Protecting Livelihoods and Landscapes in Northern Maine
Conference at Colby College
March 14, 2008

The Roles of Private Entities

Brief Synopsis

The decisions of private entities, including landowners, land trusts, and companies doing business in northern Maine, will profoundly affect both the landscapes and livelihoods in the region. These decisions are influenced by government action, of course. The issue of regulation will be addressed in another panel, but government can also affect private decisions through incentives, public capital investment, tax policies, and other programs. The amount of land conserved by land trusts through conservation easement or fee purchase depends, in part, upon the funds available through the Forest Legacy Program, Land for Maine’s Future, and similar funding measures. The decision by private corporations to invest in a new plant may depend as much upon the availability of low-interest loans, tax credits, and other incentives as available markets.

The following charts, graphs, and maps reflect some of the changes that have been occurring in northern Maine over the past fifteen years. The challenge for Mainers is to develop a vision and programs that will not only protect landscapes and build economic opportunities, but will enlist the support of landowners, land trusts, and other private entities to work toward a common goal.

Unorganized Territory Trend Information and Data

Change in Forestland Ownership

Forestland Ownership in Maine in 1994, 1999, 2005
Almost 90% of Maine’s land is privately owned, while the State and federal government own 8.7% and 1.8% respectively.


**Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC)**

LURC’s regulatory jurisdiction encompasses 10.4 million acres in Maine (the Unorganized Territory Tax District consists of approximately 9.3 million acres). 79% of this area is classified as a “Management Zone”, which permits commercial forestry practices, agriculture, recreation, and limited residential development. 21% is classified as a “Protection Zone”, which limits land use activities that may adversely affect natural, recreation or historically significant areas with the zone. 1% is classified as a “Development Zone”, which intensive uses for residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development may be permitted.

Conservation Organizations and Funding

- The Land for Maine’s Future (LMF) Program is the principal State mechanism for funding land conservation projects. The funds have been leveraged by the Federal Forest Legacy program and private fundraising. Maine voters have approved three bond issues for the LMF program:
  - 1987 $35 million
  - 1999 $50 million
  - 2005 $12 million
- Since 1987, the LMF Program has helped fund the acquisition or conservation of over 444,000 acres, including 247,000 acres in conservation easements.

Source: Maine State Planning Office, Land for Maine’s Future. Accessed at: [http://www.state.me.us/spo/lmf/](http://www.state.me.us/spo/lmf/)

Recreation (Statewide Data)
- Between 1993 and 2001, the number of hunting and fishing licenses issued statewide declined by 6% and 12%, respectively.
- Snowmobile registrations grew by over 50% between 1993 and 2001, with approximately 98,000 snowmobiles registered in 2001. ATV registrations increased by 109% during that
time, with nearly 45,000 ATVs registered in 2001. Funding for and development of motorized trails increased proportionally with this demand.


Figure 3.1 Licenses and Registrations by Activity Type 1993-2001

Maine’s Forest Products Industry

Employment in the Industry

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Number of Employees in 1990</th>
<th>Number of Employees in 2003</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>27400</td>
<td>18300</td>
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Darby Bradley, with assistance from Aime Schwartz (Colby 2008) on Trend Data. March 2008