

St. John Uplands Region Management Plan

Written Scoping Comments

Comment period: 8/30/17 to 9/20/17

[NOTE: In November 2017, St. John-Allagash Region was renamed St. John Uplands Region to avoid confusion with the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Plan and management]

Vogel, Jim

From: Leah LaRoche <leah.marion@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 31, 2017 2:39 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: Webster Lake

Jim Vogel,

In response to last night's meeting, I want you to know that I support the following:

- Repair of the fire towers on Allagash and Round Pond Mountains.
- Interpretation (how they worked, how many towers, maps in the towers) of the fire towers.

I manage the Moosehead Lake Visitor's Center, and we recently had a fire tower reconstructed on our property. It has served as a popular attraction and people have shown great interest in visiting other fire towers in the North Maine Woods.

- Public boat launch at Webster Lake
- An additional remote campsite at Webster Lake.
- Clearing the old road from Telos Dam to Baxter.

These additions would enhance accessibility to this pristine area.

- Small all winter harvests in and around deer yards to benefit deer movement and feeding. Instead of the quick removal of 100,000's of cords in a small amount of time.

This would ensure a healthy deer population in areas where herds struggle during the winter.

Thank you for your time,

Leah LaRoche

Vogel, Jim

From: Reid Anderson <reida@kieviewavus.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 31, 2017 3:01 PM
To: LaRoche, Matt
Cc: Vogel, Jim
Subject: RE: BPL plan

Thanks for passing it along, I did see notices about the meeting from various sources but wasn't sure that there was much of an effect on us as we travel very little in the lands covered, mainly just that access to Webster and the Allagash Mountain Fire Tower. However, I had no idea there was even thought to putting a boat launch on Webster.

While it would make access to Webster Lake and therefore Webster Stream a little easier and possibly make a weekend canoe trip a little easier down Webster Stream, I'm torn about putting a full scale boat launch there as it's really nice to have that lake without any motorized traffic and it also keeps the campsites there less busy. I love the idea of not having to bushwhack down that hill as we've done these past few years, but maybe there's a middle ground where a hand launch for canoes could be put in without having to go full scale to a boat ramp. Where would they be thinking about putting that, midway where the old road already gets close (and in the area of the recent skidder trail cuts) or up near the end of the portage trail around Telos Cut utilizing the Telos Dam Rd further in than the existing gate?

With any increased accessibility, there will indeed need to be more camping available as I know that outlet into Webster Stream is a prime fishing location (we saw two seaplanes fly in/out during the 16 hours we were at Webster Outlet campsite this summer). I would recommend two campsites actually, one for 4-6 people and one for 12-16 people as Webster Outlet is the only campsite currently available for groups larger than 4 people. With Telos Cut campsite hopefully coming back online (as we heard from BSP via NEOC this summer), having another 4-6 person site and a 12 person site in addition to that, would be great. Even if one of them was at/near the boat access. So, we like the idea of improving access and increased camping options even for larger groups like ours, but just don't want to see too much increase in traffic out there as Webster Lake is pretty well protected right now with the only access being by canoe or sea plane and that helps keep that pretty remote and pristine, not too much different than Allagash Lake in that you do have to work to enjoy it and access is still limited to keep it from being too busy out there.

As for the fire towers, it would of course be great to keep those trails and the towers in good shape with good info. I know our groups love to stay at Carry Trail campsite on Allagash Lake and make a sunrise trip up to the Fire Tower, usually one of the highlights of their 18 day trip. I know it was a highlight for my son (4.5 at the time) when my wife and I took him up there last summer. When it comes to the Round Pond fire tower, most of our groups skip that hike knowing that they can't get up into the tower, but I bet if they were able to get up in there for a good view they would be much more likely to make the hike up there a part of their trip. As for what's inside the fire towers, being able to stand around a map and look out the window to identify landmarks is great (and as a little plug, maybe there could be some map/compass skills worked into it too, like a little quiz to identify a mountain based on a compass reading or something like that). Our kids love being able to see all the way to Kineo from the Allagash Mountain tower as they start their trip at the Birches in Rockwood, right next to Kineo, so they can see back 7 days' worth of travel to there and then they can see to Katahdin and know that they end their trip about as far on the other side of Katahdin (at the Medway public landing) as they are currently from Katahdin. It's a great perspective point on the whole trip from about 7 days in to an 18 day trip. Being able to do something similar from Round Pond would be great as they could likely see some landmark near Hannibal's Crossing (their starting point) or Chamberlain Bridge (their resupply point) and then a landmark up near Allagash Village or St Francis (their ending point).

Let me know if either of you know of other plans or there other thoughts out there as we'd be happy to provide thoughts/comments/suggestions as the plan progresses.

Vogel, Jim

From: Dave <kidd145@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 07, 2017 3:30 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: Webster Lake Access

Mr. Jim Vogel ,

My name is David Ramsey . and I have been informed that Webster lake may be considered for a public access boat launch.

I would be very interested to see public access to that area .

As both a former Maine ParK & Lands Ranger I have encountered many people that would be interested in this and do consider it a great move to increase fishing and camping in that region. Public Access for the people of Maine as well as those from away appears to be dwindling and any attempt to increase the fishing hunting and camping opportunities is a move in the right direction.

Thank You for your consideration in this matter.

David J Ramsey
40 Rips Rd
Brownville , Maine 04414

Vogel, Jim

From: Kramer, Gordon
Sent: Friday, September 08, 2017 10:45 AM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: Webster Lake access

Jim,

I have recently become aware that BPL is considering options to improve public access at Webster Lake in T6R11 WELS. Fisheries management responsibilities for Webster Lake falls with the Penobscot Regional Headquarters and I would like to be involved in any processes that will be addressing access at Webster. I am very much in favor of any improvement of access opportunity and would be interested in assisting in that process.

I was wondering if there was any details available about how and where that access would be located? Are there any maps of that available? Please advise?

Thank you,
Nels

Nels Kramer
Regional Fisheries Biologist
Penobscot Region
16 Cobb Rd.
Enfield, Maine 04493
207-732-4131x4003
207-441-5409
gordon.kramer@maine.gov

Vogel, Jim

From: Kramer, Gordon
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 12:59 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Cc: Labbe, Vern; Frost, Frank; Dunham, Kevin
Subject: RE: Webster Lake access

Jim,

Want to thank you for getting back in touch with me and allowing me the opportunity to forward comments for this process. As I stated in my earlier email to you, I would be very much in favor of any additional access opportunities at Webster. This office receives many inquiries, both summer and winter, from anglers looking to access Webster Lake. There are very limited opportunities at present, and I generally direct anglers to Baxter State Park if they're interested in staying and utilizing the canoe that is included with the outlet leanto. I believe that there is also another option that anglers can use that involves carrying a canoe or small boat approximately 3,000 to the lake shore? That seems to be a long enough carry to not be very useful at all.

If possible, I would be in favor of developing a small, trailer-able facility that anglers can use to launch small boats that would be safe and customary for that size lake and environment. In my opinion, Webster Lake is a large enough lake that small, 12' to 16' boat and square stern canoes should be an option for anglers. In addition, there should also be suitable and sufficient parking for at least 5 vehicles and trailers as well.

We manage Webster for wild populations of brook trout, lake trout and lake whitefish. Presently there are special restrictive regulations utilized to manage all of those species at Webster, including a S-17 (Daily bag limit on trout: 2 fish; minimum length limit: 10 inches, only 1 may exceed 12 inches) on brook trout, an S-25 (Daily bag limit on togue: 1 fish) directed towards togue and a 16 inch minimum length limit on whitefish. We utilize these regulations to enhance our opportunity to manage these species for both acceptable catch rates and size quality opportunity at Webster, and allowing anglers enhanced access would fit very well into our management plan at the lake.

Thank you for reaching out to us for our input on this, and please contact me with any questions or if you need additional information.

Thanks,
Nels

Nels Kramer
Regional Fisheries Biologist
Penobscot Region
16 Cobb Rd.
Enfield, Maine 04493
207-732-4131x4003
207-441-5409
gordon.kramer@maine.gov

From: Vogel, Jim
Sent: Friday, September 08, 2017 12:00 PM

Vogel, Jim

From: Gary Willhide <garywillhide@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, September 08, 2017 5:41 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: Written Comments St. John-Allagash Region public lands

Hi.

Just wanted to add my comments to the record for the St. John-Allagash Region Management Plan. I'm glad to see Maine BPL looking out for nature (wild animals and plants). The protection of nature should always come first.

I would like to see more of an emphasis put on low impact recreation and less on logging. Where appropriate, it would be great to have more hiking/backpacking trails. It would be great to have more places to put in and take out non-motorized boats (kayaks, canoes, row). It would also be great if there were more backcountry primitive campsites. Just from the meeting in Ashland and from skimming the current management plan, I get the feeling that the Maine BPL looks to cut trees as soon as criteria is met. Let the trees grow. So what if certain criteria is met?. That doesn't mean the trees have to be cut.

Outdoor recreation such as kayaking, camping and hiking are growing in popularity by leaps and bounds. With more people living in cities and looking for outdoor recreation and with Maine's relative closeness to major population centers, we have a great opportunity to attract those outdoors types to visit our state. We can build on our reputation as an outdoors paradise but when people get here we want to have more than just twig trees for them to walk amongst (and not just for visitors but mostly for Mainers to enjoy).

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to add my comments.

Gary Willhide
Castle Hill, Maine
garywillhide@yahoo.com

Vogel, Jim

From: Rick Hesslein <rhcastorh3@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2017 11:05 AM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: Comment pertaining to the 15-year management plan for approximately 63,000 acres of lands known as the St. John-Allagash Region.

I will hope that the St. John – Allagash Region – Management Plan will be an excellent opportunity to protect this pristine wilderness area, of which there are rapidly becoming too few nationwide. It should be safeguarded against the potential disruption of overly intrusive human activity, and kept off limits to engine noise and pollution. Nor should it be open to hunting and trapping – the killing of animals by invading their habitats and homes, instead of promoting the ability to see and experience wildlife in a natural un-harassed wilderness setting. A vast majority of lands are already available for those consumptive activities and what is needed are sanctuaries that provide a special wilderness type experience and natural wildlife and ecology interactions. Please promote the recreational activities that have little, if any, impact on the land and the creatures who live there. In short, the key role we should direct Maine's Bureau of Parks and Lands to play is that of a conscientious steward, combining the woodland admonition of 'leave no trace' with the basic tenet of the Hippocratic Oath – Do No Harm.

Sincerely, Richard A. Hesslein Jr., 68 Peary Mountain Rd., Brownfield, Maine 04010 Tel. (207) 875-2005

Vogel, Jim

From: Wolfertz, Ted
Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2017 12:03 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: Telos Management Plan/Webster Lake Improvements

Dear Mr. Jim Vogel ,

My name is Ted Wolfertz and I have recently learned that you are soliciting comments for revising the management plan of the Telos Unit. If I can make some suggestions, Webster Lake is a perfect place for further public access. Sandwich between the Allagash Water Way and Baxter State Park only makes sense for improvements such as added campsites and a trailered boat launch. I would be very interested to see improved public access to this waterbody and be part of this planning process.

Previously I worked for the Department of Conservation for 20 years as a former Maine Park & Lands Ranger and an Allagash Ranger. Working for Parks and Lands I worked exclusively on the development of the Namahkanta Unit. Later after working for Parks and Lands I also worked for the Maine Land Use Regulations Commission reviewing development plans and management plans such as Namahkanta and Telos. Besides my own interests, I have encountered many people that would be interested in increased access to Webster Lake for recreational opportunities such as hiking, paddling, fishing and camping. Improved Public Access for the people of Maine as well as those from away appears to be dwindling. Not everyone is looking for the Allagash or Baxter experience. Webster Lake can be improved/developed into an experience that will meet the needs for the users that are not looking ultra-primitive recreation but are looking to be remote. I know the area very well and have recreated all around this area for a long time. This is a unique location that would be ideal for this type of user. Very similar to the Namahkanta Unit.

Thank you for your consideration. I wish to participate if you are still in the need for volunteers. And again, I am happy to hear that the Telos Management Plan is being considered for revisions and hopefully with the intent of increased and improved recreational opportunities for Maine people and visitors.

Thanks,
Ted Wolfertz

Ted Wolfertz
17 Lucia Beach Road
Owls Head Maine, 04854

Ted.wolfertz@gmail.com
207-280-0669

Ted Wolfertz
Project Manager
Environmental Specialist III
Division of Remediation
Department of Environmental Protection

Vogel, Jim

From: Paul Sheridan <sheridanpa@earthlink.net>
Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2017 2:22 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: Suggestions for management of the St. John-Allagash region public lands

Sir:

I wish to pass on to you, and all concerned, my request that any decisions about the St. John-Allagash region public lands should be made based on keeping the land as free of human incursion as possible.

This includes no hunting, no logging, no fishing, no trapping, no agriculture, no motorized vehicles.

“Take only photographs, leave only footprints” should be the motto.

Thank you, Do No Harm...!

Paul Sheridan
88 Hart Rd.
Northport, ME 04849
207-322-3961
sheridanpa@earthlink.net

Vogel, Jim

From: Russell Scott <russellascott@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 3:06 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: AWW/ST.JOHN management plan

Mr. Vogel, I frequent the AWW and adjacent Public Lands as a hunter and fisherman. I would prefer to have smaller winter wood harvest to help the deer population. Also of interest to me would be a boat launch site on Webster Lake. Thank you for considering all comments presented. Russell Scott
251 Wharff Road
Guilford Maine

Vogel, Jim

From: at <freetobeyoume@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 4:56 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: Fwd: Public Comment on the St. John-Allagash area

Sent from AOL Mobile Mail

-----Original Message-----

From: at <freetobeyoume@aol.com>
To: JimVogel <JimVogel@maine.gov>
Sent: Mon, Sep 18, 2017 01:24 PM
Subject: Public Comment on the St. John-Allagash area

Please the attached letter to the editor that appeared in the freepressonline newspaper.

<https://freepressonline.com/Content/Download-the-current-issue-as-a-pdf/Letters-Opinions/Article/Speak-Up-or-Lose-Out-93/450/54681>

I am not sure what the issues are regarding this, but I would recommend preserving the St. John-Allagash region as it is, a pristine wilderness area. Is duck hunting or fishing (with motorboats) allowed? Are there any problems such as trash from people who visit the area? Are there any camping grounds on the waterway? Are any more hearings going to be held?

Thank you.

Val Philbrick

Vogel, Jim

From: Elaine <tsleek@gwi.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 4:07 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: Submitting Comments_St. John-Allagash Public Comments

Good Day, Jim,

I am a lifelong Maine resident, have lived in rural communities, and deeply appreciate the preciousness and wise management of land for wildlife and human co-existence.

Without healthy forests and waters, wildlife cannot thrive to live their lives and fulfill vital roles to ecosystems. Likewise, without wildlife, we don't have healthy woods and waters needed for a healthy climate and human health, on which all life and activity is based.

I started reviewing the older (current) plans online that are being considered for revision, I have not had the chance to complete my study, and am eager to build my learning of how BPL functions, so I kindly ask your indulgence in considering my comments as they are now.

My basic concerns are as follows:

- Wild lands are the homes of wildlife, trees and waters first.
- I would like to see critical, peer-reviewed study on how, where and what kind of trees are to be harvested, if at all, and if done, the impact on wildlife shelter, food, the forest floor, water and the health of the diverse forests.
- What are the plans and methods for low-impact forestry, and to allow for trees to become mature, with a diverse planting and replanting plan in those areas that may allow timber use?
- I would like to see that in areas where hunting is legal, that it only be fair chase -- and that baiting, trapping, snowmobile racing and hounding of any animal is prohibited, for they are the most egregious and barbaric forms of killing and cause intense suffering of individual animals. It is also well documented that trapping in Maine has resulted in the incidental killing of endangered Canada Lynx and other animals.
- To the extent that the region contains riparian ecosystems, I would like to know what plans there are to protect or introduce beavers, who are keystone animals to creating and maintaining healthy wetlands. For example, what plans may be in the works for the use of "beaver deceiver" flow devices that a professionally installed, to mitigate any human-beaver conflict.
- For areas that are designated as recreational, what are the plans for non-motorized activity for people who enjoy the unique solitude of the woods? If there are snowmobile routes, what are the plans to regulate the routes and reduce the noise of those machines – and other human noise for that matter? It is well documented by scientists and biologists that human noise is further penetrating the wilderness areas, interrupting the ability of wildlife to hear and find prey, to protect themselves, and to find mates to reproduce.
- What areas in this land might link up with other wild areas to build wildlife corridors, which modern biologists are deeming is essential for genetically healthy and biodiverse wildlife populations?

I think you can see from my concerns, posed as queries to myself (and the planners) that I strongly believe we need to preserve as much wilderness as possible, for wild animals and for the sanity of humanity. God isn't making any more land. But humans are taking more irreplaceable land away, to the detriment of Nature, the animals who Nature intended to live wild and free, and to the detriment of humans who need true biodiversity, quiet space and a healthy climate. To me, it is not land or animals who need management. It is humans. Nature figured out how to take care of her trees and wild children. We have interfered with that with disastrous result, in my opinion. Yet I do see many people who are working hard to work with Nature, not against her, and that is heartening – and logical.

Jim, I appreciate you taking my comments into consideration. Wilderness is what makes Maine, Maine. In addition to your webpage, I would welcome other resources to learn more about BPL.

Thank you for all the work you do.

Elaine Tselikis
South Portland ME 04106

From: Vogel, Jim [mailto:Jim.Vogel@maine.gov]
Sent: Friday, September 8, 2017 11:17 AM
To: Elaine
Cc: Labbe, Vern
Subject: RE: St. John-Allagash Public Comments

Hello Elaine. The Bureau is accepting comments regarding the St John-Allagash Region lands through September 20 (the end of the 3 week comment period following the Aug 30 public scoping meeting in Ashland).

Thank you for your interest.

James Vogel
Senior Planner, Bureau of Parks and Lands
18 Elkins Lane, Harlow Building
22 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0022
Direct Telephone: Office 207.287.2163
www.state.me.us/doc/parks/index.html

From: Elaine [mailto:tsleek@gwi.net]
Sent: Friday, September 08, 2017 10:27 AM
To: Vogel, Jim <Jim.Vogel@maine.gov>
Subject: St. John-Allagash Public Comments

Dear Mr.Vogel:

Could you kindly confirm if you are accepting suggestions from the public for management of the St. John-Allagash region public lands? If so, what the deadline is for you to receive suggestions?

Many thanks,

Elaine Tselikis

Vogel, Jim

From: Esther Mechler <brunswick64@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 4:38 PM
To: Vogel, Jim
Subject: comments on land use in the St John-Allagash region

Der Mr. Vogel

thank you very much for sharing your thoughts and information on management as it stands today in the region.

We would just like to put in a word on behalf of nonhuman animals with whom we share this habitat and the planet. For ages, we have hunted them - at first out of necessity and today "for sport" The thing is that it is not "sport" if it is not "fair" - and until the deer, moose and bear are armed with telescopic sites and can shoot back, there is nothing fair about it. We are essentially invading their living space (the equivalent of armed home invaders coming into your home and shooting your family) and this too is grossly unfair.

The pain and suffering that can be avoided boggles the mind. The violence it breeds is sick.

It is not a 'cultural' thing, it is an amusement for killers. Many of us hope to see the day when people lay down their arms and find more compassionate ways to enjoy nature - walking, canoeing, photographing, camping - all of which leave the land and those on it alive and well.

thank you for your time.

--

Esther Mechler
207-798-7955