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A Report on Maine Forests Parks & Lands, Winter 1990-91

Maine Department of Conservation

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a
report
on

maine



Forests Parks & Lands

News from the Maine Department of Conservation

Winter 1990-91

DOC Manages 38,838 Acres from Maine's Largest Single Land Conservation Purchase

The Bureaus of Parks and Recreation and Public Lands will manage 33,838 acres in Piscataquis, Androscoggin and Oxford counties acquired as part of the largest single land conservation purchase in Maine's history.

The centerpiece of the acquisition package, purchased through the Land for Maine's Future program, is the 29,692 acre parcel surrounding Nahmakanta Lake, including all of Township T1 R11 and the lower third of Rainbow Township. The tract includes exceptionally scenic terrain southwest of Baxter State Park, with 50 miles of shoreline along 24 lakes and ponds, productive wildlife habitat, a remote forested area of more than 8,000 acres in the Debsconeag lakes region, and a 12 mile stretch of the Appalachian Trail corridor.

The Appalachian Trail (AT) traverses 1800-foot Nesuntabunt Mountain where old growth spruce and rare plant communities associated with rock outcrops are found. From Nesuntabunt's summit, there are expansive views of the region's lakes and Mount Kathadin to the north. The AT also follows the rim of spectacular Pollywog Gorge near Nahmakanta lake.

The property will be held and managed by the Bureau of Public Lands for multiple uses including dispersed backcountry recreation, hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and camping.

The largest parcel of undeveloped Androscoggin River frontage in Turner and Leeds was also part of the \$13.1 million acquisition package. Located within five miles of the Lewiston/Auburn area, Maine's third largest population center, the parcel includes more than 12 miles of river frontage and 2,262 acres.

A variety of wildlife habitats are present on the property including mixed-age woodlands, wetlands and extensive shoreline areas. The Bureau of Parks and Recreation will manage the property which is used for snowmobiling, hunting, fishing and cross-country skiing.

A 64 acre addition to state land at Little Concord Pond near Rumford was also acquired. The undeveloped parcel totals 614 acres and includes land surrounding 26 acre Little Concord Pond. The land is managed by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation. □

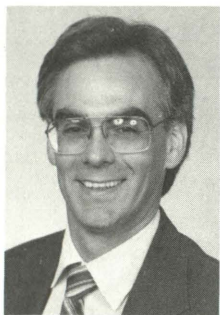


An aerial view of a portion of the Androscoggin River property to be managed by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation. Lake Auburn appears in the upper left. The 2,262 acre parcel is just north of the Lewiston/Auburn area. Photo by M. Wiebe



Sixth Debsconeag Lake. In addition to Nahmakanta Lake, Wadleigh Pond, First and Second Musquash Ponds, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Debsconeag Lakes were acquired. Many of the lakes received the highest ratings in the Land Use Regulation Commission's Maine Wildlands Lake Assessment. Photo courtesy Diamond Occidental Forest Inc.

Related stories on page 4



C. Edwin Meadows, Jr.
Commissioner

Commissioner's Column

Maine's "working landscape" has served our state well through the years, providing a diverse economy and unequalled quality of life. Natural resources, the foundation of the working landscape, continue their historical role as a key to our state's economic vitality. The "multiple-use" of Maine's forests as a source of raw materials, wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities, water and minerals also gives Maine people a close attachment to Maine's natural resources.

How we interact with the landscape is basic to our very lives; our work, play, raising a family and the way we choose to live. Programs dealing with this basic Maine treasure are found in every DOC bureau and division.

We have seen the Maine landscape change rapidly in recent years. The legislature enacted many new laws to deal with these changes—growth management, solid waste and recycling, the Forest Practices Act, endangered species, affordable housing, business development and others.

Implementing these new laws will be a challenge to all of us. Our goal is to establish programs under these laws that will lead toward natural resources of improved quality, diversity, value and vitality. Working with the private sector, citizen groups and the general public will be an important part of our effort to implement these programs.

Good information is essential in making the best decisions on these matters. We have made significant progress in increasing the availability and quality of information on Maine's natural resources, creating the capability to gather and analyze the best data ever compiled on Maine forests for the analysis of long-term trends.

As the pace of economic activity has slowed, easing some of the immediate pressures on the landscape, we will face a different set of challenges. Here too, we will need to pursue solutions in partnership with those who are directly involved with use and enjoyment of Maine's natural resources.

We will be seeking solutions to the investments needed in the state park system to maintain the physical plant. The bond issue for state parks and historic sites did not pass, so we will look for other alternatives for doing the necessary work to keep the parks accessible, usable and safe.

As we continue in changing times, we are confident that the working landscape will again help sustain Maine's economy and contribute to the vitality of our future.

We appreciate your support and interest in natural resource programs.

MGS Landslide Study Draws Praise

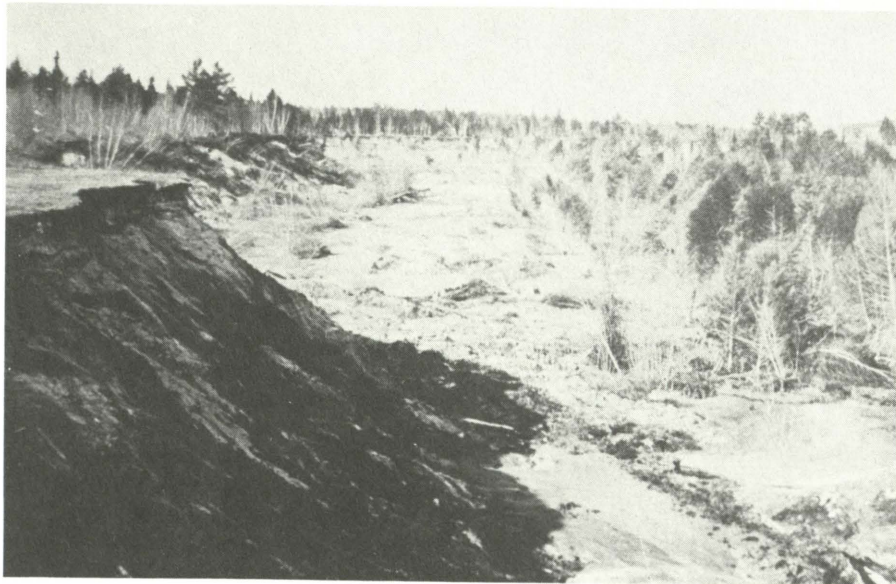
Three Maine Geological Survey (MGS) open-file reports on landslide hazards in Cumberland County are "among the best produced by any state as part of the U. S. Geological Survey-State Cooperative Landslide Program," according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

The reports were prompted by the 1983 landslide in Gorham and many other slides that have occurred in the clay deposits of coastal Maine. The MGS investigation was supported by a grant from the U.S. Geological Survey's Office of Earthquakes,

Volcanoes, and Engineering. It includes a map of landslides in Cumberland County (OF 90-22, by Irwin Novak), description of clay chemistry (OF 90-23, by Lawrence Mayer), and a detailed engineering analysis of slide-prone sites in Brunswick and Westbrook (OF 90-24, by Steven Devin and Thomas Sandford). All of these authors are in the University of Maine system.

A major finding of the Devin and Sandford report is that properties of the Presumpscot Formation clays vary from place to place, and the types and sizes of landslides vary accordingly. The most sensitive clays can experience disastrous "flowslides," such as the 1868 slide that swept away 34 acres in Westbrook (see photo). Considering the population density that now exists in the greater Portland area, it is clear that engineering studies are important for construction projects in slide-prone areas. □

Woodrow Thompson
Maine Geological Survey



The MGS landslide report contains historical photographs such as this one of the 1868 Westbrook landslide. Before the landslide, which swept away 34 acres, the trees on the right were at the level of those on the left. Photo courtesy of P. Spiller, Westbrook, Maine.

BPR Receives Waste Management Award

Governor McKernan and Sherry Huber, director of the Maine Waste Management Agency, recently presented the first "Waste Management Award" to the Bureau of Parks and Recreation for its efforts to promote a new program that encourages state park visitors to carry out their trash.



Governor McKernan presents Maine's first Waste Management Award to Herb Hartman and Steve Curtis (far left). Sherry Huber, director of the Waste Management Agency and Ed Meadows, Department of Conservation commissioner, joined the governor for the presentation.

Bureau Director Herb Hartman and Steve Curtis, supervisor of parks operations and maintenance, accepted the award on behalf of the bureau. They praised the Bureau of Parks and Recreation's field staff for their positive public education efforts to make the change work, as well as state park visitors who adapted readily to the "carry in/carry out" program, which reduced the number of trash barrels at state parks.

The "carry in/carry out" program was implemented in 31 day use (picnicking, swimming and hiking) state parks and 15 state historic sites. These facilities had a total of 1.8 million visitors from April to September 1990. The new program was accompanied by a "Solid Waste...It's No Picnic" poster campaign, press contacts, and school education programs in conjunction with Earth Day. All of the public education efforts focused on Maine's solid waste disposal crisis and highlighted state parks as appropriate places to begin implementing solutions.

As a result of "carry in/carry out" during 1990, solid waste handled by park staff was reduced an estimated 80 to 90%. In addition to the benefits of trash reduction and public education, "carry in/carry out" allowed park staff to spend more time maintaining grounds, trails, equipment, and picnic sites and providing other public services. A reduction in trash accumulated at state parks also meant a reduction in rodents and nuisance insects attracted by trash.

Next season, solid waste reduction efforts in state parks and historic sites will continue through public education and information. A particular focus will be on solid waste reduction information for state park campers. A waste stream analysis by staff at Rangeley Lake, Lake St. George and Camden Hills State Parks, as well as cooperative efforts with the Maine Waste Management Agency, may also lead to a pilot recycling project at state park campgrounds. □

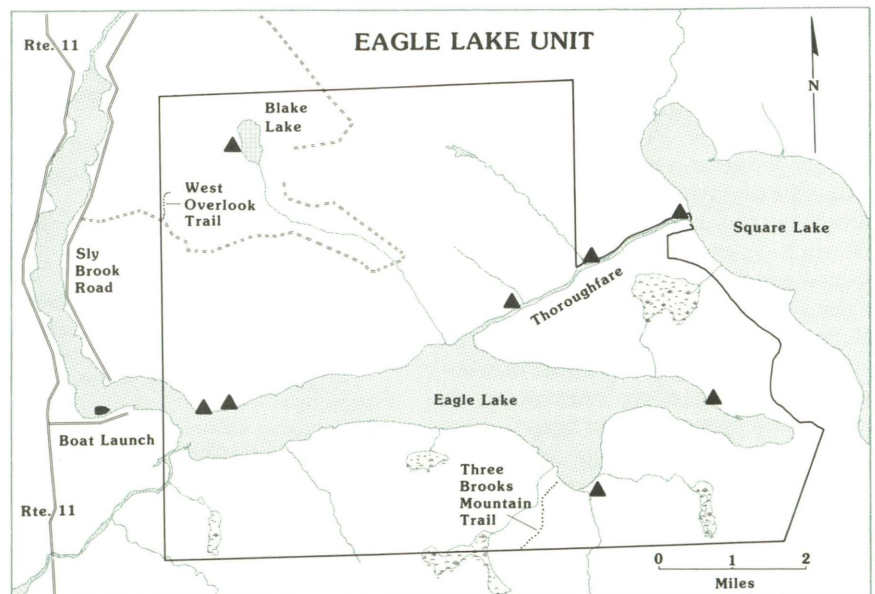
Your Public Lands: Eagle Lake Unit

✓ **General Description:** The centerpiece of this 23,882 acre tract in northern Aroostook County is the eastern two-thirds of 18-mile-long Eagle Lake. There are a variety of forest environments, including old-growth, trout streams, wetlands and habitat for rare lichens and calypso orchids.

✓ **How to Find It:** The unit lies immediately east of the town of Eagle Lake, which may be reached via Route 11, about 40 miles north of the I-95 Patten exit, or 20 miles south of Fort Kent. The town has a hard-surfaced public boat ramp providing access to the lake.

✓ **What to See and Do:** Located on the eastern edge of Maine's "big woods," the Eagle Lake Unit offers four-season recreational opportunities highlighted by the excellent landlocked salmon and brook trout fishing on Eagle Lake, nearby Square Lake, and the thoroughfare between them. The bureau maintains water-access campsites on Eagle Lake and the thoroughfare, and a foot-access site on remote Blake Lake. Two recently-built hiking trails offer scenic overlooks, and local snowmobile clubs groom 10 miles of trail on the unit. Hunting is popular; standard state regulations apply. A permit is required for bear-baiting.

✓ **Forest Land Management:** Forest management goals at Eagle Lake are to grow and harvest high-quality timber, taking advantage of the unit's fertile soils. Periodic harvests over the past decades have produced and continue to produce a diverse forest that supports a wide variety of wildlife, both game and non-game species. □



Map by Jeanne Kannegieser, BPL

Tom Charles, Public Lands

Nahmakanta Management Planning Underway

With its scattered remote ponds, acres of roadless territory, rugged terrain, deep-cut gorges and miles of protected Appalachian Trail Corridor, the land known as the Nahmakanta tract is a unique addition to Maine's publicly owned lands. The Bureau of Public Lands acquired title to Nahmakanta on October 11, marking the end of a long and complicated negotiation process among the state's Land for Maine's Future Board, the Nature Conservancy and Diamond Occidental Forest, Incorporated. Now the planning process begins through which the bureau will design a 10 year management plan that will guide the short and long-term stewardship of this outstanding area. (See "BPL Planning Process in Summary.")

In combination with a 13,000 acre public lands ownership to the west in T1 R12, the Nahmakanta Unit totals 42,962 acres and is the largest tract owned and managed for the public by the bureau. The size and diversity of this newest unit pose special opportunities for multiple-use management. Wildlife, fisheries, remote recreation, aesthetics, roadless area designation and forestry will all receive consideration as the planning process evolves.

Field work has already begun on the Nahmakanta Unit and will continue throughout the winter with on the ground and aerial observation. By the fall of 1991, field work should be complete and the advisory committee should be in operation. A completed plan will be available by the spring of 1992. This will begin an exciting time for the Bureau of Public Lands as it engages in the challenge of managing over 42,962 acres of Maine's outstanding natural heritage. □

Henry Whittemore
Public Lands

The BPL Planning Process in Summary

- ✓ BPL resource specialists in wildlife, recreation, silviculture and planning conduct field work.
- ✓ An advisory committee of resource managers and citizens is appointed.
- ✓ Resource specialists identify land features and natural resource characteristics affecting management options.
- ✓ A draft report is prepared by resource specialists and submitted to the advisory committee for review and comment.
- ✓ A public meeting is held on the draft report. Public comment is welcome at any stage in the process.
- ✓ After review of all comments, the final management plan is adopted.
- ✓ The management plan provides guidance for future management actions. With its adoption, the implementation process begins.

Newly Acquired Land Open to Public Use

The ten Land for Maine's Future Fund acquisitions under Department of Conservation management are all available for public use.

Recreational use and public access for these properties will be enhanced through the use of Land for Maine's Future Fund monies earmarked for access improvements. Because the acquisitions are quite recent, necessary planning has not been completed to spend all of the access improvement funds, which amount to 5% of the appraised value of each property. While most formal access improvements remain to be done, users will find existing trails, campsites or access points that allow enjoyment and use of these newly acquired lands.

■ **Androscoggin River (Turner/Leeds)** - Existing trails provide access throughout this parcel for a variety of recreational users, especially snowmobilers. Future plans may include trail expansion and parking.

■ **Bradbury Mountain** (addition to Bradbury Mountain State Park) - Existing trails provide a variety of recreational opportunities. Future plans may include additional parking, trail improvements and the relocation of existing campsites.

■ **Cutler Coast** - Access is provided by Route 191 along the northwest side of the property and from the water along the southeast. Appropriate access improve-

ments will be made following the development of a management plan.

■ **Dodge Point** - Existing woods roads and trails to the shore provide foot access throughout the property. Parking facilities will be improved and additional access may be made following the adoption of a management plan.

■ **Little Concord Pond** - Future access improvements may include trail development.

■ **Mt. Kineo** - Campsites and an existing trail to the summit currently provide opportunities for public use. Additional plans include trail and possible campsite expansion, and potential access improvements for hikers and boaters.

■ **Nahmakanta Township** - The Appalachian Trail and numerous campsites throughout this recent acquisition provide existing opportunities for access and recreational use. Additional access improve-

ments will be made following the adoption of a management plan.

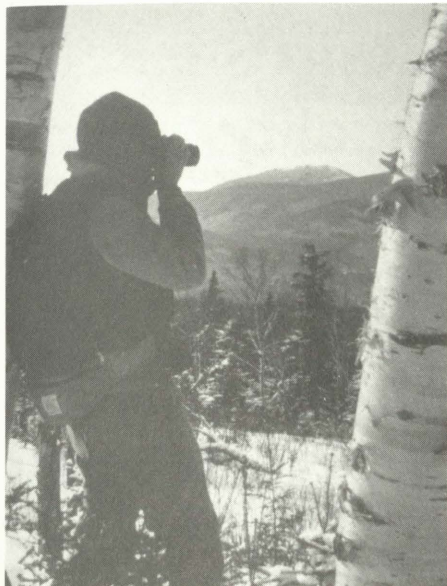
■ **Sabattus Mountain** - An existing trail provides access to the summit ridge. Future options may include the acquisition of abutting lands in order to protect the remainder of the mountain, thus creating additional access and recreational opportunities.

■ **Sandy Point** - This parcel has been leased to the town of Stockton Springs for management. The town will undertake work to clean up the site, provide better parking and improve beach access.

■ **Shackford Head** - Some trailwork, including construction of a boardwalk, was completed this past summer to improve an existing trail to the Shackford Head bluff. Future plans include additional trails to points of interest, provision of a parking area and installation of toilet facilities. □

Sheila McDonald
Parks and Recreation

Property Acquired by	Land for Maine's Future Program and Managed by	DOC	
Parcel	Location	Size (acres)	Agency
Androscoggin River	Turner / Leeds	2,262	BPR
Bradbury Mountain	Pownal	100	BPR
Cutler Coast	Cutler	2,100	BPL
Dodge Point	Newcastle	497	BPL
Little Concord Pond	Peru	62	BPR
Mount Kineo	Moosehead Lake	800	BPR
Nahmakanta Township	T1R11 T2R11	29,692	BPL
Sabattus Mountain	Lovell	90	BPR
Sandy Point Beach	Stockton Springs	100	BPR
Shackford Head	Eastport	90	BPR



Volunteer photographer Roger Merchant was one of 500 SERVE/Maine volunteers who worked for Maine's public natural resource agencies this year. Roger is volunteering with the Bureau of Public Lands taking slides which will be used in developing an informational slide show about the bureau. Photo by A. Eaton.

The 1991 SERVE/Maine Directory listing projects that need volunteers will be available in February. If you would like to receive it please contact: SERVE/Maine, Department of Conservation, Sta. 22, Augusta, ME 04333.

34,000 Hours of Work in 1990 MCC Getting Things Done

Building new trails on Goose Eye Mt., Pineland Center and Shackford Head; revitalizing campsites on the Allagash Waterway; painting buildings at Lily Bay State Park; grading and seeding a new heliport in Allagash; and building a rock stairway for ocean access at Camden Hills State Park. These are some of the projects that Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) teams accomplished in 1990 while working with other Department of Conservation agencies.

It is likely that MCC teams provide the labor for more outdoor recreation development work than any other single agency in Maine. They build hiking and ski trails, bridges, boardwalks, campsites, picnic areas and much more. In 1990, 138 MCC corpsmembers and team leaders worked over 34,000 hours on 24 conservation and outdoor recreation projects to benefit the public. Most MCC projects lasted eight weeks and, in addition to hard

work, the corpsmembers were provided job training and conservation education.

The agencies that sponsored these projects are as diverse as the Maine Audubon Society, St. Croix International Waterway Commission, Gorham Land Trust, University of Southern Maine and White Mountain National Forest.

Any public or private non-profit agency that manages land for public benefit and would like to have the MCC help get some things done in 1991 should be working on projects proposals now. The deadline to submit proposals for 1991 MCC projects is January 11, 1991. Call 289-4931 for more information and proposal packets.

The MCC also has a volunteer program, SERVE/Maine, which recruits volunteers for public natural resource agencies (see photo).

Ken Spalding
Maine Conservation Corps

BPR Leases Aroostook RR R/W for Snowmobile Trail

Twenty miles of an abandoned railroad right-of-way in Aroostook County have been leased by the state for snowmobile trail use this season through a cooperative effort by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation and the Maine Department of Transportation.

A proposal to purchase this right-of-way was made to the Land for Maine's Future Board by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation last year. Due to legal issues affecting title to portions of the right-of-way, negotiations have been suspended pending legislative efforts to resolve them. For the interim, the Bureau and the Department of Transportation's action mean that the integrity of the right-of-way and its availability for recreational use are preserved.

The lease, and planned future acquisition of the right-of-way, represents a first step by state agencies in the conversion of rails to trails for recreational use.

Scott Ramsay, Parks and Recreation



A portion of the railroad right-of-way between Washburn and Sweden recently leased for snowmobile trail use in Aroostook County. Photo by S. Ramsay

International Snowmobile Trail Opens



The nation's first international regional snowmobile trail, the North East Snowmobile Trail (N.E.S.T.) opens with the first snow of the season.

Beginning at Pennsylvania's northern border, the 1,500 mile trail spans New York and touches Quebec, Vermont and New Hampshire before crossing Maine and temporarily ending in Aroostook county at the New Brunswick border. A concept of the International Association of Snowmobile Administrators (I.A.S.A.), the trail is expected to cover 2,000 miles when complete in 1992, connecting western Pennsylvania and eastern New Brunswick.

For more information about N.E.S.T. or other snowmobile trails in Maine's 9,000 mile system, write the ORV Division, Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Sta. 22, Augusta, ME 04333, or call (207) 289-3821. □

Forest Stewardship Assistance Available

A new program designed to place 500,000 acres of private nonindustrial forest land under professional management within the next 5 years has been announced by the Maine Forest Service.

The Forest Stewardship Assistance Program is designed to help improve wildlife, recreation, water quality and timber on Maine's small woodland ownerships. The program helps the owners of small parcels of forest land obtain professionally prepared land stewardship plans.

Under the program, nonindustrial landowners of 10 to 999 acres of forest land are eligible to receive up to \$400 toward the cost of a forest stewardship plan prepared by a registered professional forester.

The program is especially important to 20,000 landowners presently enrolled under Maine's tree growth tax law. Maine law requires that a forest management and harvest plan be prepared for all lands enrolled under the tree growth law. The cost of preparing the plan may also qualify the landowner for a state income tax credit of up to \$200.00.

Approximately 8 million acres or 53% of Maine forest land is in private, nonindustrial holdings. Wise stewardship of these lands is critical to meet the demand for timber and the need for recreation, wildlife habitat and clean water.

For more information, call the Maine Forest Service Information Center in Augusta at 1-800-367-0223. □



A Maine Forest Service television public service announcement narrated by Judy Berg, president of the Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine, encourages participation in the Forest Stewardship Assistance Program.

State Seal of Quality Appears on Maine Lumber



Maine-made lumber may now qualify for the Maine Quality Seal Program. At the request of lumber manufacturers, the Maine Forest Service and the Department of Agriculture, the legislature has authorized the expansion of the program to include lumber. It had previously been used only for agricultural products.

The Quality Seal Program adopts standards of quality, condition, grade, and packaging of Maine products and promotes those products in the marketplace. Lumber producers interested in the program should contact the Department of Agriculture, Division of Quality Assurance, Station #28, Augusta, ME 04333; Tel: 289-2161. □

Forests Surveyed by Satellite

Images taken from a satellite circling 500 miles above Maine's woodlands are being used in a "first of its kind" interim forest survey commissioned by the Maine Forest Service.

A conventional, state-wide survey of Maine's forests is conducted every 10 to 15 years by the U.S. Forest Service and takes several years to complete. By using satellite technology, the Maine Forest Service expects to complete this interim survey, including publication of the results, within one year.

In addition, the Forest Service expects the project to demonstrate how mid-cycle forest surveys may be completed at relatively low cost and how a full U.S. Forest Service Decennial Survey may be completed less expensively.

Forest surveys provide essential information to natural resource managers, public officials and others interested in Maine's forest resources. Forest tree types, volume of wood, age classes and tree regeneration are measured. The information can be used to gauge wood supply, a vital concern in Maine where forest products account for 41% of the value of all manufactured goods. It also helps identify needs and opportunities to improve the quality and productivity of the Maine forest.

The satellite survey is a cooperative effort involving the Maine Forest Service, the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, the University of Maine, the James W. Sewall Company of Old Town and the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA). □



Derived satellite images such as the one above are being used in a survey of Maine's forests. The light areas indicate a decrease in forest cover between 1986 and 1987, while dark areas show an increase. Water appears black. Photo by C. Winne, University of Maine, College of Forest Resources.

LURC Adopts Innovative Lake Rules

The Maine Land Use Regulation Commission has adopted new rules protecting the natural and cultural resources of approximately 3,000 lakes and ponds in the commission's 10.5 million acre jurisdiction.

The new rules place lakes in management categories, establish new development standards for shoreline frontage and setbacks, and allow lake

concept plans to manage development of lake shores.

The new rules include a classification system based on natural resource values and land use characteristics. The rules create several management classes for lakes including two that maintain lakes in an undeveloped state. Other management classes allow for various levels of development.

The lake concept plan process allows landowners with extensive lake frontage to propose a comprehensive plan for that frontage. This approach has drawn positive response from landowners because it gives greater latitude in planning future development in exchange for

conservation of resources. The flexibility of lake concept plans has been received as an alternative to traditional shoreland zoning.

Development standards set by the new rules increase shoreline frontage requirements to 200 feet per dwelling and shoreline setback to 100 feet for dwellings. These standards are consistent with the state's shoreland zoning for municipalities.

The Land Use Regulation Commission's unique planning effort has produced a farsighted management plan and regulations that allow the commission to guide, rather than react to future lake development, and to make informed decisions regarding Maine's lake resources. □

Gloria LeVasseur

Land Use Regulation Commission



Chain of Ponds Township.

Forest Practices Act Training Underway

Maine Forest Service rangers are receiving training about the recently adopted Forest Practices Act rules. The rules, which establish standards for forest regeneration and clearcutting, become effective January 1, 1991.

While most enforcement actions under the new rules will require an assessment of harvesting operations by a registered professional forester, the rangers will play a key role in making the initial inspection for compliance with the new standards.

The rangers are being trained on regeneration sampling, clearcut size measurement, basal area determination and map reading. About half the rangers have received the training, with the other half scheduled for next spring.

The training program was developed jointly by forest management and fire control staff, with management division foresters serving as instructors.

Parks Open for Winter Use

Snow and cold temperatures prove inviting to many state park visitors who brave the elements to enjoy winter recreation.

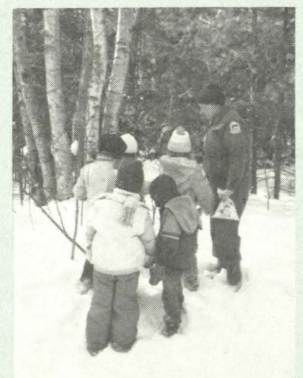
Parking lots at three state parks, Reid (Georgetown), Popham Beach (Phippsburg) and Two Lights (Cape Elizabeth), remain open year-round, allowing visitors to walk along some of Maine's most scenic oceanfront. At other state parks, visitors are able to park outside the gates and walk in.

Many state parks have extensive cross-country ski trails, some of which are regularly groomed. A free guide to cross-country skiing at state parks and public reserved lands can be obtained by writing to the Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Station 22, Augusta, Maine 04333.

At Wolfe's Neck Woods State

Park in Freeport, guided nature walks, which are provided free of charge, are available by reservation in January and February. Both school and adult groups are invited to take advantage of this opportunity. Reservations can be made by calling the Bureau of Parks and Recreation's Augusta office at 289-3821. □

Pat Bailey, interpretive specialist at Wolfe's Neck Woods State Park, helps school children appreciate the park's natural environment in winter. Photo D. Bell





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

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Bureau of Public Lands 289-3061
Forest Service 289-2791
Geological Survey 289-2801
Land Use Regulation Commission 289-2631

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Marshall Wiebe, Editor
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1990 value estimated at more than \$13 Million **Maine Christmas Trees and** **Wreaths Marketed Worldwide**

For those engaged in Maine's Christmas tree and wreath industry, the peak of the holiday season has already arrived. Maine's annual Christmas tree harvest is now in full swing and throughout the state wreathmakers are hard at work trying to construct wreaths fast enough to meet tight order deadlines.

This season about 250,000 Christmas trees worth over \$3,000,000 will be harvested in Maine for sale in local and national markets. Over 2,000,000 wreaths worth about \$10,000,000 will be constructed for shipment throughout the country and the world.

Maine has enjoyed an excellent tree and brush growing season this year. Fir tips for wreathmaking are in good shape and generally show little damage from spruce budworm or balsam twig aphid. Timely rainfall has pushed plump, green, new growth this year. Tree quality has also generally improved this year with increasing quantities of high quality plantation grown trees continuing to displace wild trees in the marketplace.

Christmas tree and wreath marketing methods have changed markedly in recent years. For decades, Maine Christmas trees were harvested primarily for sale to retail lots in other states. Now many Maine grown trees are being sold locally, often on "choose and cut" farms. The family experience of a weekend trip to select a Christmas tree is becoming increasingly popular. It is inexpensive recreation for the whole family, and the certainty of purchasing a freshly cut tree is appealing to the consumer. For the grower, "choose and cut" offers a savings in harvest labor and the opportunity to sell at retail, rather than wholesale, prices.

Mail order trees and wreaths are gaining popularity as well. An estimated 15,000 trees and 250,000 wreaths will be shipped directly to consumers in Maine and other states, opening direct retail markets otherwise unavailable to Maine producers.

While retailing methods have changed significantly over the years, the Christmas tree and wreath industry continues to represent an important and vital part of Maine's economy. □

Clark Granger
Maine Forest Service



Holiday Gift Idea **1991 Maine State Park** **Season Pass**

Good for Unlimited Day-Use of all
State Parks and Historic Sites
Managed by the Maine
Bureau of Parks and
Recreation

Individual Pass, \$10; Family Pass, \$25

Make check payable to Treasurer, State of Maine and send with name and address of recipient to Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Sta. 22, Augusta, ME 04333. Call 289-3821 for more information.



Christmas trees are prepared for shipping at Christmas Tree Acres in Norridgewock, one of many Maine Christmas tree plantations. The tree baler wraps each tree with twine to ensure that the limbs are not damaged during shipment. Photo by M. Wiebe