

Winter 12-1-1988

A Report on Maine Forests Parks & Lands, Winter 1988-1989

Maine Department of Conservation

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Recommended Citation

Maine Department of Conservation, "A Report on Maine Forests Parks & Lands, Winter 1988-1989" (1988). *Conservation Newsletters*. 70.
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a
report
on

maine



Forests Parks & Lands

News from the Maine Department of Conservation

Winter 1988-1989

THE YEAR AHEAD

By Ed Meadows, Commissioner

1989 is just weeks away. I'd like to express a few thoughts on some of the many challenges we face. Managing natural resources has been my career, and when not working, the outdoors is where my wife Alison and I choose to spend our leisure time.

For as long as I can remember—back even to summer camp as a child—I've been attracted to the outdoors as a hiking and canoeing guide, outdoor educator, park work project crew leader, land use planner and resource planner. All of which may tell you how much I appreciate the honor and challenge of being chosen to lead the Department of Conservation.

What's ahead? I'll begin with the Land Use Regulation Commission. The agency's problems are well known and not particularly new. It's time to put them behind us. I have met with LURC staff to assure them they have my support. They have the huge challenge of growing by 100 percent in a very short period, and I have arranged for assistance from other Bureaus to help do this. We have begun a study of LURC's organization and procedures. We'll be involving the Commission, legislators, and others for viewpoints.

A few words about forest productivity, a subject which everyone seems to be interested in. The Forests for the Future of Maine Program has provided the best information ever available to work with. Governor McKernan has asked me to convene an action group of major resource interests to seek areas of agreement and recommendations for solutions. That will be in motion by the time you read this.

Continued on back page

'TIS THE SEASON FOR MAINE CHRISTMAS TREES AND WREATHS



Governor John R. McKernan, Jr. and son Peter decorate the Blaine House with a Maine Christmas wreath. Photo by M. Wiebe

Producing a well balanced, full, and dark, rich green Christmas tree demands years of effort that is rewarding to the grower and appreciated each year at this season by thousands of purchasers.

Investing time and money to grow a crop which cannot be harvested and sold for a decade requires more than physical resources, it demands a love of growing. Producing a Christmas tree means more than going out and simply cutting it down. From planting time on, shearing, fertilizing and protecting each tree from fire, insects and disease is required.

There are about 300,000 Christmas trees cut and sold by Maine producers each year. The trees are worth about \$3.5 million wholesale and more than seven million dollars retail. There are about 4 to 5 times as many trees planted each year in Maine as are cut and new and expanded markets for the trees must be found. Many Maine producers are supporting the National Christmas Tree Association in their emphasis to promote the use of real trees in the home. Emphasis in Maine has been to retail trees from "choose

and cut" tree farms where buyers pick and cut their own trees.

In the United States, the wreath industry is a rapidly expanding portion of the forest products industry. In 1987, 8 million wreaths were sold nationwide, with 3 million of them manufactured in Maine, primarily in Washington and Hancock Counties. These sales brought approximately \$12-15 million into the local economy of these two counties over a six week period from November 1 to December 15.

Industry estimates indicate that only 15-20% of the potential market for wreaths is now being filled. With annual Christmas tree sales in the United States at the 35 million mark, each buyer of a tree is targeted as a potential wreath buyer. And many people may consider more than one wreath, perhaps one for the front and back doors. In all, the estimated market potential for wreaths is approximately 50 million annually.

Kathy Nitschke, Jack Dirkman, Foresters
Maine Forest Service

LURC ENTERS NEW ERA

The Land Use Regulation Commission is currently involved in a major expansion made possible by new resources provided during the September 1988 Special Legislative Session.

During 1987-88 LURC worked to improve its procedures while evaluating future needs. The agency has also experienced a significant turnover in staff. Efforts to improve hiring procedures, reclassify positions, training staff, streamline permit processes, expand inter-agency cooperation and contract selected projects have helped the bureau address some of its increased work, however, additional human and physical resources were needed.

Both the Administration and Legislature recognized the need. The new \$276,500 package that was authorized includes:

- Ten Positions, (current staff = 18)
 - Three Project Analysts
 - Three Enforcement Investigators
 - Two Clerical
 - Senior Planner
 - Resource Administrator
- Three full-time field offices, (current Field Offices = 2 part-time)
- Three, four-wheel drive vehicles, (current vehicles = 1)
- Additional work space,
- Additional computers and office equipment, and
- Funds to contract selected Development Review projects.

These new resources are being put into place as fast as possible. Some new hires have already taken place and interviews are underway for other positions. Space for two of the three field offices has been secured, the vehicles are on order, space needs in Augusta are under study, computer needs are being evaluated in relationship to LURC's association with other Department of Conservation bureaus, some new office equipment has been ordered and development review contract projects are being packaged for bids.

LURC will be able to better protect the environment in unorganized townships and plantations while providing improved service to citizens. Additional staff will enable faster response in development review and enforcement while permitting planning activities to move forward. Full-time field offices and more vehicles will bring the bureau closer to the people it serves. Additional computers and space will provide for increased productivity and contract money will enable the agency to purchase special review services needed for major permit applications.

Although this represents the single largest infusion of new State resources ever made to LURC, it is not the final answer to the bureau's long-term needs. With this in mind, the Administration asked for and received \$25,000 during the Special Session to fund a LURC management study to be completed by mid-March 1989. Results of this study will be important as the agency continues to develop its long range plan.

Paul B. Frederic, Director
Land Use Regulation Commission

MAINE'S LARGEST PUBLIC OWNERSHIP IS SUBMERGED

The largest "parcel" of publicly owned land in Maine is also the least well known. Encompassing approximately one and one-half million acres, and perpetually covered with water, the state-owned submerged lands include:

- The Coastal Region (including islands): All land from mean low watermark out to the three mile territorial limit. Where intertidal flats are extensive, the shoreward boundary begins 1650 feet seaward from the mean high watermark. The beds of tidal rivers upstream to the farthest natural reaches of the tides are also included.
- Great Ponds (10 or more acres in size): All land below the natural low watermark.
- Boundary Rivers: Land below those rivers that form Maine's border with Canada.

In 1975, the Bureau of Public Lands was entrusted with the stewardship of these lands and was given the authority to grant leases or easements to communities, private individuals, and businesses for development projects that extend onto state-owned land. These include municipal wharves, private piers, boat ramps, lobster pounds, and even a floating restaurant. All structures existing at the time the law was passed were granted "constructive easements" that enabled them to continue without a lease for 30 years, at which time they too will be required to apply for a lease and pay the appropriate rental fee. Other uses of submerged lands, such as dredging, filling, and laying cables or pipelines also require a lease or easement. Lease fees vary, depending upon the size and nature of the project, with water dependent uses being favored over those that could take place on the upland. Uses that pro-

vide access or recreational benefits for the public, such as municipal piers or public boat launches are exempt from annual fees, but must still obtain a lease.

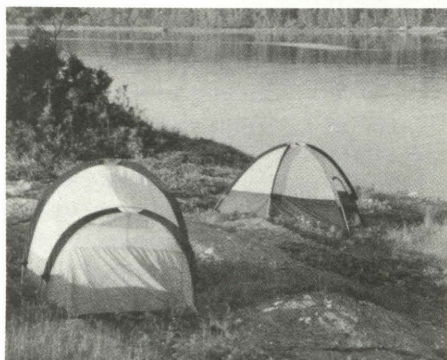
Most activities that take place on submerged lands require a permit from a regulatory agency such as the Department of Environmental Protection, the Land Use Regulation Commission, or the Army Corps of Engineers. Since a permit cannot be granted unless the applicant has legal right or interest in the land, obtaining a lease or easement is a necessary part of the permitting procedure. When an application is filed with a permitting agency it is automatically forwarded to the Bureau of Public Lands for review.

Although the Bureau of Public Lands is not a regulatory agency, it is charged with protecting public access and the public trust rights to submerged lands. These public rights include fishing, hunting, navigation and recreation. Recently, the State Legislature directed the Bureau of Public Lands to study the Submerged Lands Program.

The issues surrounding submerged lands are complex; the resource is fragile and finite, and, at the same time, tremendously important to the economy, ecology, and character of Maine's coast and lakeshores. The Submerged Lands Program will not only have to balance the private use of these lands with public rights, but will also be called upon to help plan for the protection of the resource from abuse and the cumulative impacts of too much development.

Stephen Oliveri
Bureau of Public Lands

ISLANDS ON THE TRAIL



The Maine Bureau of Public Lands holds title to some 3,000 of Maine's 4,500 coastal islands. While most of the Bureau islands are nothing more than ledges which may or may not be submerged at extreme high tides, there are a number that have particular wildlife or recreation value. Management of islands of special value to wildlife has largely been transferred to either the Maine Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife or other Conservation organizations such as The Nature Conservancy. The majority of these islands are nesting and rearing areas for sea birds and waterfowl.

Of the remaining islands 39 have been identified as having the potential to provide high quality remote recreation. That identification was made as a result of a study conducted by the Island Institute under contract with the Bureau. The Island Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to the wise management of Maine's coastal island resources. As a result of the study, the Institute also concluded that not only did individual islands offer a tremendous opportunity for outdoor recreation, but that collectively they comprised a potential cruising route for small boats along much of the coast. Dave Getchell, one of the Institute's principal investigators, explored a route from Portland to Jonesport, and found it such an exciting opportunity that he proposed designation of a Maine Island Trail.

During further discussions and field work with Bureau staff, Getchell further proposed that this Island Trail be managed and monitored by a volunteer stewardship organization to be known as the Maine Island Trail Association. This proposal made a great deal of sense, especially considering the remote nature of these islands and the Bureau's small staff. The idea provided the opportunity to

accomplish effective management and monitoring while forming a liaison with a primary user group.

A small financial grant from the Bureau, a larger grant from L.L. Bean, Inc., some membership dues, and a lot of creative initiative and effort has allowed the Maine Island Trail Association to commence its first season in April of 1988. The Association's goals are:

- (1) To delineate a route between Portland and Jonesport.
- (2) To work with the BPL in guiding and monitoring use of BPL islands.
- (3) To care for all property, public and private, made available for Trail use.
- (4) To educate its members and the user public in low-impact use of islands and other properties, and to encourage non-members by example to adhere to the same ethical approach.
- (5) To foster a sense of safe use in all persons using the Trail.
- (6) To encourage members to assist all users of the Trail and any others who may find themselves in trouble on the water.
- (7) To respect private property and to follow rules of use on lands protected by easements, land trusts, etc.
- (8) To protect wildlife by respecting non-use rules on islands and lands set aside as refuges and breeding grounds.
- (9) To support efforts to improve public access to the water.

During its first year, with minimal recruiting efforts, the Association registered 400 new members, far exceeding expectations. In carrying out Association goals during its first season, members have made hundreds of observations, collected hundreds of pounds of trash, (mostly sea borne plastic) and explored a number of public and private islands that could potentially be added to the trail.

The Bureau of Public Lands will continue to work with the Island Trail Association to provide recreational opportunities along the coast of Maine.

Steve Spencer
Recreation Specialist
Bureau of Public Lands

STATE PARK RESERVATIONS PLEASE

For the first time in its 50 year history, the Bureau of Parks and Recreation operated a campsite reservation system in 1988.

The Bureau processed 4076 reservations (2437 (60%) from Maine residents and 1639 (40%) from nonresidents) during this groundbreaking first season, which saw the reservation phone lines constantly busy and overall increased use of the state's twelve park campgrounds.

Some helpful information for making a reservation next year:

- During the first year, the single reservation phone was constantly busy. To allow more people the opportunity to make phone reservations only one reservation per phone call will be accepted.
- Mail-in reservations requests for 1989 will be accepted only if postmarked in 1989. Requests postmarked in 1988 will be returned.
- Reservations for the period between June 15 and Labor Day will be accepted on the first working day in January through August 18 from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.
- If last year's busy phone lines are any indication, it will be difficult to make a phone reservation within the first two weeks in January. To avoid a busy phone line, campers are urged to use a mail-in reservation request.
- All reservations hand-delivered to the Bureau's office in Augusta will be processed along with that day's mail and confirmation slips will be mailed to the camper.
- To receive a mail-in reservation request call the Bureau's office in Augusta at 1-207-289-3821 or write to the Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Station #22, Augusta, ME 04333. All mail-in reservation requests must be filled out completely and with the full amount due enclosed. Incomplete requests or checks will be mailed back to the camper.

To make a reservation by phone, call: 1-800-332-1501 (Maine residents only); from all other exchanges, 1-207-289-3824.

Lin Gosselin, Reservations Supervisor
Bureau of Parks and Recreation

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY CREATES WELL WATER INFORMATION PROGRAM

Active programs to characterize Maine's ground water resource through a compilation of well driller's records were begun in the 1970s. Between 1972 and 1977, ground-water data in the form of well drillers' records were collected from 12 counties in southern Maine. Well yield, depth, and construction information was collected for a total of 17,000 wells. The well locations were mapped by MGS personnel with the help of drillers, postmasters, and municipal officials. This database was used to develop a series of water resource maps for southern Maine.

There was a hiatus in data collection between 1977 and 1985, during which time MGS determined that there was an ongoing need for subsurface information from well drillers. The Voluntary Well Report Program, established in 1985 and continued until 1987, had the cooperation of 30 well drillers. Approximately 1,500 well records were collected during this time period. During the Voluntary Program it was evident that the bulk of the data was being sent from a few drillers in southern Maine, with little data supplied from central and northern Maine. Therefore, the MGS supported legislation requiring all water well drillers to report certain information for each well they drill. "AN ACT to Establish the Well Water Information Law" became effective September 29, 1987. This law states

that: "Within 180 days after the completion of any well or dry hole . . . a well contractor shall submit a report to the Maine Geological Survey . . . including, but not limited to, location, construction and well yield."

Since September, 1987, the MGS has received over 6,000 Water Well Reports from approximately 95 contractors. Over 90 percent of all well drillers are in compliance with new law; the MGS is working with the remaining well drillers to bring this percentage even higher.

The MGS is presently working to consolidate all existing water well data into a common computerized database which will be compatible with the Department's Geographic Information System. In conjunction with this process studies are being conducted in selected towns to determine the accuracy of well locations and the correlation of well yield and other characteristics with certain geologic factors. The end result will enable the MGS publish a new series of bedrock ground water resource maps which may be used for resource evaluation and development of ground water protection guidelines.

John Williams, Pat Seaward,
and Marc Loisel
Maine Geological Survey

FOREST SERVICE RESO

Assistant Regional Ranger
Kenny Wing

On a very windy day last August, the Greenville Headquarters of the Maine Forest Service received an urgent radio call from Austin Sillanpaa, a Forest Ranger stationed at the foot of Chesuncook Lake in Piscataquis County. He had just been notified that four canoes carrying nine Boy Scouts had overturned in the lake somewhere south of Chesuncook Village. Ranger Sillanpaa asked that the Forest Service Huey helicopter stationed in Greenville be dispatched while he and Game Warden Alvin Theriault headed up the 20 mile long lake in the Forest Service boat.

Ranger Pilot Otis Gray and I left Greenville in the Huey around 4:00 p.m. Enroute to Chesuncook Lake we were notified that eight of the nine canoeists and three of their canoes had reached shore between Sandy Point and the Village. One boy, a canoe and the group's gear were unaccounted for.

We located the group on the lake shore and landed. The trip guide verified that one boy was still somewhere in the lake and had not been seen for over an hour. His father was among those who had safely reached shore.

We began a helicopter search downwind from where the canoes had capsized. We knew the missing boy was wearing a bright yellow personal

IMPROVED FOREST RESOURCE INFORMATION ON THE WAY

Planning without accurate information is like trying to drive a car blindfolded and following directions given by a person who is looking out of the back window. Data gathered in the past probably fulfilled past needs; but now, with projected shortfalls for some of the forest resources, more complete, reliable, and accurate information is necessary.

Ninety-six percent of Maine's forest land is owned by private individuals and corporations. The forest policy decisionmaking process can be substantially improved if the data upon which planning and analysis is based is more accurate and complete. Natural resource organizations must look beyond their present situation and develop long-term strategies to

meet the changing conditions in the forest industry. Reliable and accurate information is necessary for managers to make informed and timely decisions.

The J.W. Sewall Company of Old Town, a forestry consulting firm, has conducted a study of the Maine Forest Service's entire data collection, analysis, and reporting program. Sewall examined the current program, interviewed users of the data and prepared recommendations to strengthen and improve the process. Aside from staff, funding, and equipment needs, they suggest that the data should be reported to the public in one annual, well-written report rather than in several reports as is now the case.

When the Sewall Company examined the program they interviewed over seventy users of MFS supplied data. These users were selected to represent a cross-section of the user group, from landowners to planners and from industry to consultants. Sewall found that *although everyone interviewed did not use all the data, all the data was used by someone*. Everyone expressed a need for the data to be accurate, complete, and reliable. The Maine Forest Service is working to provide the information needed to improve management of Maine's forests.

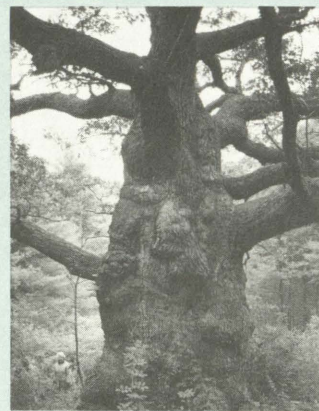
Ancyl Thurston, Forester
Maine Forest Service

CUES BOY FROM CHESUNCOOK LAKE

flotation device (PFD) but finding anything in the strong wind and high waves was proving difficult. After crisscrossing the lake several times, Otis spotted some packs floating in the water near the middle of the lake. Then we saw an aluminum canoe, more packs, some paddles, and to our relief, an outstretched arm waving to us. The boy was doing a good job of keeping his head above the waves and appeared to be okay. In addition to his PFD, he was sitting on his brother's camera flotation case.

Rather than attempting a helicopter rescue in the 40 knot winds and large waves, we used hand signals to let the boy know we would remain near him to mark his location for an approaching rescue boat. Guided by our presence, Austin and Alvin soon arrived in the boat and picked the boy up. He was taken to shore where he and his father were tearfully, joyfully reunited. Austin and Alvin then returned to the lake and recovered the missing gear and canoe.

The boy had been in the water for almost two and a half hours before being rescued. Everyone felt that the outcome for this 15 year old Pennsylvania Boy Scout could have been much different if it hadn't been for the helicopter which was undoubtedly the most effective means of locating the missing Scout under these conditions. But the whole rescue was initiated by a radio communication system which the High Adventure Boy Scout Program maintains for just these types of emergencies. The trip guide radioed the High Adventure home base using a walkie-talkie and a repeater system. The base in turn alerted the proper authorities. Once this contact was made, a state radio communication system alerted the Forest and Warden Services.



Maine's largest white oak stands sentinel, as it has for more than 200 years, over an overgrown hillside pasture in Pittston. Maine is the home of the largest tamarack, yellow birch, paper birch, and pitch pine in the nation. Using a formula that combines girth, height, and crown spread, Maine's Big Tree Program has located 54 trees that are the largest representatives of their species in the state. Most of them were reported by interested private citizens. The Big Tree Program is run by Stephen Oliveri with the assistance of SERVE/Maine volunteer Jerry Sass. Photo by Steve Olivari

CARING FOR A \$75 MILLION PUBLIC LEGACY

Bureau of Parks and Recreation staff spent a busy summer season of good weather keeping state parks and historic sites open and safe for over 2 million visitors. In a major initiative, staff also worked through the summer and fall to begin inventorying and evaluating the conditions of the buildings, water systems, sewage systems, roadways, grounds, and utilities that require maintenance and upkeep throughout the Bureau's 45 major public areas.

The inventory and evaluation represents a crucial first step in the Bureau's first ever computerized maintenance management program. The task of developing and implementing this system has proven to be a major challenge. Maine's wide-ranging holdings of parks and historic sites include some 709 structures alone, along with seemingly countless miles of roads, hundreds of acres of grounds, and hundreds of thousands of dollars invested in various water and utility systems.

As designed by Bureau staff, the maintenance management system has three components — an inventory, inspection, and maintenance manual. When the system is fully in place by summer 1989, it will be used to identify, prioritize, standardize, and track all kinds of maintenance projects from resurfacing a road at Camden Hills State Park to replacing a roof on the restroom building at Reid State Park, to bringing the electrical system up to code at Sebago Lake State Park's campground. The maintenance management system will also function as a budget planning tool, keeping track of needed repairs in spite of deferred maintenance due to funding limitations.

When the inventory component of the system is completed, it will include all man-made and maintainable features within parks and historic sites. These features range from buildings, grounds, trails and walks, to utilities,

roads, and special features such as Civil War period cannon emplacements. Information such as year of construction, type of material, size, and condition will also be collected.

The inspection aspect of the new initiative includes a systematic review of each facility's features. Such a procedure will identify below standard conditions, develop a corrective action, attach a projected cost, set a target completion date, and track the project to its finish or document that the work has been deferred. Data collected will provide a justification for work, prioritized tasks, and accurate budget estimates.

A newly up-graded maintenance manual is the final component of the new maintenance management system. The manual is intended to serve as a resource for managers to train their staffs in standardized, proper, and efficient maintenance techniques. The manual's primary focus is preventative maintenance, with an emphasis on taking small corrective actions before a problem expands into a large crisis.

Like any resource, the state's parks and historic sites require ongoing maintenance to preserve and enhance their value, which in monetary terms alone totals an estimated 75 million dollars. The goal for the Bureau's maintenance management system is to make these maintenance tasks easier and more efficient by incorporating elements proven successful in other agencies, including current computer technology.

Ron Hunt
Assistant Director of Operations
and Maintenance Bureau of
Parks and Recreation

"OUR JOB IS CUSTOMER SERVICE"

"DOC involvement stretches from the bottom of the ocean to the tops of the mountains. We do everything from deep drilling in the Gulf of Maine to aerial inventory high above the landscape. We do active *management* of lands and provide facilities in State Parks and on public lands. And we provide services to thousands of citizens. We are in the natural resource business, but our job is customer service." **C. Edwin Meadows, Acting Commissioner — statement to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.**

Last summer, former Commissioner LaBonta appointed a 12 member task force, comprised of representatives from each bureau and some field offices to take a look at how well the department is doing this job of customer service.

The task force has worked very hard in looking at how this department serves the public, what we are doing right and where we can improve. Currently the task force is drafting recommendations geared to

improving our responsiveness to our customers. We also are consulting with public and private entities to gather information on how to measure the effectiveness of our policies and recommendations.

The Department of Conservation is here to serve you by providing technical information and assistance regarding Maine's natural resources, its forests, parks, lands, minerals and waters. In addition, we manage parks and public lands for your recreational use and enjoyment. Please feel free to give the task force any comments or concerns about our service to you. Send your comments to Gale Ross, Department of Conservation, Customer Service Task Force, State House Station #22, Augusta, Maine 04333. Task Force recommendations will go to Commissioner Meadows in January, so now is the time to let us know how we are doing.

Catherine Ward, Chair
Customer Service Task Force

SNOWMOBILE TRAIL GRANTS INCREASED

Maine's snowmobile clubs that are eligible for trail maintenance grants will qualify for an increase in available grants-in-aid as a result of a recent rule change implemented by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation's Snowmobile Program.

The change, which increases the per mile reimbursement from \$25 to \$30 for maintained authorized trails, will allow clubs to better meet their costs for maintaining a total of over 6,000 miles of trails throughout Maine.

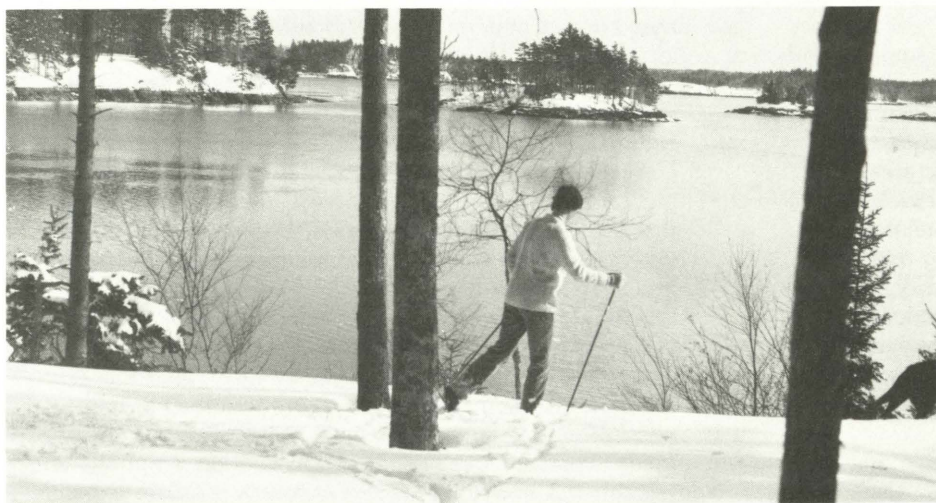
The grant-in-aid program, funded by the state's gasoline tax and a portion of snowmobile registration fees, is a major service provided by the Snowmobile Program. The grant-in-aid program is designed to reimburse snowmobile clubs for maintenance costs on authorized "club trails." In this program, a participating club agrees to maintain local, public trails in a reasonably safe condition for one season. The maintenance costs eligible for reimbursement include trail sign maintenance, bridge repairs, brush cutting, gas, oil, repairs to machinery, and equipment rental costs.

The cost of purchasing capital equipment needed for maintenance is not eligible for reimbursement. As a result, actual maintenance costs to local clubs far exceed the reimbursement grants.

During the 1987-88 winter, 194 clubs were approved for trail maintenance grants. The reported total cost of eligible expenses was \$214,192 or an average of \$35 per mile. The grant reimbursement returned to the clubs averaged only \$19 per mile. With the increase to a reimbursement of \$30 per mile, the maximum grant available will be \$750 to \$900 per club. The Snowmobile Program is pleased to provide this extra financial support to local snowmobile clubs and to recognize their continued contributions to making Maine snowmobiling unsurpassed in the northeast.

Scott Ramsay, Supervisor
Off-Road Vehicle Division
Bureau of Parks and Recreation

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING GUIDE AVAILABLE



Cross country skiing at Cobscook Bay State Park in Washington County. Photo by Kelly Pontbriand

Each season, Maine's state parks and public lands host a growing number of cross country skiers.

A few of the more popular locations for skiing are described in a "Guide to Cross Country Skiing on Maine State Parks and Public Reserved Lands."

Updated information on conditions at some areas may be obtained by

calling the park number listed in the "Guide" or in "Outdoors in Maine," the Department of Conservation's comprehensive outdoor recreation information folder. These publications may be obtained from the Maine Bureau of Parks and Recreation, State House Station #22, Augusta, Maine 04333.

FIGHTING WILD FIRES IN THE WILD WEST: A RANGER'S ACCOUNT

Editors note: This fire season, 13 major fires burned 1.6 million acres in the Greater Yellowstone Area, including 566,508 acres on national forests. This area includes parts of Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana.

In accordance with Maine's cooperative agreement with the U.S. Forest Service, the Maine Forest Service sequentially dispatched six twenty-member crews and six independent specialists, more than in any previous year. Each crew consisted of a mix of twenty firefighters — some were Forest Rangers and others were local firefighters. All crew members underwent special training provided by the Maine Forest Service before being dispatched to the fire sites.

On the second day the fire blew up and raged out of control. Our escape route was cut off — an impenetrable wall of flames. We remained calm and in control and moved swiftly to our "safety zone." When the helicopter arrived, we were snatched from the jaws of danger just in time.

Maine Crew #3 flew West and arrived in Missoula Montana on August 27th, 1988. We worked on two forest fires — the LoLo Creek Fire and the Canyon Creek Fire. Two weeks later, and several weeks older, we returned home.

The western crew fire detail was a positive experience, and certainly unforgettable. Arriving in Montana as a crew, we worked and lived together, and returned to Maine as a team.

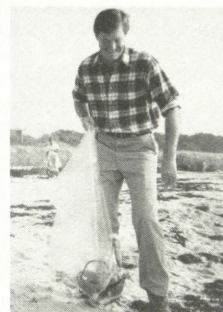
With each new firefighting assignment the confidence level of the crew grew stronger and our ability as a team increased.

At LoLo Creek we improved and held a bulldozed fire line high on a mountaintop. We chased spot fires down over the backside and mopped up after the fire raced through.

Canyon Creek, a wilderness area, provided us with our most unforgettable experience. While working in this area, we supported full-time crews from out west. It was at Canyon Creek that we followed our plan, relied upon our training, and were evacuated from the area by helicopter. Once out of danger it took three days to bring the fire under control. We spent our time building firelines around structures in the path of this giant 242,000 acre blaze.

The memories of sleeping on the rock hard ground will fade, along with visions of the freezing cold nights and the hot uncomfortable days. But the visions of vast forest areas burning and the deafening noise of the fires is branded permanently in my memories. Air temperatures rose and dropped 50 degrees each day but Maine crew #3 fought with a steadfast determination -fight, and rest, and fight some more. I'd go west with Crew #3 again; but, there's no place like home.

Doug Getchell, Ranger
Maine Forest Service



Governor John McKernan volunteers at Crescent Beach State Park in Cape Elizabeth.
Photo by T. Skolfield

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

Among the many volunteers involved in natural resource projects this year was Governor John McKernan, who participated in a Coastweek '88 project at Crescent Beach State Park. Coastweek is a nationwide event which is largely a volunteer effort to educate the public about protecting the coast and includes Maine's annual shore cleanup.

Other volunteers have been active across the state accomplishing a variety of projects. Volunteers worked as nature photographers at Roosevelt Campobello International Park, Back Country Rangers at Scraggly and Duck Lakes, maintenance workers, and work teams at Crescent Beach, Wolfe's Neck Woods, Popham Beach and many other state parks. In other areas of the state, volunteer campground hosts, fisheries assistants and wilderness lake monitors were active. The projects completed this year translate into some impressive numbers. Over 200 volunteers and interns accomplished in excess of 11,000 hours of work for the state natural resource agencies.

Any agency seeking SERVE/Maine's assistance recruiting volunteers or interns for spring and summer projects should contact the Program Coordinator; Project Description forms are due by January 13, 1989. Individuals who would like to receive information about SERVE/Maine's volunteer and intern opportunities are encouraged to write requesting the Spring Project List, SERVE/Maine, Department of Conservation, State House Station #22, Augusta, Maine 04333 — Tel. (207) 289-4945.

Libbey Seigars
SERVE/Maine Program Coordinator

WILDLIFE GUIDELINES PUBLISHED

A new 70 page handbook describing "low-cost, no-cost" wildlife management practices is available from the Maine Bureau of Public Lands.

"Wildlife Guidelines for the Public Reserved Lands of Maine" was compiled by Joe Wiley, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife biologist permanently assigned to the Bureau. The primary purpose of the Handbook is to aid land managers in making forest management decisions which will provide a variety of habitats for all species found on Public Lands. The Handbook is also applicable to private lands where the landowner wants to improve wildlife habitat. Emphasis is placed upon activities that are relatively inexpensive to imple-

ment.

Topics discussed in the Handbook include management of waterfowl, furbearers, fisheries, riparian zones, (a 330-foot area along both sides of all rivers and major streams, and around all lakes, ponds, and wetlands), upland habitat, and special habitats.

The Handbook is a working tool, to be updated and enlarged as new wildlife management practices information becomes available. The document is printed on reinforced paper and distributed in 3-ring binder form to make updating easy. The Handbook is available from the Bureau of Public Lands in Augusta for \$6.00 per copy.

THE YEAR AHEAD

Continued from front page

Effective land management is a growing job. Management is often overlooked or taken for granted, but it provides the basic functions and facilities that the public needs in order to use and enjoy state property—from brochures on how to get there, to roads, hiking trails, campgrounds, and clean restrooms. These items are necessary and expensive, and that job will grow as more land is acquired by the Department and through the Land for Maine's Future Program.

We know more can be done in partnership with private owners to provide greater public recreational opportunities on both public and private land. We currently have an initiative underway with the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to move us in that direction. We are the lead state agency in the establishment of an effective Geographic Information System (GIS). Most agencies will depend on the GIS to better carry out their missions, from DOT locating highway rights of way to collecting better data on recharge and consumption of ground-water.

The Geological Survey and the Bureaus of Public Lands and Parks and Recreation are involved in coastal resource planning along the entire coast, where the most intense development pressure is concentrated.

These are just a few of the challenges I see ahead.

Thank you and warmest Holiday Greetings!

DONNELL POND UPDATE

This past August, deeds were signed placing approximately 7000 acres of land, including 11 miles of frontage on Donnell Pond and Tunk Lake in Hancock County into State ownership. The newly acquired parcel, located close to Route One near Ellsworth, has been the subject of off and on negotiations with its owners since the 1950's.

The Donnell Pond/Tunk Lake parcel will be managed for a multiple of uses with the policies which direct the management of all the other properties managed by Public Lands applying to this parcel. Most portions of the properties are ideally suited for public recreation, particularly for hiking trails on the mountain peaks and campsites along the shorelines. In addition, the parcel contains significant volumes of timber which will be managed to provide important wildlife habitat and to produce quality wood products for local markets.

The Bureau of Public Lands will begin developing a management plan for the entire parcel this winter. No facilities will be built or road improvement work undertaken until the management plan is complete.

Bureau personnel have already begun collecting field information on the natural features of the area. The Bureau will form an Advisory Committee of local area residents, public agency representatives, and others knowledgeable about the area to advise them in the development of the Plan.

Tom Doak
Bureau of Public Lands

NEED HELP?

Do you manage or protect natural resources for the benefit of the public? Do you work for a public or private nonprofit landowning agency? Does your agency have a special labor intensive project it would like to accomplish in 1989?

If your answer to all three of these questions is yes, then the Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) can probably help you. The MCC is currently seeking proposals for projects to work on during the spring and summer of 1989.

In 1988, the MCC provided 35,000 hours of labor in completing 33 different projects. Each project lasted from seven to ten weeks. With training provided by the sponsoring agencies, the generally unskilled MCC laborers built trails, foot bridges, docks, picnic tables, campsites, duck boxes, boardwalks, small buildings, and other structures. They renovated buildings, campsites, and picnic areas; rehabilitated wildlife habitat; reconstructed trails; planted flower gardens; and much more.

Project applications for the spring and summer of 1989 are due by January 13. The MCC will put together a team, consisting of a leader and between four and six corpsmembers, specifically to accomplish the projects which are chosen.

For more information and application forms, contact Ken Spalding, Director, Maine Conservation Corps, State House Station #22, Augusta, Maine 04333. Telephone, 289-4931.

**Maine Department of Conservation
State House Station #22
Augusta, ME 04333**

A Report on Maine Forests, Parks and Lands is published semiannually by the Maine Department of Conservation. Write to State House Station #22, Augusta, Maine 04333 to receive it.

Maine Department of Conservation
John R. McKernan, Jr., Governor
C. Edwin Meadows, Jr., Commissioner

Bureau of Parks & Recreation	289-3821
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