

Central Penobscot Region Management Plan



View of Nahmakanta Lake from Nesuntabunt Mountain, Nahmakanta Unit

**Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Bureau of Parks and Lands**



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ADOPTION CITATION

In accordance with the provisions of 12 M.R.S.A. § 1847(2) and consistent with the Bureau of Parks and Lands Planning Policy and Integrated Resource Policy for Public Reserved and Nonreserved Lands, State Parks, and State Historic Sites (revised December 18, 2000 and amended March 7, 2007), this Management Plan for the **Central Penobscot Region** is hereby adopted.

RECOMMENDED: Willard R. Harris DATE: 5/27/14

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APPROVED: Walter E. Whitcomb DATE: 5/27/14

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The Bureau also acknowledges the helpful participation of the Central Penobscot Region Management Plan Advisory Committee, and the members of the public who participated in public meetings held during the preparation of this Plan and submitted comments on the Plan (Appendix A).

I. Introduction

About This Document

This document constitutes a fifteen-year Management Plan for 79,175 acres of public reserved land in the Central Penobscot Region of Maine managed by the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (the Bureau). The Plan summarizes the character of the region and the planning process, but its primary function is to 1) provide a description of the resources found on the properties addressed, 2) describe management issues identified by members of the public and Bureau staff, and 3) put forth management allocations and recommendations to be implemented over the next fifteen-year period subject, in some cases, to funding and staff availability.

One objective of the Plan is to provide a balanced spectrum of resource-based opportunities across the Bureau's lands, keeping in mind the available opportunities in the Central Penobscot Region as a whole. In developing the management recommendations for each parcel, the Bureau has considered this broader perspective.

The Central Penobscot Region Management Plan is also a commitment to the public that these properties will be managed within prescribed legislative mandates and in accordance with the Bureau's *Integrated Resource Policy* and its stated mission and goals. Future revisions to these commitments will occur only after providing opportunities for public comment. The Plan provides guidance to Bureau staff with responsibility for managing these properties, including a degree of flexibility in achieving the stated objectives. This document is not, however, a plan of operations.

An important aspect of the management of the public lands is monitoring and evaluation of proposed management activities in terms of stated objectives. This Plan describes monitoring and evaluation procedures for recreational use, wildlife management, management of ecological reserves, and timber management.

The fifteen-year duration for this Plan is a departure from previous plans prepared for these lands. In 2007, the Bureau amended its policy to increase the Plan interval from 10 to 15 years. This change brings the Plan interval into closer alignment with Bureau forest management plan prescriptions, and most other resource management concerns other than recreation. The Bureau recognizes that some resources and management issues, most notably recreation, may undergo more rapid or unanticipated change over time. Thus, in addition to the fifteen year scheduled Plan revision, a review of current issues and progress on implementing the Plan's recommendations will be undertaken every five years, with a status report issued at that time to the advisory committee. If amendments to the Plan are then proposed, there will be an opportunity for public review and comment prior to their adoption. At the fifteen year interval, the Bureau will undertake a full review and revision of the Plan. The Bureau recognizes that several of the stated objectives will require longer than the fifteen year Plan period to achieve.

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What is the Central Penobscot Region?

The Central Penobscot Region encompasses two exceptional public lands units in the State (Nahmakanta, Seboeis Lake) and is embedded within a nationally significant corridor of conservation lands, the largest block of such lands in Maine. From the Millinocket Forest, one can walk west across Baxter State Park to the Allagash Wilderness Waterway or south across the Penobscot River Corridor, through The Nature Conservancy lands, Nahmakanta and the Katahdin Forest easement to Seboeis Lake or southwest through, the Appalachian Mountain Club's Roach Ponds and Katahdin Iron Works tracts within the storied 100-Mile Wilderness segment of the Appalachian Trail, where other surrounding private landowners rely on a common access and recreation management entity, North Maine Woods.

The Central Penobscot Region often presents a sense of being secluded —cut off from other places —and surrounded by a richness of natural and recreational resources. It is renowned for its undeveloped character, landscape beauty, expansive woodlands, inviting trails and watercourses and for its range of outdoor recreation experiences for enthusiasts of all types. The Central Penobscot Region is unique as it also serves a critical role in linking popular motorized recreation throughways and destinations to neighboring population centers from Greenville to Dover-Foxcroft to Millinocket, and points beyond.

What Lands are in the Central Penobscot Region?

The Central Penobscot Region is the setting where several distinct public reserved properties comprised of management units and scattered lots are located east and south of Baxter State Park, east of Moosehead Lake, west of Interstate 95, south of the west branch of the Penobscot River and west of the east branch of the Penobscot River and south to LaGrange. These groupings of public lands possess geographic, conservation and multiple-use trail relations and are addressed in a single plan.

Historically, the Bureau was guided by a 1995 Management Plan for the Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit and by a 1990 Management Plan for the Seboeis Public Lands Unit. Today, Public Reserved Lands making up the Central Penobscot Region include Nahmakanta Unit, Seboeis Lake Unit, East Turner Mountain Lot, Wassataquoik Lot, Millinocket Forest Lot, Gray Ledge Deadwater Lot, Seboeis Plantation Lot and the Bradford/LaGrange Lot.

A map of the public reserved lands of the Central Penobscot Region plan area is provided on page 4.

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The Public Reserved Lands of the Central Penobscot Region

Name and Location	Fee Acres
Nahmakanta Public Lands Unit (<i>T1 R11 WELS, T1 R12 WELS, and Rainbow Twp., Piscataquis County</i>)	43,966
Seboeis Lake Unit (<i>T4 R9 NWP and Lake View Plt., Piscataquis County</i>)	21,369
East Turner Mountain Lot (<i>T4 R8 WELS, Penobscot County</i>)	2,574
Wassataquoik Lot (<i>T3 R7 WELS, Penobscot County</i>)	2,099
Millinocket Town Forest Lot (<i>T2 R8 WELS, Penobscot County</i>)	5,061
Gray Ledge Deadwater Lot (<i>T3 R9 NWP, Penobscot County</i>)	960
Seboeis Plantation Lot (<i>Penobscot County</i>)	1,136
Bradford/LaGrange Lot (<i>Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties</i>)	2,010
Total	79,175

These lands offer a wide-ranging spectrum of high quality natural resources, scenic values and recreational opportunities.

- rare and endangered species and rare and exemplary natural communities and unique habitat diversity (including two Ecological Reserves)
- wildlife (bald eagles, moose, bear, loons, osprey, terns to name a few) and wildlife watching
- extensive wading bird and waterfowl habitat and deer wintering areas
- extensive backcountry hiking trails for multi-day and day use
- nine miles of the Appalachian Trail
- hike-to, drive-to and water access camping
- numerous gorges, hills, mountains, wetlands, streams, and rivers within the viewshed of Katahdin
- critical motorized trail connection for snowmobiles and all terrain vehicles linking the Brownville area to the JoMary Region north to the Millinocket area, and miles of popular ITS trails
- continuity of conserved lands especially with the Appalachian Mountain Club, The Nature Conservancy and the Katahdin Forest Easement
- concentration of remote ponds sustaining wild or native brook trout fishing
- cold and warm water fishing and ice fishing
- public water access to nearly the entire shorelines of Seboeis and Nahmakanta Lakes
- motorized and non-motorized boating
- three private commercial recreational camps
- extensive sustainably managed forests that provide a wide variety of habitats, including both early successional (young) and late successional (old) stages of growth
- a continued tradition of hunting and trapping

The key focus of this Plan is management allocations and recommendations for the Bureau fee lands mentioned above. However, other private and public conservation projects and lands in this region are an important context for planning the future uses and management of Bureau lands, and will be described in the Planning Context section.

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