

Black Woods Byway / Donnell Public Land Unit Meeting
Downeast RC&D
November 4, 2009

Attending: Larry Johannesman, Ashby Bladen, Jim Fisher, Chuck Simpson, Misha Mytar, Rex Turner, Jeremy Gabrielson

Forestry Practices – Chuck Simpson

- BPL is commissioned to manage the timber on public lands
- Practice exemplary management
- Use operations to raise revenues for the department
- Certified under two major agencies for sustainability
- Engage Maine Audubon, wildlife biologists, etc. to inspect and critique management
- Management plan / integrated resource policy is renewed every ten years
 - Plan defines primary and secondary uses
 - Defines ecological reserves
- Donnell Pond
 - Historically has not been harvested
 - Bureau acquired the property in the early 1990's
 - Donnell Pond is primarily a recreational area. Timber is secondary.
 - Have done some cutting off of the Dynamite Brook Road
 - Need to create significant entrances for large logging trucks, as small as possible
 - Otter Road – sometimes easier to cut a new road than rebuild an existing road. New roads need to accommodate larger trucks. The trees were not good quality, but were marketable as biomass. The Otter road may be adequate for summer access.
- Questions
 - Who decides on the design? Contractor or Department?
 - Regional field staff make decisions
 - Two kinds of roads
 - Public access – reduce visual impact with buffers, cutting lower, etc.
 - Management – can cut right to the road
 - Ashby – overriding concern has been the perception of a conflict of interest when the BP&L is dependent on logging for funding
 - Certification audit held in September – found this area to be in conformity
 - Jim: Byway has an interest in protecting the scenic beauty – would like the ability to review cutting and road construction plans
 - Misha: Byway has an interest in creating safer places for people to pull off.

Access points – some of these are on a map that BPL brought, was marked up and is not posted to:

- Misha rolled out a large map which indicates a variety of trails, formal and informal
- The group marked up several trails
- Primary stops
 - Myrick Pond – long range
 - Dynamite Brook
 - Rex
 - Pro – linkages to trail network
 - Pro – exiting designated trails
 - Con – safety

- Larry
 - Pro – good name
 - Pro – can go either direction
 - Misha
 - Con – Drive up the road – not very visible
 - Con – steep
 - Pro – already existing, maintained
 - Ashby
 - Con – no winter access
 - Pro - snowshoeing
 - Pro – can mountain bike in season
 - Pro – can be rolled into the hidden ponds
 - Chuck
 - Pro – have a good spot – RTP grant written to connect
 - Pro – have some vistas
 - Con – steep road
 - Jeremy
 - Con – need easy visibility, not on main road
 - Con – want water with a scenic overlook
 - Jim
 - Pro – historic mining sites
 - Pro – connected
- Tunk Mountain / hidden ponds
- Chuck
 - Con – unrealistic to stop hiking at the hidden ponds
 - Pro – Connectivity
 - Pro – fishing, camping potential
 - Larry
 - Pro – can go on
 - Pro – area provides lots of things to do
 - Pro – can create additional loops
 - Con – unclear trail head
 - Con – beach on Spring River Lake
 - Misha
 - Pro – beautiful views, including looking up at Tunk
 - Pro – potential for parking on the byway on the north side
 - Con – keeping people within their limits – trail up Tunk
 - Pro – can make small changes in the trail to improve safety
 - Ashby
 - Pro - Short, beautiful hike, easily done with children
 - Con – need to designate campsites at the ponds
 - Chuck
 - Con – campsites may not be authorized, or may require permits
 - Con – snowmobile use and other traditional unauthorized uses
 - Jeremy

- Pro – good for children
 - Pro – like
 - Jim
 - Pro – family friendly to ponds
 - Pro – will eventually include a rewarding trail up Tunk Mountain
 - Con – have to skirt a very tempting beach on Spring River Lake
- Catherine’s Mountain
 - Ashby
 - Pro – great views of the entire Spring River Track
 - Pro – reach the views before you leave the
 - Pro – can be the centerpiece
 - Con – would require building a trail
 - Pro – Ashby has already scouted several potential trails through here
 - Chuck
 - Con – will be logging on the south side of Route 182, but will be set back from trail
 - Jim
 - Con – noise from Route 182
 - Misha
 - Con – ongoing conversation with property owners – uncertainty about management planning
 - Jeremy
 - Pro – this area provides some of the first elevation for people coming from
- Tunk Lake – tabled
- Spring River Lake - tabled
- Round Mountain
 - Jim
 - Pro – water and trail
 - Pro – nice small walk
 - Pro – interesting geological features
 - Pro – pond is smaller and less windy
 - Con – winter access will depend on volunteers plowing
 - Jeremy
 - Con – trail along road might be less pleasant
 - Pro – family friendly
 - Chuck
 - Pro – quick hike
 - Con – some highway safety issues depending on entrance
 - Ashby
 - Pro – water access
 - Pro – potential campsites
 - Pro – connects with 1000 Road and Spring River Lake Outles
 - Con – not possible to keep trail on the public lands
 - Con – boat launch has not been built
 - Con – Thousand Road provides better access to Round Mountain

- Misha
 - Pro – consolidated boat launch and trail head parking
 - Pro – boat launch provides a good view of Round Mountain
 - Pro – good views from Round Mountain
 - Con – existing trail is pretty rough
 - Con – can the trail stay on the public lands
- Larry
 - Pro – good experience walking along water
- Rex
 - Con – connectivity to full system is weak
 - Pro – multiple uses
 - Otter Road
 - 1000 Road

Itinerary

- Otter Road
 - This road doesn't offer access to ponds or scenic mountains
 - It is used locally for hunting
 - There is room for parking
 - Work will be required to restore vegetation and stabilize the road to avoid runoff
 - The road is close enough to Long Pond that the parking might be helpful as swing parking
- Long Pond Boat Launch
 - We walked in the general area where a proposed access facility will be built.
 - Parking space is likely to be limited
 - DOC has concerns that hikers not crowd out the boat owners
 - A short walk from this facility to Round Pond Mountain looks feasible, though the ascent is problematic in the Public Lands property
- 1000 Road
 - We drove into the road about ½ mile
 - This road provides a potential connection to the Sunrise Trail, though property owners would need to grant permission
 - There is not water access or mountain access along this road, so it is unlikely to be a visitor destination.
- Tunk Mountain / Hidden Ponds
 - We looked at potential parking areas on Route 182 (North side) and 1/8 mile down the access road.
 - Parking along Route 182 looks feasible and might be better for year-round access
 - Parking down the access road would be quieter
- Dynamite Brook Road
 - We drove about 1 mile up the Dynamite Brook Road to the bridge
 - This site is not visible from Route 182, but might be used if signage at the base of the road was sufficiently inviting – eg. Caribou Mountain Trail
 - Building parking spaces would be challenging given the sloping topography
 - The group discussed ways to link Catherine's Mountain with a formal trail