and CVTC for maintenance of trail.

### **Amendment C: Monitoring on Bike Use in the Bigelow Preserve**

**Amendment to Monitoring and Evaluation section of Plan, under “Recreation” (page 171 of Plan):**

Since the Plan’s adoption there has been a gradual increase in mountain bike routes (on management roads) and bike trails in or leading to the south part of the Bigelow Preserve, allowed by amendments resulting from the first Plan review and now continuing with Plan Amendments A and B. Given this trend and the lack of existing data, the Bureau will collect baseline data on bike and other use of the Esker Trail, giving a specific focus to the general commitment expressed in the Plan to monitor use levels in the Preserve. Data may also be collected on the Approach Trail where it meets the Esker Trail, to help gauge the effect of the trail changes permitted under Amendments A and B on the Esker Trail. Methods may include trail counters installed and monitored by staff and/or direct field observation. Results will be reported periodically to the Advisory Committee.

## **Appendices**



## Appendix A.

### **Bureau of Parks and Lands Flagstaff Region Planning and Management Staff**

**Jim Vogel** – *Management Plan Coordinator*  
**Peter Smith** – *Regional Manager, Public Reserved Lands Western Region*  
**Lance Alley** – *Forester/Bigelow Preserve Manager*  
**Rex Turner** – *Outdoor Recreation Specialist*  
**Tom Charles** – *Chief of Silviculture*  
**Nate Webb** – *IF&W Wildlife Biologist assigned to the Bureau of Parks and Lands*  
**Brian Bronson** – *ATV Coordinator, Off-Road Vehicle Program*  
**Joe Higgins** – *Snowmobile Coordinator, Off-Road Vehicle Program*  
**Gena Denis** – *Mapping and GIS Coordinator*

### **Flagstaff Region Lands Advisory Committee**

**Tarsha Adams**, *Natanis Point Campground*  
**Ernie DeLuca**, *Brookfield White Pine Hydro LLC*  
**Eliza Donoghue**, *Maine Audubon Society*  
**Gregg Drummond**, *Claybrook Lodge*  
**Dick Fecteau**, *Maine Appalachian Trail Club*  
**Dan Grenier**, *The Nature Conservancy*  
**Chad Grignon**, *Representative, House District 118*  
**Lloyd Griscom**, *High Peaks Alliance*  
**Frances Head**, *Representative, House District 117*  
**Matt Jacobs**, *America Forest Management*  
**Cathy Johnson**, *Natural Resources Council of Maine*  
**Bob Luce**, *Town of Carrabassett Valley*  
**Joe Marcoux**, *Flagstaff Area ATV Club*  
**Rick Mason**, *East Flagstaff Lake Property Owner's Association*  
**John McCatherin**, *Carrabassett Valley Outdoor Association*  
**Carolann Ouellette**, *Maine Huts & Trails*  
**Claire Polfus**, *Appalachian Trail Conservancy*  
**Travis Roderick**, *JV Wing Snowmobile Club*  
**Allan Ryder**, *Timber Resource Group*  
**Tom Saviello**, *Senator, Senate District 17*  
**Tom Skolfield**, *Representative, House District 112*  
**Ken Spalding**, *Friends of Bigelow*  
**Josh Tausas**, *Carrabassett Region Chapter, NEMBA*  
**Rodney Whittemore**, *Senator, Senate District 26*  
**Kenny Wing**, *Eustis*



**Management Recommendations** (Plan pages 161-170)

<b>General: Applies to All Lands</b>	<b>Actions taken/Comments:</b> [2012 entries: standard font, 2017 entries: italic font]
<p><b>Rare or Exemplary Ecosystems &amp; Habitat Management</b></p> <p>1. Keep recreationists on trails, especially in alpine areas, through scree walls, education, etc.</p>	<p>Horns Pond Caretaker educates hikers on the Appalachian Trail (AT).</p> <p><i>Caretaker program continues, under the purview of Maine Appalachian Trail Club.</i></p>
<p>2. Protect natural communities and rare plant populations from impacts related to land management by consulting with MNAP prior to harvesting in areas containing rare plants or plant communities, exemplary natural communities, or areas identified as potential ecological reserves in the 1998 Janet McMahon report, "An Ecological Reserves System Inventory."</p> <p>3. Consult with the MNAP prior to establishing new trails or cutting vegetation for view opportunities in an ecological reserve.</p>	<p>Routinely consult with MNAP prior to harvesting in these areas.</p> <p><i>Continuing.</i></p> <p>Routinely consult with MNAP when establishing new trails or cutting vegetation to maintain views in ecological reserve.</p> <p><i>Continuing.</i></p>
<p><b>Rare, Threatened &amp; Endangered Species; Species of Special Concern</b></p> <p>4. Manage areas around rare animal sites according to MDIFW or USFWS guidelines, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Continuing objective for management.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Wildlife Management</b></p> <p>5. Manage public reserved lands to increase the quality and quantity of softwood dominated stands amongst the predominance of hardwoods to increase forest diversity and benefit many wildlife species.</p>	<p>Ongoing objective.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p>6. Follow Bureau-adopted "beech management guidelines" to assure the continuance of beech as a viable component of hardwood stands. Maintaining beech in the face of severe disease problems is a regional goal. Beechnuts are an important food for more than 40 wildlife species, and important to bear reproduction.</p>	<p>Severe mortality has limited BPL's ability to manage beech.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p>7. Provide significant amounts of multi-aged forests (this general goal will enhance wildlife habitat over time).</p>	<p>Ongoing objective.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p>8. In cooperation with Florida Power and Light, MDIFW, and MDOT, as appropriate, pursue ways to educate the public about threats to the fishery from illegal stocking of non-native fish, which diminish native populations, and threats to the health of the region's lakes and ponds from the introduction of invasive aquatic weeds.</p>	<p>The number of invasive species of concern in Maine has grown substantially to include a variety land and water plants and animals. Information is plentiful but has yet to be consolidated into a single format suitable for posting on BPL signboards/kiosks. However, IF&amp;W and NFCT have posted signs with BPL permission. The BPL website will soon include links to invasives information provided by Environmental Protection, Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the</p>

	<p>Maine Forest Service for each area searchable under “Find Parks &amp; Lands.”</p> <p><i>Pending for select BPL lands websites; fisheries and aquatic weed invasives information is provided on many of the BPL lands brochures.</i></p>
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<b>Bigelow Preserve</b>	<b>Actions taken/Comments:</b> [2012 entries: standard font, 2017 entries: italic font]
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<p><b>Flagstaff-Lake Focused Recreation:</b> In cooperation with Florida Power and Light and constituent groups develop a coordinated plan for Flagstaff Lake related recreational facilities. Areas to address include:</p> <p><u>Water Access Camping:</u> When the need can be documented and resources are available, consider additional remote water access sites at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the Savage Farm Site across from Myers Lodge</li> <li>2. the Reed Brook area</li> <li>3. additional areas identified in the Bureau’s Multiple Use Coordination Reports (developed as part of the forest management prescription process)</li> </ol>	<p>The FERC Flagstaff Project license requires Brookfield (formerly Florida Power and Light/Next Era Energy) to develop a Comprehensive Recreation and Land Management Plan, in consultation with DPPL and other state and federal agencies by July 31, 2013. Bureau staff met with Brookfield and their consultant in January and June 2013. Key issues discussed included recreation facility enhancements, potential new recreation sites, and sharing of costs for recreation site development and management. The Bureau has provided comment on the Draft Plan and will be seeking further input from user groups during the Plan update process.</p> <p><i>Brookfield completed recreation facility enhancements at Flagstaff shoreline campsites and at Big Eddy in 2015.</i></p>
<p><u>Walk-to or Drive-to Camping and Recreation:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Redesign Trout Brook Sites – limit vehicle access to the lake on the north side of the brook and define 4 individual party walk-to sites; continue to provide drive-to group site on the south side of the brook.</li> </ol>	<p>South side drive-to site was improved.</p> <p><i>Facility enhancements completed by Brookfield included these sites.</i></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Work with Florida Power and Light to remove the shack near old boom dam and limit vehicle access creating a walk-to/water access site or sites.</li> </ol>	<p>Shack was removed. Further work to limit vehicle access will be addressed in the Comprehensive Recreation and Land Management Plan being developed by Brookfield (formerly Florida Power and Light/Next Era Energy) in consultation with the Bureau.</p> <p><i>Site was improved in 2015 by Brookfield with one campsite and privy and the has been blocked.</i></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Limit further development at the Round Barn site to not more than two additional sites on the east side of the cove; and a designated disabled access site near to the parking area. Improve the privy nearest the parking area to be compliant with the American with Disabilities Act.</li> </ol>	<p>Limited activity. Improved accessibility of privy near parking area.</p> <p><i>Facility enhancements complete by Brookfield included this site; a new outhouse and 2 new vault toilets were constructed.</i></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Continue to allow trailered boat access to Flagstaff Lake at Round Barn during the fall waterfowl hunting season only.</li> </ol>	<p>Trailered boat access to Flagstaff Lake at Round Barn is allowed during the fall waterfowl hunting season only.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>



<p><b>Land-Based Recreation</b>  <u>Additions to the Bigelow Preserve:</u>                  1. Consistent with Bureau Policy on additions to the Preserve, add the following to the Bigelow Preserve: the Range Trailhead (Coplin Pit); and the Wyman Lot East (north and east of powerline and Route 27; excepting a small area near the powerline needed for a proposed ATV trail following the powerline to bypass of the transformer station); and excepting a buffer along the CMP powerline of 500 feet; and a small buffer north of the Boralex powerline as shown on the allocation maps.</p>	<p>Done. Requires GIS update.  <i>GIS update has been completed.</i></p>
<p>2. Close to motorized public use two small spur roads that branch southerly off the Stratton Brook Road on parcels added to the Preserve.</p>	<p>Spur roads have grown over and are not vehicle-passable.  <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><u>Hiking, Biking and Camping Opportunities:</u>                  3. In consultation with the MATC and ATC, evaluate and document the need for additional hiking trails to relieve heavily used areas or provide new opportunities for which there is a documented demand. Implement, if the need can be demonstrated, and the resources are available, one or both of the following:</p>	<p>No activity this period on Avery Peak Bypass or North Col trails. Continues to be an objective, as resources and staff time allow.  <i>No new trails have been developed.</i></p>
<p>a. <u>Avery Peak Bypass Trail:</u> This could provide additional loop possibilities and a thru trail option that does not require the very difficult and intimidating summit of Avery Peak. It could also provide a safe alternate route during times of inclement weather for planned hikes that start on one side of the ridge and go to the other. Currently parties must make the choice to go over the peaks in dangerous conditions or turn back. The safest choice is often difficult one to make. There appears to be a demand with many aging hikers for such an alternative. The entire route area has been scouted.</p>	
<p>b. <u>North Col Trail:</u> This could provide a loop from the Round Barn Campsite decreasing pressure on the heavily used Safford Brook Trail. Upper portions of the closed Parson’s trail could be utilized with lower sections rerouted to bring hikers to the East Flagstaff Road Extension. Further evaluation of the possible location of this trail is needed, if the need can be justified.</p>	
<p>4. Work with MATC to develop walk-to campsites on the east shore of Flagstaff Lake on Bureau lands, to meet existing demand associated with the A.T.</p>	<p>Constructed one campsite and monitor use for additional need.  <i>No change.</i></p>
<p>5. Explore developing a summer hiking trail through the eastern shore area of the Bigelow Preserve, connecting with the Western Mountains Foundation (WMF) Trail, in consultation with MATC and the ATC.</p>	<p>Done. The AT was relocated closer to the lake and the former AT route now connects to the WMF trail.  <i>No change.</i></p>
<p>6. Install a foot bridge over the outlet of Stratton Brook Pond on the Fire Wardens Trail.</p>	<p>Design is in progress. Construction is anticipated to occur in 2014.</p>

	<i>Bridge was completed in 2015.</i>
7. Reconfigure the parking area and campsite in the gravel pit that serves the Little Bigelow Trailhead.	The Little Bigelow parking area and campsite were reconfigured, and the parking area is maintained year-round. Installation of an ADA-compliant privy occurred in 2012.
a. Maintain as a year-round parking area for AT hikers, boaters, and cross-country skiers. Provide a pit privy that is ADA compliant to serve the parking area and other allowed uses.	<i>No change.</i>
b. Investigate the feasibility of providing a path to the lake from this parking area for hand-carry boat access (including an option of a connector trail to the Bog Brook Road).	This path exists and is lightly used. <i>No change.</i>
c. Develop/designate one or more camping areas (depending on demand) limited to tent camping to serve parties that arrive late in the day to start a hike or boat trip the following day. Limit use of the site(s) to one or two nights only, as deemed appropriate based on use.	Work on these campsites is complete. <i>No change.</i>
d. Allow use of a portion of the parking area for special events associated with the Trail, subject to approval of a Special Use Permit.	Special events are allowed by permit. <i>No change.</i>
8. Remove the Fire Tower from Avery Peak after consultation with the Maine Forest Service. The tower is in very poor shape and an attractive nuisance. Damaged walls provide access and fires have burned through the floor. Structure would be dismantled and burned on site. Stone foundation would be left providing defined durable surface for trail users.	Done. <i>No change.</i>
9. Retain Fire Warden’s cabin and maintain structure for continued seasonal use by the MATC.	MATC uses and maintains this structure. <i>No change.</i>
10. Continue to cooperate with MATC’s Caretaker and Ridgerunner Education (CARE) program at Horns Pond, The Col volunteer program and other MATC partnerships.	Cooperation with MATC is ongoing. <i>No change.</i>
11. Designate mountain biking routes as follows: along the existing public use roads; along the Stratton Brook and Huston Brook Roads (the latter also known as the “Sixties haul road”); and the woods road from the Range trailhead to the Stratton Brook Road.	These roads are designated for bicycling. Improvements to Huston Brook Road trail were completed by the Carrabassett Region Chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA).  <i>The 2012 review resulted in a Plan amendment which added two management road segments along the southern edge of the preserve to the designated mountain bike routes; use of these roads for timber management purposes will continue. An additional amendment allows for rerouting of the bike route on the Sixties haul road, due to planned timber hauling along this road.</i>
<u>Winter Recreation:</u>	
12. Develop routes for two backcountry skiing areas. Explore possible trails connecting to Jones Pond area with the National Park Service, MATC and ATC.	No activity this period. BPL will continue to explore the concept of additional backcountry skiing areas as interest is indicated. <i>No change.</i>
13. Designate the existing high elevation snowmobile route crossing through	Done. Requires GIS update.

<p>north leg of The Horns ecological reserve as the primary snowmobile route on the north side of Bigelow; and designate the existing lower elevation route as an alternate trail to be improved and used when the Bureau is actively harvesting in the higher elevation areas.</p>	<p><i>GIS update completed.</i></p>
<p>14. Design snowmobile trails to be not more than 12 feet wide, maintaining natural contours to discourage high speed travel and ensure safety to about a 25 mph speed. Major stream crossings will have bridges built to protect not only the riders from the steep slopes and rocky bottoms but to allow the streams to flow unimpeded during the spring runoff.</p>	<p>No new trails were constructed. Any major improvements to existing trails would have to meet this standard.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p>15. Winter Parking</p>	
<p>a. Continue to plow area at Range Trail</p>	<p>Done.</p>
<p>b. Explore options to provide a winter parking area serving the south side of the Preserve for access to cross-country ski trails and winter hiking; and on the north side at Gravel pit parking area near Bigelow Trailhead.</p>	<p>Now considering options in these areas.</p> <p><i>The road is plowed approaching the Range trailhead. There is plowed access to the gravel pit while winter harvesting is occurring. The Carriage Road is also open in the winter.</i></p>
<p>Continue to cooperate with both local snowmobile clubs to provide groomed sled trials. Additional seasonal barricades are required to control inappropriate summer use.</p>	<p>Have repaired one gate and installed an additional gate to control summer use.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p><u>Use of the Bigelow Lodge:</u></p>	
<p>16. Develop operational procedures and guidelines for use of the Bigelow Lodge during summer and winter.</p>	<p>Appendix D of the Plan contains the Bigelow Lodge Operational Guidelines. During 2014, the guidelines will be reviewed and revised, and additional operational procedures appended, if determined necessary for efficient operation of the facility.</p> <p><i>No change. Lodge continues to be used for lodging Americorps worker in the summer, for MATC training sessions, and a winter warm-up location for snowmobilers and skiers.</i></p>
<p>17. Manage the Bigelow Lodge to minimize its impacts on other users in the Preserve.</p>	<p>Ongoing. <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Timber Resources</b> The Bigelow Act allows timber harvesting “consistent with the area’s scenic beauty and natural features.”</p> <p><u>Management Objectives by Stand Type (regulated acres only):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Softwood types (~3,050 acres, or 13% of the regulated acres): Areas currently in softwoods should usually be managed to stay in the type.</li> <li>2. Mixedwood types (~8,756 acres, or 39% of the regulated acres): Management should favor spruce in most areas, pine where it occurs, and northern hardwoods (yellow birch, beech, sugar maple) on the</li> </ol>	<p>The Bureau’s forests are managed by sustainable harvest units (SHUs), which in the case of the Flagstaff Plan area includes all the lots in the plan in one unit, ZW2.</p> <p><i>The period covered in the summary below totals 4 years, FY 2013 through FY 2017.</i></p> <p><i>Total harvest volume in the entire SHU was 49,000 cords; average volume was 12,250 cords per year. That’s 92% of the Sustainable</i></p>

<p>more fertile soils.</p> <p>3. Hardwood types (~10,920 acres, 48% of the regulated acres): (a) Intolerant hardwoods, labeled as aspen or fire type – Management in this type should concentrate on recovering much of the value of the mature aspen and birch in a way that protects the Bigelow view sheds, and that retains most of the desirable softwood regeneration (fir and spruce). (b) Northern hardwoods - Most acres would qualify as late successional forest; careful selection harvests should be used to maintain successional quality, while growing and selling high value timber.</p> <p><u>Resource Allocations</u></p> <p>The resource allocations designated in the Plan provide further management direction regarding timber management. No areas within the Bigelow Preserve are given a Timber Management dominant allocation. However, forest management including timber harvest is allowed as a secondary use (multi-aged management only) in areas designated Bigelow Backcountry Non-mechanized, Bigelow Backcountry, Wildlife Management, and Remote Recreation areas. Visual Class I areas have been designated as a dominant allocation in a small area of the Preserve, and as a secondary allocation in areas adjacent to shorelines, public use roads and trails. All areas not designated as Visual Class I are allocated to Visual Class II. In Visual Class I areas, harvesting is permitted under stringent limitations directed at retaining the appearance of an essentially undisturbed forest, while Visual Class II areas are managed to avoid any obvious alterations to the landscape.</p>	<p><i>Harvest Level target of 13,250 cords, and 83% of net growth (14,694). 32,450 cords (66% of the volume) came from Bigelow and the adjacent Carrabassett Valley parcel (700 cords). The Bigelow (plus CV) volume was 20% softwoods, 80% hardwoods. (In comparison, 2011 volume at Bigelow was 42% SW, 58% HW; increasing SW was an objective.) 90% of softwoods were spruce-fir, the rest pine and hemlock. Only 7% of hardwood volume was sawlogs/veneer; 60% of logs/veneer was sugar maple. Mixed hardwood pulp was the greatest single item at 33% of the Bigelow total, with aspen pulpwood next at 31% as harvests covered large areas where stands originated from fires related to land clearing for Flagstaff Lake in the 1940s. The total volume of 32,450 cords came from 3,060 treated acres.</i></p> <p><i>The other 34% of Plan area volume came from Dead River Peninsula, where significant harvests resumed in FY2016 after 20 years with only very small volumes cut. Softwood and hardwood volumes here were about equal, again favoring a softwood increase as the 2011 inventory showed the tract to be 73% SW and 27% HW. Spruce and fir made up 36% of DRP volume, mixed hardwood pulpwood and biomass were each 21%, aspen pulpwood 13% (also from “Flagstaff fire” acres), and 7% was white pine, which in 2011 made up 13.5% of tract cords. Quality hardwoods are not common on this softwoods-dominated area, and less than one percent of the volume here was logs/veneer. The total 16,500 cords came from 1,405 treated acres.</i></p> <p><i>None of the smaller original public lots in the Plan area saw harvests during the four fiscal year period.</i></p> <p><i>For the full Plan area, mixed HW pulpwood was 28% of total harvest volume, aspen pulpwood 26%, spruce-fir products (80% were sawlogs) 24%, biomass 4%, hardwood logs/veneer 4% and pine 2%.</i></p>
<p><u>Management Objectives for Old Growth Forests:</u></p> <p>4. The Bureau has not identified any Old Growth stands on the Bigelow Preserve although trees aged at least 150 years are present. The Bureau has a policy for managing individual or groups of very old trees (less than the 5 acres needed to qualify for special protection) – called old growth component. Management will follow the current policy for old growth component, which is to retain this feature (where feasible) at similar proportions in the residual stand as it occurred pre-harvest, including species diversity.</p>	<p>In 2013 an old growth stand was identified on the north slope in Dead River Twp. The core of the stand is a mixedwood stand with pure hardwood acres added along the south edge and some pure softwood acres added on the northeast making a stand totaling 68 acres with a high degree of variability.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>

<p><b>Management Objectives for Late Successional (LS) Forests:</b></p> <p>5. The Bigelow Preserve is estimated to have from 30 to 35% in late successional forests, and current policy and prescriptions will result in a continued increase in the proportion of Bureau forest land being LS. For the Bigelow Preserve the following guidance will ensure that the trend toward increasing amounts of LS forests continues: Identify existing and "soon"-potential LS stands through the prescription process; Retain sufficient large, old trees, and younger stems of long lived species; Avoid removal of disproportionate amounts of LS-character trees; Avoid major reduction of crown closure, while managing within the bounds of good silviculture. Note that some areas of the Preserve are in need of silvicultural treatments that might require variance from this guidance – for example, in old burn areas, restoring the forest to a healthy, multi-aged structure.</p>	<p>Continued management during this plan period according to the guidance provided by the Plan. Development of refined techniques for foresters to more accurately identifying LS stands is ongoing.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Historic Resources</b></p> <p>1. Any activities that would result in ground disturbance in historic and archaeologically sensitive areas must be reviewed by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC). Sensitive areas include areas close to the original Dead River channel – Round Barn and Ferry Farm where there could be artifacts from the Arnold Expedition; and areas determined to have potential for prehistoric artifacts – all shoreline areas.</p>	<p>Follow as required.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Administrative Issues</b></p> <p>1. Execute a lease for the Wing Camp.</p>	<p>In past years, the Bureau has not received the cooperation of the camp owner to execute a lease. A number of years have passed since contact was made. No later than December 30, 2015, the Bureau will bring the lack of a lease for the camp to resolution. A recent inspection of the camp indicated that the shed attached to the rear of the camp is collapsing and needs to be removed. This condition will be included in a lease agreement that will be offered to the camp owner. If the offer of a lease is not accepted, the Bureau will act to remove the camp.</p> <p><i>The Bureau has corresponded with the Wing family and met with them on-site. The site was surveyed to determine the Brookfield/ BPL boundary along the lakeshore and the dimensions of the lease area to be offered. A lease has been sent to the camp owner and is awaiting their signature (the former owner has passed away and probate issues are pending). The shed attached to the rear of the camp has been removed.</i></p>
<p>2. Gravel extracted from pits within the Preserve may only be used for purposes within the Preserve. All depleted pits will be rehabilitated.</p>	<p>Gravel restriction observed. <i>No change.</i></p>

<p>3. Seek to acquire in-holdings within the Preserve boundaries, or lands adjacent to the Preserve that have valued public resources, if these lands are placed on the market and can be acquired at fair market value, and funds are available for the acquisition.</p>	<p>The Bureau is in communication with landowners who are interested in selling land or interests in land adjacent to the Preserve; those communications are ongoing. <i>No change.</i></p>
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<p><b>Flagstaff Lake/Surrounding Properties</b></p>	<p><b>Actions taken/Comments:</b> [2012 entries: standard font, 2017 entries: italic font]</p>
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<p><b>Coordinated Recreation Planning for Flagstaff Lake:</b></p> <p>1. In cooperation with Florida Power and Light and constituent groups develop a coordinated plan for recreational facilities on Flagstaff Lake. In general, evaluate the demand and needs for additional water access camping sites on Flagstaff Lake in cooperation with user groups such as the Northern Forest Canoe Trail organization, Outward Bound and Chewonki, and local guides. Implement when the need is documented and resources allow.</p> <p>2. Develop a formal agreement with Florida Power and Light regarding the management of lands and recreation resources within the 1146-foot and 1150-foot elevation contours of shoreline adjacent to Bureau ownership.</p> <p>3. Discuss/pursue erosion control along the shoreline of Flagstaff Lake with Florida Power and Light.</p>	<p>The FERC Flagstaff Project license requires Brookfield Renewable (formerly Next Era Energy/Florida Power and Light) to develop a Comprehensive Recreation and Land Management Plan (CRLMP), in consultation with DPPL and other state and federal agencies by July 31, 2013. Bureau staff met with Brookfield and their consultant in January and June 2013. Discussion at these meetings addressed a coordinated management approach and an accurate inventory of recreation sites and ownership. There was only general discussion of potential new water access camping sites. The Draft Plan addresses coordinated recreation site development and management and a potential future formal agreement, and shoreline erosion control. The Bureau has provided comments on the Draft Plan and will be seeking further input from user groups during the Plan update process.</p> <p><i>Brookfield submitted a Final CRLMP to FERC in July 2013. The Final plan includes an updated and revised inventory of recreation sites and ownership. In March 2017, BPL sent Brookfield a Proposal for Recreation Management Agreement for the Flagstaff Lake Project; finalization of the agreement is pending.</i></p>
<p><b>Flagstaff Lake Focused Recreation:</b></p> <p><u>Water Access Camping:</u></p> <p><u>Islands:</u></p> <p>1. Evaluate the need and feasibility of adding water access sites on Flagstaff Island.</p>	<p>See #1 under Coordinated Recreation Planning.</p>

<p><u>Dead River Peninsula:</u>                  2. Designate the North Flagstaff Road (Picked Chicken Hill Road) as a public use road.                  3. If the demand can be documented, and as resources allow, provide additional remote water access camping sites. The shoreline of the Dead River Peninsula has been identified as the preferable location for through-trippers on the Northern Forest Canoe Trail due to prevailing winds and aspect.</p>	<p>Done.                   See #1 under Coordinated Recreation Planning.   <i>No change; no additional recreation sites are planned at this time.</i></p>
<p><u>Walk-to or Drive-to Camping &amp; Recreation Opportunities on Flagstaff Lake:</u></p> <p><u>Myers Lodge:</u>                  1. Designate the access road as a public use road.</p> <p>2. Limit vehicle access to the lake. Remove the culvert through the drainage area and replace with a foot-bridge wide enough for carry-in boat access.</p> <p>3. Develop drive-to campsites on high ground near the footbridge. Designate one handicapped accessible site.</p> <p>4. Provide one or more vault toilets, including one that is ADA compliant.</p> <p>5. Manage the beach area for carry-in boat access and day use, except in areas designated for walk-to campsites; manage a portion of the beach for day use.</p>	<p>Road is maintained for public use. Requires GIS update.   <i>GIS has been updated.</i>                   The Bureau has discussed these improvements with Brookfield and they are addressed in the Comprehensive Recreation and Land Management Plan that the Bureau has reviewed and that Brookfield is to submit to FERC by July 31, 2013.   <i>These improvements are included in the Final CRLMP mentioned above. The improvements were completed by Brookfield in 2015.</i></p>
<p><u>Northern Shoreline – Flagstaff Township:</u>                  6. Explore the potential for ATV access to the northern shoreline of Flagstaff Lake (the area that was the original Flagstaff Pond) for a remote ATV camping opportunity (requires agreements with adjacent landowners). As with other remote sites, provide a parking area with footpaths to campsites and the lake. Design at least one site to be handicapped accessible. (Note: these sites would also be accessible by water).</p>	<p>This concept has not been explored due to other priorities and the local ATV club being focused on other trail management issues.   <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><u>Dead River Peninsula:</u>                  7. Redesign site on west end of Dead River Peninsula lot to be walk-in or water access; block the spur road to this site and provide a parking area for walk-in users.</p>	<p>Done. <i>Improvements were completed by Brookfield at this site in 2015.</i></p>
<p><u>Boat Access:</u>                  Pursue parking improvements to the Flagstaff Lake boat access facility on the Spring Lake parcel with Florida Power and Light (responsible for this facility under their Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license).</p>	<p>The Bureau has discussed these improvements with Brookfield (formerly Florida Power and Light/Next Era Energy) and they are addressed in the Comprehensive Recreation and Land Management Plan that the Bureau has reviewed and that Brookfield submitted to</p>

	<p>FERC on July 31, 2013. Brookfield will redevelop the site “for general and ADA uses and functional improvements.” Only carry-in boat access will be provided.</p> <p><i>Improvements were completed by Brookfield at this site in 2015. In addition, Brookfield improved the boat launch at Long Falls dam, including a gravel parking area, and opened it to public use (formerly the site was not accessible to the public).</i></p>
<p><b>Dead River Focused Recreation:</b> 1. Improve the Big Eddy Campsite sanitation facilities.</p>	<p>Vault toilets were installed in 2012.</p> <p><i>Substantial Improvements were completed by Brookfield at this site in 2015, as detailed in the CRLMP.</i></p>
<p><b>Land Based Recreation</b> 1. <u>Wyman Lot (south) and Carrabassett Valley lots:</u> Work with the Flagstaff Area ATV Club to develop a route connecting trails in Coplin Plantation to Kingfield via the Wyman lot south of Route 27, crossing the AT along Route 27, connecting to the CMP powerline on the east side of Route 27 (involving a bypass around the transformer station using an existing road and a small portion of the Wyman lot north and east of Route 27), and then connecting to the existing snowmobile trail heading south of the Preserve.</p>	<p>Done. The Carrabassett Valley ATV club has received grant funding for trail improvements in the vicinity of the CMP powerline corridor.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p>2. <u>Wyman Lot (south):</u> Construct an interpretive trail through the Old Growth Stand, as resources allow.</p>	<p>Secured funding for trail construction.</p> <p><i>Ongoing consideration; no trail construction planned at this time.</i></p>
<p>3. <u>Spring Lake and Dead River Peninsula Lots:</u> Designate the road on the Spring Lake Lot beginning at the bridge over the Dead River, and continuing across the top of the Dead River Peninsula as a public use road. Allow public use of the management road that branches south from this road on the Dead River Peninsula (this will be maintained only to the standard of a woods management road, and may be used by ATV’s and for pedestrian uses).</p>	<p>Done. <i>No change.</i></p> <p>Done. <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Historic Resources:</b> Any activities that would result in ground disturbance in historic and archaeologically sensitive areas must be reviewed by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC). Sensitive areas include areas close to the original Dead River channel – where there could be artifacts from the Arnold Expedition; and areas determined to have potential for prehistoric artifacts – the entire shoreline of Flagstaff Lake.</p>	<p>Follow as required. <i>No change.</i></p>



<p><b>Administrative Issues:</b> 1. Survey the boundary line on the Northern Flagstaff Lake shoreline parcels acquired from Plum Creek.</p>	<p>No activity this period.  <i>No activity.</i></p>
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<p><b>Mount Abraham</b></p>	<p><b>Actions taken/Comments:</b> [2012 entries: standard font, 2017 entries: italic font]</p>
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<p><b>Wildlife/Rare or Exemplary Ecosystems and Habitats</b> 1. Work with local snowmobile and ATV clubs to increase awareness of the impacts of these trails on the fragile alpine areas. 2. Block and post trails and roads on Bureau lands that are used to gain unauthorized motorized vehicle access into ecological reserve. Work with adjacent landowners to block and post trails that enter the Ecological Reserve from the western side. 3. Develop an agreement with MDIFW wardens to provide an enforcement presence if necessary, to ensure that ATV's and snowmobiles are not violating posted areas. 4. Remove the "cave" and metal structures, including the old fire tower, from the peak.</p>	<p>Problems are more associated with independent riders than with club members. Have blocked and posted routes on Bureau lands and worked with adjacent landowners to do the same. Most difficult use to control is winter snowmobile use. <i>The Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust, easement holder for the reserve area, has posted two signs at key locations indicating that motorized vehicles are prohibited in the area. A third sign will be posted in the spring of 2018.</i> Will schedule additional enforcement patrols with the Maine Warden Service. No activity this period. Reevaluate in 2014. Bridges out on the access road into the property have been a primary factor preventing this work from being completed. <i>Two bridges have recently been replaced, in cooperation with the abutting landowner. The Bureau will evaluate options for removing the structures in the next 5-year plan period.</i></p>
<p><b>Recreation</b> 1. Re-establish the hiking trailhead at the original lower elevation site and reroute the trail on Bureau lands to connect with the Warden's trail. 2. Remove the old Fire Wardens cabin and locate/construct a group tent site. 3. Block the logging roads that extend into the Ecological Reserve and put them to bed. 4. Evaluate alternatives to the road across the southern arm of the</p>	<p>Done. <i>Road to trailhead and parking have been improved.</i> Cabin has been removed, and a new campsite has been constructed. No activity this period. Bridges out on access roads have prevented vehicles from using the logging roads, and have made it unnecessary to block the roads. <i>Although the bridges have been replaced, the logging roads are rough and have now grown in, discouraging motorized use.</i> No activity this period. Reevaluate in 2014-15.</p>

<p>ecological reserve presently used as part of the snowmobile and ATV trail system in the area. Relocate these trails to other roads if reasonable, and discontinue the road on the ecological reserve.</p>	<p><i>Evaluation by the ORV Division indicated that steep terrain provides no reasonable option for relocating this segment of trail (which predates the 2007 ecological reserve designation).</i></p>
<p>5. Continue to allow ATVs and snowmobiles to use the existing gravel management road on the easterly edge of the non-ecoreserve portion of the property, provided there are no environmental issues.</p>	<p>Uses continue to be allowed.</p>
<p><b>Timber Resources</b> 1. Evaluate forest management opportunities on the non-ecoreserve portion of the property.</p>	<p>No activity this period, and no management activity is expected on the property within the next five years as it was harvested just prior to Bureau acquisition in 2001.</p> <p><i>No activity expected this five-year period.</i></p>
<p><b>Administrative Issues</b> 1. Determine and mark the boundary of the ecological reserve where roads appear to cross the ecological reserve (southern and eastern boundary); and where woods roads appear useable by ATV's to illegally access the summit area (portions of the western line).</p>	<p>Some woods roads accessible by ATV and snowmobile have been blocked. Boundary has not been marked, to date, on these roads.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p>2. Assess any environmental issues with roads located on the Bureau lands. Put to bed any roads not needed for forest management purposes and not part of an approved snowmobile or ATV trail network.</p>	<p>No activity this period. Most roads have been blocked or closed out by abutting landowners, and have minimized use of the forest management roads on the Unit. The Bureau has not done an environmental assessment of the roads, to date; this is done as part of forest management activities, which have not yet occurred on the unit.</p> <p><i>No change, as no harvests have occurred.</i></p>
<p>3. Develop a proposal to the MATC for extending the Appalachian side trail (blue-blaze trail) from the summit to the Bureau trailhead on the east side of the mountain.</p>	<p>MATC has adopted the trail as an official side trail of the Appalachian Trail.</p>

**Chain of Ponds**

**Actions taken/Comments:**  
[2012 entries: standard font, 2017 entries: italic font]

<p><b>Recreation Resources</b> 1. Redesign Burnt Dam Campsites.</p>	<p>No activity this period.</p>
<p>2. Through the Boating Facilities Division, work with MDOT to provide improved public boat access to this string of ponds. Improve the boat ramp in the Natanis Campground to a concrete-plank ramp and provide additional parking. Block the informal access site onto Natanis Pond, just south of the entrance to the Natanis Campground to discourage its use (unsafe</p>	<p>Boat ramp and parking improvements at campground were completed.</p> <p>The informal site, created by MDOT on MDOT land, has not been blocked.</p>

location).	
3. Provide an ADA compliant privy at the new boat launch facility on Natanis Pond; upgrade the privy at the Upper Farm site to be ADA compliant as resources allow.	<p>Currently working with campground operator to provide accessible toilet at improved boat launch.</p> <p><i>Campground lessee provides toilet at the boat launch.</i></p>
4. Work with the Boating Facilities Division and MDOT, using MDOT Water Access Bond money to develop an improved trailerable boat access onto Lower Pond, to replace a steep, gravel ramp at the same location.	<p>The site has been determined unsuitable for an improved trailerable launch because of steep slopes, insufficient land and deep water at the shore.</p>
5. Provide signage to identify hand carry boat access to the two middle ponds within the chain, Long Pond and Bag Pond.	<p>No activity this period. Two hand-carry sites providing access to Long Pond and Bag Pond are located on the Bureau's Google Earth web mapping application:  <a href="http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/programs/boating/googlemaps.html">http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/programs/boating/googlemaps.html</a>.                  Signage has not been provided at these sites to date.</p>
<b>Historic Resources</b>	
1. Any activities that would result in ground disturbance in historic and archaeologically sensitive areas must be reviewed by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC). Sensitive areas include areas in proximity to Natanis Point, Round Pond and Horseshoe Stream.	<p>Follow as required.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
2. Pursue interpretive efforts related to the Arnold Trail in cooperation with MDOT (related to interpretive panels to be erected at the new scenic overlook on Route 27, as part of the Scenic Byways program), and the Arnold Trail Historical Society, which maintains a trail around and above Round Pond.	<p>MDOT panels describing the Arnold Expedition were installed on Route 27 turnout near Cathedral Pines in Eustis.</p> <p>Work with the Arnold Expedition Historical Society is expected in the future.</p>
<b>Wildlife/Rare or Exemplary Ecosystems and Habitats</b>	
1. Periodically manage the old fields and apple trees to maintain their habitat attributes.	<p>Periodic mowing and pruning occurs.</p>
2. Monitor and evaluate the potential of the Horseshoe Stream area for designation as a managed deer wintering area.	<p>No activity this period.</p>
3. Post information at the trailered boat access on Natanis Pond related to procedures for avoiding introduction of invasive aquatic vegetation and fish.	<p>The number of invasive species of concern in Maine has grown substantially to include a variety land and water plants and animals. Information is plentiful but has yet to be consolidated into a single format suitable for posting on BPL signboards/kiosks. The BPL website will soon include links to invasives information provided by Environmental Protection, Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Maine Forest Service for each area searchable under "Find Parks &amp; Lands."</p> <p><i>IF&amp;W has posted signs addressing invasive fish and plants at the Natanis Pond boat launch.</i></p>

<p><b>Administrative Issues</b></p> <p>1. Work with the Natanis Campground leaseholders to ensure continued reasonable public access to public resources including availability of short-term camping sites; access to the planned public boat access at the north end of Natanis Pond; access to ATV trails; and access to the Arnold Trail walk.</p>	<p>Lease agreement with campground lessee addresses these objectives.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p>2. Work with the commercial campground lessee to ensure the campground is in character with the scenic and primitive nature of the surroundings, and has as little impact on the lake and associated wetlands as possible.</p>	

<b>Other Public Lots/Easement</b>	<b>Actions taken/Comments:</b> [2012 entries: standard font, 2017 entries: italic font]
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<p><b>Coplin Plantation West Lot (Deeryard Lot)</b></p> <p>1. Continue to manage for wildlife; monitor and evaluate use and ongoing studies related to the Deer Wintering area on this lot.</p>	<p>Due to natural occurrences in past decades, the cover on this lot had fallen apart and portions are no longer suitable habitat, although it still zoned for wildlife protection by LURC. However, cover is improving. <i>No change.</i></p>
<p>2. Define the Visual Class I area along the Dead River prior to any timber harvest in this area.</p>	<p>Visual Class I area will be defined as part of forest management prescriptions. The most recent prescription was prepared in April 2006. <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Coplin Plantation Center Lot</b></p> <p>1. Continue to manage for late successional forest for high quality timber where appropriate, and a diverse wildlife habitat.</p>	<p>Ongoing. The most recent prescription was prepared in August 2005. <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Freeman Township Lot</b></p> <p>1. Continue to manage for high quality timber and diverse wildlife habitat.</p>	<p>Ongoing. The most recent prescription was prepared in October 2006. <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Highland Plantation West Lot:</b></p> <p>1. Continue to manage for late successional forest for high quality timber where appropriate and wildlife values.</p>	<p>Ongoing. The most recent prescription was prepared in 2010. <i>No change.</i></p>
<p>2. Define the Visual Class I area along the Long Falls Dam Road prior to any timber harvest in this area.</p>	<p>Done. GIS update required. <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Highland Plantation Double Lot:</b></p> <p>1. Continue to manage for late successional forest, for high quality timber where appropriate and diverse wildlife habitat.</p>	<p>Ongoing management as per Plan. The most recent prescription was prepared in 1987. <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Highland Plantation Southeast Lot:</b></p> <p>1. Manage the portion of the lot west of Sandy Stream for wildlife.</p> <p>2. Establish a Visual Class I area around the small ledge/waterfall on the north line of the parcel prior to any timber harvest in this area.</p> <p>3. Provide signs along the gravel road visible to the public showing points of entry onto and exit from this lot. Provide a small parking area along the</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Visual Class I area will be defined prior to any forest management work within the identified area, which is within the 10 acre portion of the lot west of Sandy Stream, with Dominant Wildlife and Secondary Timber Management allocations. (The remaining 111 acres of the</p>

<p>road if feasible.</p>	<p>lot is allocated to Special Protection.)                  Parking needs to be reevaluated in 2014.   <i>No activity this period.</i></p>
<p><b>King and Bartlett Township Lot:</b>                  1. Continue to manage for late successional forest for high quality timber where appropriate and wildlife values.</p>	<p>Ongoing management as per the Plan. The most recent prescription was prepared in September 2006. <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Redington Township Lot:</b>                  1. Continue to manage for late successional forest for high quality timber where appropriate, and wildlife habitat, subject to a variable width Visual Class I area and the 100-foot no-cut area along either side of the Appalachian Trail.                  2. Avoid placement of new forest management roads within the remote recreation zone along the AT.</p>	<p>Ongoing management as per the Plan. The most recent prescription was prepared in 1997, and it is anticipated that a new prescription will be developed soon.   <i>No Change. No roads have been developed during this period as no harvesting occurred.</i></p>
<p><b>Pierce Pond Easement:</b>                  1. Establish and implement an annual monitoring program in cooperation with the US Forest Service (holder of the Plum Creek and Maine Wilderness Watershed Trust conservation easements), and the Maine Wilderness Watershed Trust (third party enforcer to the conservation easement held by the Bureau on the Charles and Gertrude Valentine property).</p>	<p>Established and ongoing. <i>No change.</i></p>

**Monitoring and Evaluation** (Plan pages 171-173)

**Actions taken/Comments:**  
 [2012 entries: standard font, 2017 entries: italic font]

<p><b>Implementation of Plan Recommendations</b>                  Within 2 years of plan adoption, develop a process for implementing, accomplishing, and tracking the management recommendations in the Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include a framework of recommendations with priority levels assigned and targeted timeframes established by priority level. This framework will be utilized to determine work priorities and budgets on an annual basis.</li> <li>• Document annually progress in implementing the recommendations, plans for the coming year, and adjustments to the target timeframes as needed.</li> </ul>	<p>The Bureau implements plan recommendations through the process of calendar year planning, during which it schedules and budgets for projects for the coming year. Priorities are established within each Public Lands administrative region based on urgency of need (e.g., public safety, environmental impact); availability of resources (e.g., funds, staff, equipment, contractors); and opportunities available at the time (e.g., project consolidation, favorable weather). Yearly accomplishments are reported by administrative region in an annual report to the Legislature, which is posted on the Bureau’s website.   <i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Recreation – Public Use</b>                  Public use data for the Flagstaff Region, except for use on the Appalachian Trail and some scattered monitoring of snowmobile use on the Bigelow</p>	<p>No activity this period. The Bureau will explore collaboration with Brookfield on recreation use data collection for their FERC-</p>

<p>Preserve, does not exist. Fees are not charged for the use of these lands, so this avenue for collecting data does not exist for the Flagstaff properties. The Bureau will consider how additional use data could be gathered, perhaps by periodic user surveys.</p>	<p>required Form 80 Report (due every six years, with the next report due in 2015).  <i>No change.</i></p>
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<p><b>Recreation – Use Impacts</b>                  In addition to gathering data on use, the Bureau will monitor use to determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether improvements to existing facilities or additional facilities might be needed and compatible with the vision for the Unit;</li> <li>• whether additional measures are needed to ensure that recreational users have a high quality experience (which could be affected by the numbers of users, and interactions among users with conflicting interests);</li> <li>• whether use is adversely affecting sensitive natural resources or the ecology of the area;</li> <li>• whether measures are needed to address unforeseen safety issues;</li> <li>• whether changing recreational uses and demands present the need or opportunity for adjustments to existing facilities and management; and</li> <li>• whether any changes are needed in the management of recreation in relation to other management objectives, including protection or enhancement of wildlife habitat and forest management.</li> </ul>	<p>As a practical matter, most monitoring of public use occurs as observations made by seasonal recreation staff in the course of their routine duties; or as a result of conditions reported or requests made by visitors and others to field staff or to BPL regional and central offices. The Bureau is experimenting with a number of monitoring tools to supplement these observations and reports, including trail counters and visitor surveys.</p> <p><i>No change.</i></p>
<p><b>Wildlife</b>                  (1) <b>Deer Wintering Areas:</b> Of particular interest are the deer wintering areas on the Spring Lake, Chain of Ponds, and Coplin West lots, since there is a need for this habitat in the region. As staff and budgets allow, the Bureau will coordinate with MDIFW on aerial and ground surveys of these deer wintering areas to determine the distribution and use related to habitat quality and quantity. These surveys will be conducted during winter under snow conditions that restrict deer mobility.</p>	<p>The Bureau routinely coordinates with DIFW on DWA surveys, and Spring Lake and Coplin Plantation lots have had winter surveys. No additional surveys were done during this 5-year period.</p> <p><i>No surveys were done this 5-year period.</i></p>
<p>(2) <b>Ruffed grouse:</b> The Bureau also conducts periodic “drumming counts” for monitoring ruffed grouse populations in areas managed specifically for this species – on the Dead River Peninsula in this Region.</p>	<p>The grouse patch management area at Dead River will be surveyed in the 2014 field season.</p> <p><i>No surveys were done during this 5-year period due to other priorities but may be surveyed over the next period.</i></p>
<p>(3) <b>Bicknell’s thrush:</b> In cooperation with the Vermont Institute of Natural Resources (VINS), the Bureau participates in monitoring high elevation birds, including Bicknell’s thrush, on Mount Abraham. VINS also monitors these birds on Bigelow Mountain, through another partner.</p>	<p>The Vermont Center for Ecostudies, VCE (now separate from Vermont Institute of Natural Science, VINS) now monitors these areas.</p>
<p><b>Game Species:</b> The Bureau cooperates with MDIFW monitoring of game species on the unit, including deer, moose, grouse, and black bear.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DIFW tracks deer, moose and bear harvests through harvest registrations, which are compiled and reported annually from registration station across the state.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DIFW does not survey ruffed grouse populations. BP&amp;L runs drumming surveys where they have conducted grouse patch management, principally at Dead River and Seboomook. These two routes will be surveyed in the 2014 field season.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Significant Wildlife Habitat:</b> The Bureau will identify and map significant wildlife habitat such as vernal pools and den trees in the process of developing its detailed forest management prescriptions. The boundaries of any sensitive natural communities will also be delineated on the ground at this time. Any significant natural areas or wildlife habitat will then be subject to appropriate protections.</p>	<p>Ongoing. Process continues as described.</p>
<p><b>Ecological Reserves*</b> The MNAP conducted natural resource inventories on the Horns and Mount Abraham ERs in 2005. Baseline data for long term monitoring using permanent plots were collected at the Horns in 2002 and at Mount Abraham in 2004. The areas will be re-inventoried periodically according to schedules developed by the Bureau and MNAP.</p>	<p>MNAP's re-inventory of The Horns ER is scheduled for 2013. <i>MNAP revisited and collected data on 46 permanent forest monitoring plots in the Bigelow (~Horns) Ecological Reserve in 2013 and 35 plots within the Mt. Abraham Ecological Reserve in 2014</i></p>
<p>*An inventory interval of 10 years has been recommended by the Ecological Reserve Scientific Advisory Committee.</p>	
<p><b>Timber Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prescriptions are prepared by professional foresters according to Bureau policies, with input from staff specialists, and peer-reviewed prior to approval.</li> <li>• Timber sales are prepared and laid out with field staff looking at most acres prior to harvest and with individual tree marking done on the majority of harvest acres.</li> <li>• Field staff are on-site to check on harvest practice and progress frequently; senior staff visit sites less frequently to obtain overall picture of what is taking place in the forest.</li> <li>• After harvest is completed, roads, trails, and water crossings are put to bed as appropriate, and any changes in stand type are recorded to update the Bureau's GIS system can be updated.</li> </ul>	<p>Process continues as described.</p>
<p>The Bureau is currently developing a post-harvest monitoring plan to assist forest managers in assessing harvest outcomes on all managed lands. The monitoring plan will also address water quality and Best Management Practices (BMPs) utilized during harvest activities.</p>	<p>At present, monitoring objectives are addressed by the Bureau with the Harvest Evaluation Report, last revised Feb. 2013, by which harvests are scored on 20 criteria. These criteria include compliance with BMPs, laws and regulations and other criteria which serve to protect water quality. During this five year Plan period, the Bureau was in full compliance with Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards.</p> <p>Post-harvest monitoring is more accurately described as a process; with 2011 inventory data, we are engaging in a</p>

	<p>modeling process to better manage our prescriptions, and better understand the impacts of harvests on management objectives.</p>
<p>Third party monitoring is done mainly through the forest certification programs of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). A full FSC audit was completed for all Bureau lands in 2006, including the Seboomook Unit.</p>	<p>In 2011, the Bureau had a full recertification audit under the FSC program and an annual surveillance audit under SFI. Auditors looked at harvest areas on four or five separate tracts in each of the three Lands administrative regions. A total of eight corrective action requests are now being addressed. Auditors were especially complimentary of the condition of recently harvested stands, the High Conservation Value Forests, and recreation management.</p> <p><i>In 2015, the Bureau had annual surveillance audits under both the FSC and SFI programs. The auditors visited 17 separate sites on nine different townships in the Bureau's West Region. They particularly noted the thinning of immature stands and diversity of wildlife habitat.</i></p>

**Issues for Advisory Committee Attention**

**New Issues or Circumstances Not Addressed in the Plan:**

**Requests for New Mountain Bike Trail Segments and Mountain Bike Use of Existing Trail on the Carrabassett Valley Parcel**

The Carrabassett Valley Trails Committee (CVTC)<sup>1</sup> has requested to construct approximately 1,900 feet of single-track mountain bike trail across the western side of the Carrabassett Valley parcel, south of the Bigelow Preserve. These segments would be part of a new trail connecting the existing Oak Knoll single-track bike trail (on Carrabassett Valley Sanitary District property) and the Approach Trail, a ~1.5-mile hiking/snowshoeing/ungroomed ski trail on the Carrabassett Valley parcel and Bigelow Preserve. The remainder of the new trail would be on District property. The parcel is allocated to Visual Class I in the Plan and was harvested in 2014.

Plan Amendment E resulting from the 2012 Five-Year Review allowed Maine Huts & Trails (MH&T) to construct the Approach Trail, connecting an existing multi-use non-motorized trail near the MH&T Stratton Brook Hut and the 60's Road bike/ski trail (aka, Esker Trail) in the Bigelow Preserve. The trail was completed in 2016, with BPL oversight. Now, in conjunction with the new trail described above, CVTC would like to expand use of the Approach Trail to include mountain

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<sup>1</sup> CVTC consists of Carrabassett Region NEMBA, the Town of Carrabassett Valley, Maine Huts & Trails, and Sugarloaf Mountain Corporation.



bikes, giving riders a route between the hut and nearby bike trails and the Esker Trail, off the existing hut service road and BPL/CVSD management roads.

New circumstances: The request is prompted by a new focus (since adoption of the Plan in 2007) on mountain biking as a component of the four-season recreation economy in the region, a new capacity to manage mountain biking through the Carrabassett Region Chapter of NEMBA (CR-NEMBA, established in 2010) and the CVTC, and ongoing mountain bike trail development by CR-NEMBA and their partners on the lands between the Bigelow Preserve and Route 27. As part of this developing network of trails, the proposed new trail and bike use of the Approach Trail are intended to further improve and expand riding opportunities and experiences in the area.

**Other Items of Special Concern or Interest:**

Request for New Hiking and Cross-Country Skiing Trail Crossing the Redington Twp. Lot

Maine Huts and Trails (MH&T) is interested in constructing a hiking and cross-country skiing trail across the Redington Twp. Lot, including a crossing of the A.T., to provide a connection between a planned MH&T hut at Caribou Pond (about 1 mile north of the Redington Lot) and the Orbeton Stream area to the southwest. The trail would run north/south ~1.5 to 2.0 miles across the lot and follow existing management roads or skid trails, where possible. Only non-motorized uses would be allowed on the trail; however, winter grooming of the trail would be conducted by snowmobile. The A.T. on the Redington Twp. Lot is surrounded by a 100-foot Special Protection buffer and additional 400-foot Remote Recreation buffer. An amendment to the Plan will be necessary to allow this new recreation use of the lot and the existing approved management road crossing of the A.T., in consultation with the Bureau's A.T. partners.

New circumstances: During the past decade, MH&T has developed four huts and 80 miles of trail north of Highway 27, much of which are on and adjacent to BPL lands in the Flagstaff Unit. MH&T is now turning attention to extending the trail system south of Highway 27, to eventually reach the Rangeley area. A crossing of the Redington Lot is a key link in the proposed trail extension south from Caribou Pond, due to topographic constraints and the presence of US Navy property to the west, where public access is restricted.

Permission for the trail has not been granted by the landowner abutting the Redington Lot north of the AT corridor, although discussions between MH&T and the landowner have been initiated. BPL policy does not permit approval of trail connections on the public lands until landowner approvals are received on adjacent private lands. Therefore, it is not anticipated that this Plan review will result in a Plan amendment to allow the trail. However, the Bureau wishes to take advantage of the Plan review process to discuss the proposal and receive comments, in the eventuality that MH&T receives the necessary landowner approval in the near future. If MH&T receives the necessary approval, the Bureau would reengage with the AC through correspondence. A public meeting would be held to receive comments on any resulting Plan amendment.

## APPENDIX C

MAINE BUREAU OF PARKS AND LANDS (BPL)  
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry  
22 State House Station - Augusta, Maine 04333-0022

### MEETING MINUTES

FLAGSTAFF REGION MANAGEMENT PLAN – FIVE YEAR REVIEW #2  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AC) MEETING  
U. Maine - Farmington  
December 6, 2017  
6:00 – 7:30 PM

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND THE INTERESTED PUBLIC PRESENT

##### AC Members

Richard Fecteau, Maine Appalachian Trail Club  
Matt Jacobs, American Forest Management  
Bob Luce, Town of Carrabassett Valley  
Joshua Tauses, Carrabassett Region NEMBA  
Carolann Ouellette, Maine Huts & Trails

##### Interested Public and Other Organizations

Bob Weingarten (Friends of Bigelow)  
Larry Warren (Longfellow Mtns. Heritage Trails)  
Simon Rucker (Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust)  
Savannah Steele (Maine Huts & Trails)

(AC member Claire Polfus, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, submitted written comments in advance of the meeting)

#### BPL STAFF PRESENT

Peter Smith, Lands Manager Western Region  
Jim Vogel, Management Plan Coordinator  
Rex Turner, Recreation Planner

Brian Bronson, ATV Program Coordinator  
Nate Webb, MDIF&W Biologist assigned to BPL

##### Introductions

After a welcome by Jim Vogel, introductions were made by members of the Committee and other BPL staff, followed by a brief statement of the purpose of the meeting: 1) to review the accomplishments since 2013 in implementation of the Flagstaff Plan recommendations, 2) to review recreation improvements allowed by the Plan amendment adopted in 2014, and 3) to review and discuss three new trail proposals/requests that may require plan amendments if approved. A meeting agenda (attachment 1), Appalachian Trail Conservancy comment letter (attachment 2), and a map of mountain bike trails in and adjacent to the Bigelow Preserve and Carrabassett Valley Lot were distributed. Copies of the Five Year Review Table were available. PowerPoint slides were used in support of the discussion (attachment 3).

##### Accomplishments

Jim presented highlights of recreation improvements that have been accomplished since the last Plan review at the Flagstaff Unit/Bigelow Preserve and at Chain of Ponds, primarily implemented by others and as allowed by the 2014 Plan amendments. Attendees were also given the opportunity to discuss and ask questions about other accomplishments, as summarized in the Plan Review table (AC members were provided the table in advance of the meeting). No questions or comments were forthcoming.

### MATC Requests/Friends of Bigelow Question

Next, the group briefly discussed several projects that Richard Fecteau of MATC has stated they would like to accomplish on the AT within the Bigelow Preserve, with the assistance of BPL. These include replacing **two composting privies at Horn's Pond** and the tent platform for the seasonal caretaker, and potential relocation of a badly eroded section of the Range Trail between Stratton and Cranberry Peak. In addition to help with funding, MATC will be seeking use of a helicopter to transport new materials to the sites. The Western Region will further evaluate these projects with MATC, including potential financial and logistical assistance.

Also discussed were concerns expressed by Friends of Bigelow in advance of the meeting regarding the status of the East Flagstaff Road beyond Round Barn in the Bigelow Preserve. Jim reminded the group that the road (improved for timber harvesting, along with some winter road spurs, in 2013-14) is designated **"light maintenance public access"** in the Plan. Dick Fecteau commented that the primary concern is that improved road conditions (surface and widening) increases vehicle traffic and changes the character of that area of the Preserve; thus, road character and size are of concern, not just the number of roads or road miles open to the public. Also of concern is the cumulative effect of incremental road improvements. Dick **commented specifically on the Parson's Brook spur** off East Flagstaff Rd. being left open after it was improved (the Plan designates it as a surfaced summer road, gated as of 2006). Pete Smith stated that this and other roads that had been gated or blocked in the past can be blocked if need be. (Spur roads that are part of the snowmobile trail system cannot be blocked, but gates that allow snowmobile traffic could be installed.) Jim Vogel offered to provide a table in the Final review packet that updates the table in the Plan (p. 61) summarizing road miles in the Preserve by type as of 2006.

### New Trail Proposals

The Carrabassett Valley Trails Committee (CVTC, which includes CR NEMBA, the Town of Carrabassett Valley, Maine Huts & Trails, and Sugarloaf Mountain Corp.) and Maine Huts and Trails (MH&T) have recently come forward with proposals for recreation trail development that were not considered in the development of the Plan or the first Plan review and that may require plan amendments. These proposals reflect the ongoing development of trail networks in the region over the past decade. CVTC has requested access for bicycles to the Approach Trail, recently constructed by MH&T on the Carrabassett Valley (CV) lot and Bigelow Preserve, and to construct a new bike trail (**the "Bypass Trail"**) partially on the CV lot, intersecting with the Approach Trail. MH&T has requested to construct a multipurpose non-motorized trail across the Redington Lot, as part of an expansion of their trail and hut system south of Rt. 27.

Jim Vogel presented summaries of the trail proposals, with field photos and maps, as well as the **Bureau's** perspective on the favorable factors/opportunities and concerns/constraints associated with the proposals, and potential Plan amendments should the trails be allowed. The MH&T proposal was presented "for discussion only" because permission for the trail from abutters to the Redington Lot has not been obtained. (The IRP requires abutter approval before BPL can approve trails on the public lands that would also cross adjacent private lands.) CVCT and MH&T were invited to provide additional details and background on their trail proposals to the Committee.

Approach Trail and Bypass Trail discussion – In response to the concern that bike use could present a safety issue where these trails cross the ATV and snowmobile route on the CV lot, attendees queried CVCT/MH&T about winter biking in the area and the potential for that use on the trail. Savannah Steele **replied that although, in general, winter ("fat tire")** biking was growing in the area, use of the Approach Trail

(or of the proposed new trail on the lot) was unlikely if the trails were not groomed. (Bikes crossing the route in the non-snow seasons when ATVs are present may still be a concern.) Savannah also commented on two other concerns enumerated by BPL; the potential for conflict between bike and pedestrian users of the trail and potential for increased trail erosion. She emphasized the care taken to apply best practices in building the Approach Trail and plans for maintenance to ensure the trail will be durable and sustainable, and the opening of lines of sight on the trail as a key to conflict avoidance. She also described potential upgrades of some small stream crossings to accommodate bike use.

BPL's presentation stated that, if the trail proposals are approved, the amount of bike use within the Preserve would be monitored to ensure it did not exceed a level consistent with the Vision expressed in the Plan for a backcountry dispersed recreation experience. In agreement with this, Bob Weingarten commented that the primary concern for the Preserve is a diminished backcountry recreation experience. He further commented that data on user numbers is needed to ensure cumulative changes to road and trail access do not diminish those experiences, and that the next Plan should set clear goals for protecting the backcountry experience.

Redington Lot Trail discussion – Attendees did not comment specifically on the proposed MH&T trail across the lot. Carolann Ouellette explained to the group that planning for the southward extension of the trail and hut system is at a very early stage, and that an alternative route to the Saddleback/Rangeley area is also being considered that would connect to the Kingfield area then circle around Mt. Abraham, bypassing the Redington Lot. Permission has already been granted to allow a trail from Rt. 27 to Caribou Pond and the **potential hut site there; permission from the owner of the “Golden Eagle” parcel, between Caribou Pond** and the Redington Lot, remains up in the air. The preference of MH&T is to build trail that is hut-to-hut, but dead-end or out-and-back sections could also be considered as part of the incremental development of the trail system. Regarding potential unauthorized motorized use of the proposed MH&T trail, Carolann commented that they have had success working with motorized groups to minimize such activity. Brian Bronson and others did acknowledge, however, that during periods of particularly deep snowcover in the area, some snowmobilers are able to ride across roads blocked with deep ditches and access closed areas and take it as a challenge to do so.

### Next Steps

Jim explained that additional comments were welcome through December, after which BPL staff will develop Plan amendment recommendations, which may allow the mountain bike trail proposals with certain conditions. These will be provided to the AC members for review and comment during January. The final draft proposed amendments would then be presented at a public meeting to gather further public input.

### Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:05 pm.

*Respectfully Submitted by  
Jim Vogel*

Attachment 1: Meeting Agenda  
Attachment 2: Appalachian Trail Conservancy Comment Letter  
Attachment 3: Meeting Presentation



**Flagstaff Region Management Plan Five-Year Review #2**  
**Flagstaff Region Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**UM-F Olsen Student Center – Conference Room**  
**December 6, 2017**  
**6:00 – 7:30 PM**

**AGENDA**

**6:00 PM**

**Welcome** ~ *Introductions, and Meeting's Purpose*

**6:10 PM**

**Accomplishments** ~ *Presentation of recreation improvement highlights, address any questions regarding accomplishments since 2013 in implementing the Plan recommendations, as summarized in the Plan Review table.*

**6:20 PM**

**MATC Requests / Friends of Bigelow Questions** ~ *Inform AC of requests by MATC trail reconstruction and privy replacement projects on the AT within the Bigelow Preserve; Discuss status of East Flagstaff Road beyond Round Barn, improved for harvesting in 2013-14.*

**6:30 PM**

**Mountain Bike Trail Proposals – CVTC** ~ *Presentation of proposal for use of bikes on an existing hiking and ski/snowshoe trail on the Carrabassett Lot and Bigelow Preserve, and development of a new bike trail partially on the lot, both connecting to the Esker Trail; discussion of implications for Flagstaff Region Management Plan.*

**7:00 PM**

**Non-motorized Trail Proposal – MH&T** ~ *Presentation of proposal for extension of MH&T regional multi-use trail across the Redington Lot and Discussion of Implications for Flagstaff Region Management Plan. (For discussion only – no action will be taken during the course of the Plan review.)*

**7:25 PM**

**Next Steps and Committee Comments**

**7:30 Adjourn**

The Flagstaff Region Management Plan, Plan maps, and Five-Year Review documents can be found online at: <http://www.maine.gov/dacf/flagstaff>



James Vogel  
Senior Planner, Bureau of Parks and Lands  
18 Elkins Lane, Harlow Building  
22 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0022

To Jim Vogel and the Flagstaff Region Management Plan Advisory Committee members:

Thank you for sending the updated Management Plan actions, the new items of special concern, and for engaging the Advisory Committee for input. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy appreciates being part of the committee. Unfortunately, we will not have a representative available to attend the scheduled meeting on December 6 in Farmington. In lieu of being able to attend the December 6 meeting, please accept these comments and concerns regarding the updates and changes.

- 1) Our first comment centers around the proposed reallocation of the timber management road crossing of the A.T. in the Redington Public Lot to allow a multi-use recreation trail for groomed skiing and hiking. We understand the land ownership and management constraints between Carrabassett Valley and Rangeley. However, to our knowledge the specific route and connection have not been shared with the Advisory Committee. There are multiple timber management roads crossing the A.T. in the Redington Public Lot and we would like to see a detailed map showing which road is proposed to be reallocated. We are also reluctant to support a trail crossing of the A.T. without detailed information regarding the purpose and regional connectivity of the proposed trail. We fully agree that the State Bureau of Public Lands should not amend the management plan without proof of permission from adjacent landowners. We further recommend that the agency request proof of permission for non-directly adjacent landowners whose land is critical to the connectivity of the trail and a more detailed plan and map for the Maine Huts and Trails expansion.
- 2) We request that any hiking trail connecting to the A.T. go through the Appalachian Trail side trail approval process, which ATC administers, to ensure that it meets A.T. and national trails system standards. We are happy to provide information regarding this process to the State BPL and any other trail managers.
- 3) We also have concerns regarding the multi-use nature of the proposed trail. Firstly, we are concerned with potential mountain bike use of the proposed trail. The A.T. through the Redington Public Lot has mild to moderate slopes and the terrain is conducive to mountain biking in many locations. It also goes through wet areas and across streams. Any biking on the A.T. could cause damage to the treadway and adjacent resources. Secondly, we continue to have issues with motorized use of the Barnjum road just east of the proposed crossing including snowmobiles and ATVs driving down the A.T. treadway and then across an unbridged stream. It is reasonable to think those same users might attempt to use the proposed trail if it is



approved. We would like to see plans for how the trail managers will prevent motorized and mechanized uses in such a remote area as the Redington Public Lot.

- 4) The final concern is with the potential ecological impact of the proposed trail. Multiple studies, including the 2007 study, *An Ecological Study of the High Peaks Region of Maine's Western Mountains*, have cited the interior high peaks as critical core habitat for high elevation species, including for the federally listed Canada lynx. Currently there is no approved motorized use and very little non-motorized use of the area in the winter. The proposed trail would bisect the core of the interior high peaks and could disturb current wildlife populations at a critical time of year as well as provide easier access routes for competitor species. The body of research on recreational impacts to wildlife populations is growing. We recommend that the Bureau of Parks and Lands researches the potential impact of this trail to important rare, threatened and endangered species.

In closing, we would also like to thank the Bureau for their ongoing partnership in managing the A.T. through BPL lands and as an adjacent landowner around the Crockers. In particular, we appreciate the Bureau's continued support for MATC's ridgerunner program in the Bigelows and for ongoing and completed work improving trailheads in the Bigelows, Mt Abram and the Crockers.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed plan amendments. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Claire Polfus".

Claire Polfus  
Maine Program Manager  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
PO Box 454  
Farmington, ME 04938  
207-778-0700  
cpolfus@appalachiantrail.org

Citation: Mckinley, P. 2007. *An Ecological Study of the High Peaks Region of Maine's Western Mountains*. Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust. <http://matlt.org/matltwordpress/wp-content/uploads/MATLTEcologicalReport.pdf>

# Flagstaff Region Management Plan 5 Year Plan Review and Update #2



*New pedestrian  
bridge at  
Stratton Brook  
Pond Outlet*

BUREAU OF PARKS AND LANDS  
DECEMBER 6, 2017

## Agenda

2

- Recreation improvement highlights
- Questions on other accomplishments
- Review and comment on new issues and potential Plan amendments
  - Carrabassett Valley Trails Committee (CVTC): 2 related proposals
    - ✦ Bike use on MH&T Approach Trail, Carrabassett Valley lot and Bigelow Preserve
    - ✦ New bike trail across part of CV lot and intersecting with Approach Trail
  - Maine Huts & Trails (MH&T)
    - ✦ Extension of trail system across the Redington Lot
    - ✦ *Discussion item only* – have not received permission for trail from abutter to north and east of lot



## Recreation Site Improvements at Flagstaff Lake

3



RV sites at Big Eddy campground



New table at Hurricane Island

Improvements constructed in 2015 by Brookfield Renewables under new FERC Project License.

## Recreation Site Improvements at Flagstaff Lake

4



New shoreline site at Myers Lodge



New ADA privy at Round Barn

Improvements constructed in 2015 by Brookfield Renewables under new FERC Project License.

## Recreation Improvements

Allowed by Plan Amendments Adopted June 2014

5

- Approach Trail – CV lot & Bigelow Preserve
  - MH&T constructed 1.5 mile trail with pedestrian bridge over Stratton Brook; completed 2016
- Coburn Gore to Kingfield Trail – Bigelow Preserve
  - LMHT improved existing management road/snowmobile trail between Range TH and Stratton Brook Road; completed 2015
- Coburn Gore to Kingfield Trail – Chain of Ponds
  - LMHT constructed 1.5 miles of non-motorized trail north of Natanis Campground in 2015/16 (11 miles total constructed on and off BPL)
- East Flagstaff Lake Boat Access
  - Brookfield improved existing gravel launch ramp near dam and made formerly closed area accessible to public

## MH&T Approach Trail

6



Bridge across Stratton Brook



MH&T signage at junction with Esker Trail

## LMHT at Bigelow Preserve

7



Graded with DR Power grader



Composite bridge over stream  
Drainage to stream

Source: Larry Warren, LMHT

## LMHT at Chain of Ponds

8



Slash piles from plantings  
and logging activity



2" Bridge over stream to Meadow Stream

Source: Larry Warren, LMHT

## Long Falls Dam Boat Access

9



Lower ramp and rock breakwater



New gravel surface

## Questions/Comments?

10

- Any questions on other accomplishments in implementing the Plan recommendations, as reported in the Review table?



## MATC and Friends of Bigelow Requests/Questions

11

- MATC projects on AT within Bigelow Preserve
  - Replace two composting privies at Horns Pond
  - Relocate badly eroded section of Range Trail (40% of total)
- Friends of Bigelow
  - What is status of East Flagstaff Road west of Round Barn?
    - ✦ Designated a **“light maintenance” Public Access Road in the Plan** (except for part of spur to Ferry Farm), see p. 65 (road map)
    - ✦ Improved for timber harvesting in 2013-14, also some winter road spurs

## New Issues to Address

12

- Mountain bike trail proposals – CVTC
  - CV Lot & Bigelow Preserve – Open MH&T Approach Trail (hiking/snowshoe/ski trail) to bike use
  - CV Lot – ~1,900 foot segments of new ½ mile bike trail linking Oak Knoll and Approach Trails on CVSD and BPL property
- Non-motorized trail proposal – MH&T
  - Redington Lot – multi-purpose non-motorized trail across lot
    - ✦ AT crossing on existing management road
    - ✦ motorized winter grooming for xc skiing

## Mountain Bike Use of MH&T Approach Trail

13

- Proposal
  - Allow bike use on hiking/snowshoeing/skiing trail connecting bike trails near MH&T Stratton Brook Hut and 60s Road/Eske Trail
  - Purpose: provide most direct and attractive route for bike riders between Eske Trail and hut, as it now provides for hikers/snowshoers/skiers
  - NOTE: Approval required in order to develop Bypass Trail

## Mountain Bike Use of Approach Trail (CVTC)

14





## Field Photos – Approach Trail

15



Trail improvements along old road south of Stratton Brook



Drainage work on trail

## Mountain Bike Use of Approach Trail

16

- Favorable factors/Opportunities
  - Trail construction and grade are suitable for bike use with little additional work on trail required
  - Links to but does not expand existing approved bike trails/routes along south margin of Bigelow Preserve
- Concerns/Constraints
  - Potential for increased trail erosion
  - Potential conflicts with pedestrian trail users
  - Potential conflict and safety issue with ATV and snowmobile use of Mountain Trail
  - Potential for off-trail riding
  - Signage and rider information/education required for safe sharing of trail between bike riders and hikers

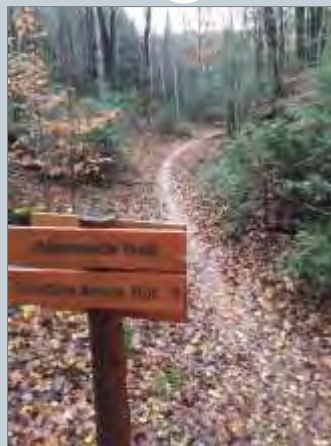
## Mountain Bike Use of Approach Trail

17

- Potential Plan Amendments
  - No resource allocation changes required
  - Allow use of bikes on hike/ski trail, pending:
    - ✦ Posting with appropriate signage instructing bike riders to yield to pedestrian users
    - ✦ Satisfactory resolution of any potential conflicts with ATV and snowmobile trail, where the proposed trail intersects it
    - ✦ Posting of warnings on both ORV and Approach trail of crossing traffic
  - Monitoring
    - ✦ Monitor trail for indications of off-trail riding
    - ✦ Monitor trail condition for adverse resource impacts from bike use; collaborate with MH&T and CR-NEMBA to address any impacts noted

## Questions and Comments?

18



Approach Trail at junction with  
Esperanza Hill



## Service Road Bypass Mountain Bike Trail (CVTC)

19

- Proposal
  - ~1,900 feet of new ~1/2 mile single track trail crossing west side of CV lot, connecting Oak Knoll bike trail and Approach Trail
  - Crosses “Mountain Trail” (Snowmobile and ATV route)
  - Purpose: With Approach Trail, provide more desirable route for riders than existing service and management roads connecting bike trails
- Resource Allocations
  - Visual Consideration Class II (due to visibility of lot from Bigelow Mountain and AT)
  - Timber Management secondary allocation

## CVTC Proposal – Service Road Bypass Mountain Bike Trail

20



Source: Map provided by Carrabassett Valley Trails Committee.

## Bypass Mountain Bike Trail (CVTC)

21

- Favorable factors/Opportunities
  - Bike trails are an allowed use in areas allocated Visual Consideration and Timber Management
  - Few constraints due to terrain (similar to area crossed by Approach Trail)
- Concerns/Constraints:
  - Long term maintenance needs
  - Potential for off-trail riding
  - Potential conflict and safety issue with ATV and snowmobile use of Mountain Trail at bike trail crossing point
  - Potential, with Approach Trail use, to diminish backcountry dispersed recreation experience in the Bigelow Preserve

## Bypass Mountain Bike Trail (CVTC)

22

- Potential Plan Amendment
  - No resource allocation changes required
  - Allow construction of trail segments on CV Lot, pending:
    - ✦ Approval of final trail route
    - ✦ Approval of abutting landowner (CVSD) for linking trail segments upslope and downslope of segment on unit
    - ✦ Posting of warnings on both ORV and bike trail of crossing traffic
    - ✦ Long-term agreement for maintenance of trail
  - No expansion of parking within the Preserve (Stratton Brook trailhead)
  - Monitoring of use levels
    - ✦ Use level within Bigelow Preserve should not exceed a level consistent with Vision expressed in the Plan for backcountry dispersed recreation experience

## Questions and Comments?

23



Hut service road near upslope end of proposed trail

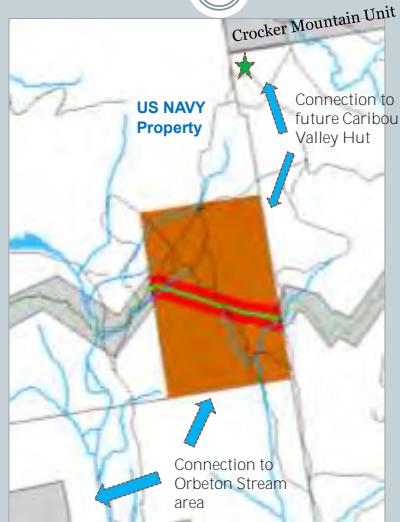
## Multi-use Non-motorized Trail across Redington Lot (MH&T) – *For Discussion Only*

24

- **Proposal**
  - Allow development of hike/ski trail crossing lot North-South
  - Purpose: part of eventual extension of MH&T system between Route 27 and Rangeley
- **Permission from Abutters Required**
  - IRP requires that adjacent landowner approval be sought and received before planned trail connections are approved (Policy D-30, page 64)
- **Dominant Resource Allocations**
  - Timber Management (majority of lot)
  - Special Protection/Remote Rec (AT corridor)

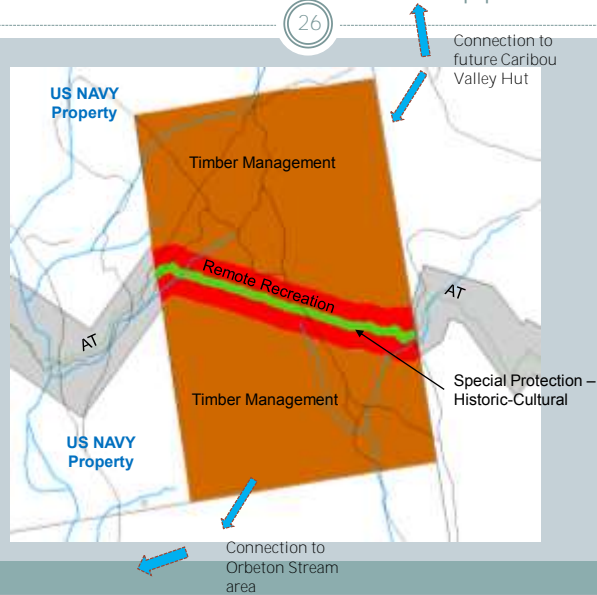
## Redington Lot – Resource Allocations, Roads and Appalachian Trail

25



## Redington Lot – Resource Allocations, Roads and Appalachian Trail

26



### Redington Lot – Topography (20 foot contours)

27



### Field Photos – Redington Lot

28



South end of mgmt. road & barrier



Primary stream crossing road

## Field Photos – Redington Lot

29



AT crossing of management road



AT northbound from road

## Non-Motorized Trail Crossing Redington Lot

30

- Favorable Factors/Opportunities
  - Appears that existing management roads and skid trails could be basis of much of route across lot
  - Approved management road crossing of AT
- Concerns/Constraints
  - Consultation with MATC/ATC required regarding new recreation use of authorized management road crossing of AT
  - Potential for unauthorized motorized use of new trail
  - New trail may conflict with timber management (timber harvesting likely to resume in next 5-10 years)
  - Culverts and bridges have been removed from management roads

## Non-Motorized Trail Crossing Redington Lot

31

- Potential Plan Amendments
  - No changes to Resource Allocations would be required
    - ✦ Non-motorized trails are an allowed secondary use in Special Protection-Historic/Cultural areas
    - ✦ Also an allowed use in Remote Recreation and Timber Management areas
  - If approval from abutter is obtained, allow MH&T to develop non-motorized trail, with winter grooming
    - ✦ BPL to approve final route, utilizing existing management roads and skid trails to the extent feasible
    - ✦ Develop long-term agreement between MH&T and BPL for maintenance of trail
    - ✦ Timber harvesting will resume and may disrupt trail

## Questions and Comments?

32



AT and surrounding hardwood forest on Redington Lot



## Next Steps

33

- Comment Period - December
  - Comments on the trail proposals are welcome over the next few weeks
- Draft Plan Amendments - January
  - Will be circulated to AC for comment, along with responses to any written comments received
- Public Meeting to Present Plan Amendments - February
  - Public meeting and opportunity to comment is required before any Plan amendments can be adopted

Thank You for your Attendance!

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## APPENDIX D



2007 Flagstaff Region Management Plan – 2<sup>nd</sup> Five Year Review  
**Public Meeting: Proposed Plan Amendments**

***UM Farmington – Olsen Student Center – North Dining Hall C***  
***February 13, 2018***  
***6:00 PM***

### AGENDA

**6:00 PM**

**Welcome** ~ *Introductions, Purpose of Meeting*

**6:10 PM**

**Proposed Amendments** ~ *BPL presentation of proposed new mountain bike trails and proposed Plan amendments to allow the trails*

**6:30 PM**

**Public questions and comments**

**6:45 PM**

**Public Comment Period and Steps to Finalize Plan Amendments**

**Adjourn**

The Flagstaff Region Management Plan, Plan maps, and the proposed Plan amendments can be found online at:

**<http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/flagstaff>**

Written comments on the proposed Plan amendments can be sent to:

Jim Vogel

Bureau of Parks and Lands

22 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

-or-

[Jim.Vogel@maine.gov](mailto:Jim.Vogel@maine.gov)

**Flagstaff Region Management Plan – Five Year Review #2**  
 Public Meeting  
**February 13, 2018 ~ 6:00 PM**  
 UM-Farmington Olsen Student Center, Dining Hall C

PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY

Name	Organization (if any)	Mailing Address & Email Address (optional and if not provided previously)
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## APPENDIX E

### Testimony of Bob Weingarten, 2/13/18

#### Re: Flagstaff Region Management Plan Five-Year Review #2 – Draft Plan Amendments

I am on the Board of Directors of Friends of Bigelow but today I am submitting testimony on my own behalf and not for Friends of Bigelow

The focus of my testimony is on proposed Amendment C “Monitoring on Bike Use in the Bigelow Preserve.” This Amendment is being proposed as an addition to the Monitoring and Evaluation section of the Plan, under “Recreation.”

BPL acknowledges that since the Plan’s adoption there has been a gradual increase in mountain bike routes (on management roads) and bike trails in or leading to the south part of the Bigelow Preserve, allowed by amendments resulting from the first Plan review and now continuing with Plan Amendments A and B.

BPL acknowledges there is concern that use levels of these trails might not be consistent with a backcountry dispersed recreation experience in the Bigelow Preserve and thereby proposes focused monitoring of recreation use in the area affected by these bike trails. BPL indicates the methods to be employed may include trail counters installed and monitored by staff and/or direct field observation.

#### I contend that Amendment C is much too limiting.

Multiple use management plans are statutorily required for Public Reserved Lands pursuant to Title 12 of the Maine Statutes, and must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the *Integrated Resource Policy* revised and adopted in December 2000 by the Bureau.

These laws and policies direct the Bureau to identify and protect important natural, ecological, and historic attributes and to **enhance important fisheries and wildlife habitats**, in addition to timber harvesting and outdoor recreation, the latter two that seem to get all the attention.

Research findings published in the journal PLOS ONE by scientists at Wildlife Conservation Society, Colorado State University, and the University of California-Berkeley finds that human recreation activities in protected areas are impacting wildlife, and more often than not, in negative ways.

Outdoor recreation in protected areas is typically assumed to be compatible with conservation. Increasingly, however, negative effects of recreation on wildlife are being reported.

The authors reviewed 274 scientific articles published between 1981 and 2015 on the effects of recreation on a variety of animal species across all geographic areas and

recreational activities. More than 93 percent of the articles reviewed indicated at least one impact of recreation on animals, the majority of which (59 percent) were negative.

**Given these findings and BPL's mandate to enhance, rather than degrade, wildlife habitat on Public Reserved Lands I propose that Amendment C needs to be modified to include monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of all the new trails and new uses of these trails on wildlife and wildlife habitat, in order for BPL to adhere to the multiple use management requirements for Public Reserved Lands.**

**BPL should impose a moratorium on new recreational developments and on timber harvesting until impacts on wildlife can be scientifically assessed and plans revised to account for any negative impacts.**

**It is also critical in this context that BPL immediately hire a Bigelow Preserve Manager.**

Monitoring of impacts requires boots on the ground. The 1989 Bigelow Preserve Management Plan recommended hiring a Preserve Manager and for many years we had such a manager, now apparently we do not. The 1989 Plan stated: "There is a need for State personnel to have a greater on-site presence at the Preserve particularly during May-September in order to better manage recreational use in the Preserve." Given the vast increase in recreational activities in the Bigelow Preserve since then, a dedicated manager is an absolute necessity.

**Bureau Response:**

The Bureau recognizes the potential for impacts of recreation development on wildlife. Therefore, any recreation development, including bike and hiking trail development, is carefully planned to avoid sensitive wildlife habitats to the greatest practical extent. For example, wherever possible, riparian corridors and high value deer wintering areas are avoided as are exemplary ecological resources identified by the Maine Natural Areas Program. In addition, input and guidance is sought from the IF&W Wildlife Biologist assigned to the Bureau during planning for substantial recreational enhancements. More specifically in regards to the Bigelow Preserve: there has been little development of new recreation trails or other types of facilities since the adoption of the 2007 Plan, particularly in the core areas of the Preserve. Other than the primitive snowmobile trail in the northeast of the Preserve, and a new section of non-motorized trail built by Maine Huts & Tails and a realigned section of the Appalachian Trail on the east side of Flagstaff lake, trails and bike routes have been opened on existing management roads, with no new ground disturbed. This eliminates or minimizes the fragmentation of habitat that is a primary cause of impacts on wildlife. The development of primitive recreation facilities (as well as timber harvesting) that has occurred as permitted under the Bigelow Preserve Act are not contrary to the objective of enhancing wildlife habitat.