

## **Blackwoods Scenic Byway Corridor Committee Meeting**

When: Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> 9:00 – 11:00 AM

Where: Cherryfield Public Library 35 Main Street

### **Minutes**

#### **Who attended and what interest in the Blackwoods Byway:**

Charlie Corliss, BP&L

- Maintaining and enhancing the Sunrise Trail
- Extending the trail or a companion trail to Calais
- Maintaining connecting trails (ITS, MATS)

Crystal Hitchings, WCCOG / DART

- Promoting recreation and tourism
- Scenic Bikeway in Washington County

Kathy Upton, Cherryfield Historical Society / Cherryfield Library

- Interpreting history of Cherryfield and surrounding area
- Promoting Cherryfield's economy

Jim Fisher, HCPC

- Promoting scenic byway
- Creating interpretive information for byway visitors
- Expanding the backpacking opportunity

Isaac Marnik, Sea Coast Mission

- Providing kids with outdoor recreation opportunities

Eric Nosel, BP&L

- Safety on roads and trails
- Maintaining the trail system
- Maintaining access
- Maintaining turnouts

Greg Burr, IF&W

- Maintaining access
- Stocking ponds

Fred Michaud, MaineDOT

- Identifying corridors of regional and economic significance
- Promoting Maine tourism and rural economy

Chuck Simpson (Could not attend but sent written Comments following the meeting)

- Only the state can contract for plowing at Tunk Lake or other areas. We have to work under specific contracts with insurance, etc. The locals have been plowing it to go ice fishing up at the ponds. This must go through and be approved in advanced by the Eastern Region.

- Signage too must be approved by BPL
- BPL will work with ME IF&W on Round Pond access
- Mining is currently in progress on Catherine's Mtn. I'm concerned that interest will grow and put un sustainable pressure on the area
- Spring River Lake area is an Eco- Reserve, so approval building a new hiking trail around the Lake may be challenging. I suspect the camp owners there will object as well.

### Review of Blackwoods Byway 2005 Corridor Plan

- Objectives completed
- Objectives remaining **(Keep)**
- Objectives better forgotten **(Stop)**
- New goals, objectives and strategies **(Start)**
  - Corridor Plan Update
  - Infrastructure – road quality, turnouts, trailheads, boat access
  - Wayfinding – signage
  - Interpretation – signs, displays, interactive exhibits
  - Promotion – brochures, maps, website, social media
  - Partners

*Notes are in italics*

Goal 1: Protect the natural, historic and scenic resources that make this byway unique

### Objectives

- ◆ Open and preserve vistas, such as Catherine Mountain overlooking Spring River Lake, where possible.
- ◆ Maintain a clean and natural environment along the byway that is free of litter and graffiti.
- ◆ Preserve water quality of the natural lakes and streams.
  - ◆ *Some acidification*
  - ◆ *Low water - drought*
- ◆ Preserve night-sky along the byway by discouraging bright, internally lit outdoor signage and brightly lit parking areas.
  - ◆ *Have not noted significant deterioration in night sky.*
  - ◆ *Need to continue advocating for shielded lighting*
- ◆ Preserve historic resources, including cemeteries along the byway.
  - ◆ *Concern about mining on Catherine's Mountain (Chuck Simpson's notes)*

### Strategies

- ◆ Support campaigns to remove roadside litter and remove graffiti from rocks along the byway
  - ◆ *Turnouts – particularly Tunk Lake – are an ongoing maintenance issue*
  - ◆ *Shoulder on Catherine's continues to accumulate trash*
  - ◆ *Cameras have helped to reduce littering*
- ◆ Reduce roadside erosion from Route 182 and adjoining roads into local ponds and streams.
  - ◆ *Catherine's Mountain*
    - ◆ *Flow attenuators and diversions are needed to slow the water in ditches*

- ♦ *Blast Rock may also slow water movement*
- ♦ *Ongoing maintenance is required*
- ♦ Encourage MaineDOT to employ mechanical control of vegetation rather than chemical control in areas near to sensitive waterbodies.
  - ♦ *Note from Jim Vogel - blueberry growers have requested to use herbicide to control sweet fern.*
- ♦ Support Friends of Tunk non-point pollution project along Tunk Stream and connecting lakes and ponds.
  - ♦ *Forest service is responsible for monitoring this*
  - ♦ *Most loggers are using best management practices*
- ♦ Inventory historic sites along the byway and in the Towns of Cherryfield and Franklin.
  - ♦ *Cherryfield and Franklin have active historic societies*
  - ♦ *Questions about Catherine's Hill*
    - ♦ *Ghost stories – people ask about this in Cherryfield*
    - ♦ *Dance Hall on Catherine's*
      - ♦ *Changing horses on the crest of Catherine's Hill*
      - ♦ *Weather Channel did a nice document on this – see Mark LaBreeze*
      - ♦ *Also on You Tube – America's Supernatural*
    - ♦ *Mine sites*
      - ♦ *No photographs of the historic mines have been found*
      - ♦ *Concern expressed by Chuck Simson that mines are being exploited now.*
      - ♦ *Caution will be needed to avoid encouraging destructive behavior*
    - ♦ *Cherryfield*
      - ♦ *Wascott – photographer 1870 – 1880 at the Tides Institute in Eastport*
      - ♦ *Gardens at the current Weald Bethel*
        - ♦ *3D Stereo Opticon photographs*
        - ♦ *Google cardboard*
    - ♦ *Fisher Hatchery*
      - ♦ *Photographs*
      - ♦ *Became a store. May have been called "Mikes" or "Mikes by the river" – run by a couple in the 1960s.*
        - ♦ *Still had long, narrow fish troughs on one side of the store.*
      - ♦ *Candle or pottery makers?*
      - ♦ *Next site for the Fisheries Trail*
- ♦ Identify resources (capital and voluntary) to clean-up cemeteries, and to add historic plaques and interpretive information at select historic sites
- ♦ Work with local utilities to avoid obstructing scenic vistas with utility poles, lines and other infrastructure.
  - ♦ *Emera*
- ♦ Provide input into management plans for the Maine Public Reserve lands.
  - ♦ *Jim Vogel, Senior Planner with BP&L is seeing input on the second 5 year review of the 2007 plan*
- ♦ Identify ways to encourage sustainable, low impact tourism within wildlife reserve areas and other environmentally sensitive locations.

*Fish passage at the Cable Pool Dam in Cherryfield*

- *Preventing some fish passage - shad*
- *Restoring fish population on the Narraguagus*

- *Difficult to restore Atlantic Salmon*
- *Stripers*

*Maine Coast Heritage Trust – Holding a meeting January 4<sup>th</sup> at the Edge Building  
Army Corps of Engineers in NH may have good ideas*

## Goal 2: Maintain a safe and efficient transportation corridor connecting Cherryfield and Franklin

### Objectives

- ♦ Identify options to correct locations with high crash rates and high crash potential and pass that information to MaineDOT.
  - ♦ *Some sections of the road require reconstruction to get at problems of water and ledge*
  - ♦ *West Side of Catherine's*
    - ♦ *Water and ledge*
    - ♦ *Big Trucks –*
    - ♦ *Pulp is going to Woodland now that Verso*
    - ♦ *Saw logs are carried to saw mill in Hancock*
- ♦ Increase site distance along the byway with vegetation management and context-sensitive design.
- ♦ Improve safety for entrance and egress at access points to scenic vistas and recreational locations such as Catherine Mountain, Tunk Lake, Fox Pond, Long Pond and Spring River Lake.
  - ♦ *Bruce Mattson or Andrew – could do a safety audits*
  - ♦ *Long Pond Improved*
  - ♦ *Fox Pond Improved*
  - ♦ *Tunk Mountain – parking lot*
- ♦ Promote context-sensitive shoulder paving along Route 182 when road segments are reconstructed.
- ♦ Study potential for passing lanes on steep grades to permit cars to pass slow moving vehicles.
  - ♦ *No plans for passing lanes*
  - ♦ *No bicycle use can be recommended at this time*
  - ♦ *No funding available*

### Strategies

- ♦ Corridor Management Committee works with RPCs, Sunrise Trail Coalition and MaineDOT to support design engineering for Route 182 safety enhancements.
- ♦ Corridor Committee works with Bureau of Parks and Lands and MaineDOT to identify improvements for safe access to recreational sites and scenic vistas.
- ♦ Collaborate with MaineDOT to assure that future road improvements, such as new guardrails, use natural-looking materials and do not obstruct vistas.
- ♦ Study options for paving aprons for day use parking at boat launch areas to reduce congestion and the need to back-onto Route 182. Aprons might also provide day-use parking for ice fishing on the lakes.
- ♦ Improve directional signage, providing drivers with adequate warning of the boat launch locations.

### Goal 3: Promote the local economy through diversified economic activities, including forestry, farming, manufacturing, retail and tourism

#### Objectives

- ♦ Make improvements to Route 182 to preserve transportation speeds.
- ♦ Add way-finding signage on the byway encouraging people to continue their journey into the villages of Cherryfield and Franklin.
- ♦ Increase shoulder season tourism, including fall colors visits and heritage tourism.
- ♦ Increase all-season infrastructure for nature-based tourism along the byway, including additional space for vehicles in the Tunk Lake and Spring River Lake access areas, adding locations for camping, hiking, paddling, fishing, etc. and improving boat launch facilities.
  - ♦ *Plowing – no funding for plowing the parking areas*
  - ♦ *Plowing reduces the number of cars*
  - ♦ *Wing snow back at Dynamite Brook area – snow storage and shoulder by Tunk Mountain entrance*
  - ♦ *Seek county TIF funds for trail access – Economic development, season extension*
    - ♦ *Tunk Mountain - Winter Maintenance - \$100/storm? Create a winter maintenance fund*
    - ♦ *Tunk Lake – second priority*
  - ♦ *Single track bicycle course?*
    - ♦ *Better to create a separate track for bikes*
  - ♦ *Gravel Grind*
    - ♦ *Events riding the gravel roads – starting at Myrick Pond Road*
    - ♦ *Currently and ATV route*
    - ♦ *The Nature Conservancy owns – have been open to this in the past*
    - ♦ *Haynes owns some of the land – may also be open to gravel biking*
- ♦ Market and promote the corridor for low-impact eco-tourism and heritage tourism.
  - ♦ *Hoping to increase tourism*
  - ♦ *Lacking infrastructure*
    - ♦ *Places to eat, sleep*
    - ♦ *Internet access*
- ♦ MaineDOT has applied for infrastructure funding to build 395 extension
  - ♦ *Would then look at improvements to Route 193 from Beddington to Cherryfield*
  - ♦ *One section of 193 in Beddington is collapsing right now*
  - ♦ *Bypasses Route 182*
- ♦ *Identify resources to help small businesses start-up and expand in Cherryfield and Franklin.*
  - ♦ *MaineDOT Corridors of Economic Significance*
  - ♦ *Will be reviewing corridors in 2018*
- ♦ *New infrastructure needs*
  - ♦ *Economic engines*
  - ♦ *Loss of paper mills*
  - ♦ *Electric Charging stations*
    - ♦ *Revision energy*
    - ♦ *Three phase power*
    - ♦ *Business with an interest*
      - ♦ *Franklin Trading Post*
      - ♦ *Cherryfield*

- ♦ *Back in the Good Old Days / consignment/ rental retail*
- ♦ *Englishman's B&B*

### Strategies

- ♦ Seek state and federal funding for marketing and promotion for the byway, Cherryfield and Franklin.
- ♦ Identify tour packages for the region, particularly in coordination with increased visitation connected to the Calais Downeast Heritage Center and the St. Croix 400 year anniversary in 2004.
- ♦ Explore potential for a Cherryfield Gateway Grant to encourage visitors to “come closer” rather than passing through.
- ♦ Evaluate the potential impact of changing highway names between Route 182, Route 1 and Route 1A.
- ♦ Promote multiple uses of the Calais Branch Rail right-of-way, including seasonal excursion rail, snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles, horses, bicycles and pedestrians.
- ♦ Identify cell tower locations that will improve wireless phone service on the byway without compromising the viewshed.

### Goal 4: Promote community participation in protecting and enhancing the byway

#### Objectives

- ♦ Develop a detailed work plan and community participation plan for refining and implementing byway objectives.
- ♦ Expand the circle of individuals and organizations partnering with the Corridor Management Committee.
  - ♦ *See updates to partner list below*
- ♦ Support annual roadside litter collection and graffiti removal programs.
  - ♦ *Perhaps we can host an event in the spring.*
  - ♦ *Would be good to connect this with the ongoing problem of litter and abuse to trash cans and privies.*

#### Strategies

- ♦ Share copies of this corridor management plan with community organizations such as the Narraguagus Snowmobile and ATV Club, Franklin and Cherryfield Historical Societies, and Downeast Rivers Land Trust.
- ♦ Identify partners for roadside litter and graffiti clean-up days in Franking and Cherryfield.
- ♦ Identify resources (capital and voluntary) to clean-up cemeteries, and to add historic plaques and interpretive information at select historic sites.

### Goal 5: Encourage education about this byway for our residents and visitors

#### Objectives

- ♦ Add a small number of scenic turnouts, such as a Catherine Mountain overlook.

- ♦ *Added facilities at Tunk Mountain, Dynamite Brook Road, Tunk Lake (across Rte 182), Long Pond, Spring River Lake and Spring River Lake outlet*
- ♦ Incorporate interpretive signage at scenic turnouts and the Tunk Lake and Spring River Lake access points.
  - ♦ *Wayfinding signs placed along the byway at turnouts*
  - ♦ *Interpretive sign placed at Cherryfield Historic Park*
- ♦ Develop information resources for local schools to learn more about the Blackwoods Byway.
- ♦ Develop information resources accessible to visitors such as brochures and a presence on the Internet.
  
- ♦ *Interpretive Sign Ideas*
  
- ♦ *Fish Hatcheries*
  - ♦ *Ice Fishery*
  - ♦ *Fish Biology – Reproduction*
    - ♦ *Life Cycle of the Salmon*
    - ♦ *Sign from Route 201 byway – ask Larry about adapting the Brook trout – adapt to salmon?*
- ♦ *Sustainable Forestry*
  - ♦ *Dynamite Brook Road*
    - ♦ *General history*
    - ♦ *Telling the story*
    - ♦ *Comparisons – no management, then and now, etc.*
  - ♦ *Working woodlots*
    - ♦ *1000 Road – has some working forests*
    - ♦ *White Pine – has been pruned*
    - ♦ *Picnic Tables*
    - ♦ *8<sup>th</sup> grade science trip*
  - ♦ *Maine Forest Products Council*
  - ♦ *MOFGA*
  - ♦ *Working on panels on forestry*
    - ♦ *Jen Brophie runs sporting camps – Patton*
    - ♦ *What was cut, why, how it is regenerating*
- ♦ *History*
  - ♦ *Rail Depot*
  - ♦ *Mills*
    - ♦ *Noise*
    - ♦ *(State Museum)*
  - ♦ *Dams*
    - ♦ *Boom*
    - ♦ *Sluice way*
  - ♦ *Historic district*
- ♦ *Long Pond*
  - ♦ *Drainage difference was reversed for the mills*
- ♦ *Black House*
  - ♦ *Black managed land for the Bingham*
  - ♦ *Black designed the route*
    - ♦ *Ben Franklin – was instrumental in creating the post road – need to look at the old route*

- ♦ *Work with Joshua Torrance*
- ♦ *Cherryfield's oldest settler – deed signed by Alexander Baring (heir to the Bingham)*
- ♦ *History of Colonel Black*

#### *Priority*

- *Interpretive Signs come first*
- *Web site – regular updates, but not a major overhaul*
- *Brochures*

#### Strategies

- ♦ Provide information to local schools about problems with litter and graffiti and encourage school clean-up campaigns.
- ♦ Seek funds to produce brochures, signage and other information.
- ♦ Work with the University of Maine-Machias recreation education programs to sponsor educational initiatives on the Blackwoods Byway.
- ♦ Work with local historical societies to promote heritage tourism sites, including local sites -- e.g. buildings and cemeteries.
- ♦ Work with local business to link their clientele with tourism opportunities on the byway.

#### **Updates**

- Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands – Eric Nosel
  - Seem to be more users on the trails
  - Receiving more phone calls
- Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
  - Want to create carry-in access to Round Pond
    - Road passing tent platforms
    - Would start stocking rainbow trout
    - May be a few years – collaboration with BP&L
  - Need to make it drive in access
    - Small parking area
    - Hand Launch
  - Might be eligible for TIF funding
    - Would be maintained by state
  - Tunk Lake Boat access site
    - Cleared out brush
    - Posted a sign for No Swimming (not strictly enforced)
    - Latrine – was closed due to abuse
    - Trash Receptacles – may be removed
    - May remain if someone can maintain them under contract (Ashby?)
- Cherryfield Historical Society
  - Concern about ATV use on the local roads
    - Creating a nuisance – racing, on roads
  - Historical Society
  - Cherryfield Library
- Sunrise Trail



- Extending access to Calais
- Finished Trail in Ellsworth
- ATV and Snowmobile Clubs are investing in the ITS trails system
- Campsite in Cherryfield – not seeing much use
- Concern about the dirt bikes on Sunrise Trail (Isaac)
- Washington County Council of Governments
  - Bold Coast Bikeway
  - Bold Coast Byway
  - DART
- MaineDOT
  - Corridors of Economic Significance
  - Tourism is #1 or #2 for economy
  - Maine Office of Tourism
    - Moving away from regions
    - Toward destinations
  - Economic Impact of ATVs \$780 million
  - Matt Delany – Received a NextGen grant for wifi access in Millinocket
    - Putting antennas on building
- Hancock County Planning Commission
  - Byway has improved significantly since we organized about 12 years ago
  - Additional hiking trails will add to visitor interest and length of stay
  - Want to maintain the privy's and trash/recycling facility as possible. Abuse of these facilities is very discouraging

## Updates to Partner List

- ◆ ~~Bangor Hydroelectric Company~~ – Renamed to Emera
- ◆ Cherryfield-Narraguagus Historical Society
- ◆ ~~Downeast Coastal Press~~ (New management and names)
  - ◆ Online – Downeast Coastal News (Susan Bennet), Paper – County Wide
  - ◆ The Coastal Chronicle. Contact info: Adrain Aveni, P.O. Box 22, Milbridge, Me 04658 or [coastalchronicle17@gmail.com](mailto:coastalchronicle17@gmail.com)
- ◆ ~~Downeast Region Chamber of Commerce~~ - defunct
- ◆ Downeast Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) – No longer funded, still acts as a fiscal agent for startups – Contact Gary Edwards
- ◆ DART
- ◆ *Friends of Tunk* - No longer formally organized
- ◆ Hancock County Planning Commission
- ◆ Department of Inland Fisheries and Waterways (IF&W)
- ◆ Land Use ~~Regulation~~ Planning Commission (LURC -> LUPC) – Karen Boldstrige
- ◆ Machias Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (Now in the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, Forestry)
- ◆ Maine Department of Transportation
- ◆ MRG, Inc./Downeast Rail
- ◆ ~~Route 1 Corridor Committee~~ - defunct

- ◆ Sunrise County Economic Council – contact
- ◆ *Sunrise Trails Coalition, Inc.* - Struggling
- ◆ Town of Cherryfield
- ◆ Town of Franklin – Have so far opted not to pursue byway designation
- ◆ ~~Tunk Lake Association~~ - gone
- ◆ Washington County Council of Governments

Additions:

- ◆ Black House / Woodlawn
- ◆ Bold Coast Partnership / Bold Coast Byway (via WCCOG)
- ◆ Downeast Heritage Trust
- ◆ Downeast Fisheries Trail – Natalie Springuel
- ◆ Downeast Salmon Federation – contact Duane Shaw
- ◆ Maine Sculpture Trail
- ◆ Forest Society of Maine (may not be here)
- ◆ Maine Coast Heritage Trust
- ◆ SWOAM
- ◆ The Nature Conservancy