Plum Creek

Growing Value from Exceptional Resources

- Plum Creek Concept Plan for the Moosehead Lake Region -

Executive Summary – September 2009

- The Moosehead Lake Region -

The Moosehead Lake Region of Maine has long been recognized for its unique character. Located near the entrance to the North Woods, Moosehead Lake is expansive, peppered with islands and surrounded by vast working forests and scenic mountain ranges.

Since Henry David Thoreau's visit to the region in the mid-1800s, the region has attracted those seeking an exceptional outdoor experience. Years ago, visitors escaped from city life and traveled by train to stay at the grand lakeshore hotels to enjoy the beauty and serenity of the region.

Today, Moosehead Lake is becoming the destination for tourists and nature lovers. Beautiful mountains surround the lake attracting hikers, bird watchers, mountain bikers, skiers and snowmobilers. Others flock to the lake for a scenic cruise, to go fly fishing, kayaking, or white water rafting.

- Plum Creek's Concept Plan -

In April 2005, the company introduced its Concept Plan for the Moosehead Lake Region. The Plan has undergone numerous revisions based on feedback from the Land Use Regulation Commission and hundreds of residents in the area. The result is a Plan that addresses working landscapes, ecological resources, intact contiguous working forests, recreation, economic development, and regional planning. Importantly, the communities of the Moosehead Lake Region and those who value the area, will benefit from knowing what the future holds for the region.

The final Plan covers 409,000 acres of Plum Creek's northern lands in the state. It includes significant conservation - more than 96 percent of the Plan area - including 363,000 acres in a permanent conservation easement and a conservation sale to The Appalachian Mountain Club of about 29,000 acres. Approximately 16,900 acres have been rezoned for development, which will occur over the next 30 years. This includes 821 residential units and two resorts: a 1,852-acre resort at Lily Bay will include 404 units; and a 4,200-acre resort at Big Moose Mountain will include 800 units. While the terms of the Plan apply for 30 years, the conservation easements will be in place in perpetuity.

- Concept Planning -

The Land Use Regulation Commission, the "planning board" for the unorganized territories of Maine, established concept planning as part of its 1997 Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Concept planning was established to encourage long-range planning based on resource characteristics and suitability as an alternative to haphazard, incremental development. The planning process encourages landowners to chart the future of their ownership in a manner that is thoughtful and forward-looking.

Through concept planning in general, and in this Concept Plan for the Moosehead Lake Region, both the landowner and the public receive benefits that are not available through the traditional regulation process. The landowner benefits from the insight obtained in preparing the plan, from expanded flexibility, and from increased predictability. The public benefits from the improved planning that results from comprehensive evaluation of lake-related recreational and natural resources, from provisions for the long-term protection of resources, from greater knowledge of future development patterns, and from the increased predictability of the development review process.

- Conservation -

The Concept Plan provides lasting, large scale conservation of approximately 392,000 acres. Ninety-six percent of the land area will be permanently conserved solidifying a nearly 2-million-acre network of conservation lands stretching from the Quebec border to Baxter State Park.

The Concept Plan ensures that approximately 363,000 acres will be placed under a permanent conservation easement called the "Moosehead Lake Region Conservation Easement." The easement will ensure that sustainable forestry is practiced, prohibit all residential development, and forever guarantee the right for the public to access the lands for traditional recreational pursuits.

In addition, approximately 29,000 acres, known locally as the Roaches Tract, will be sold to the Appalachian Mountain Club, which will place a permanent conservation easement on the land.

All told, a forest of 600 square miles, larger than Androscoggin County, will be subject to permanent conservation that embraces the values and traditions of the region, protects the region's natural resources, keeps the vast tracts of undeveloped woods and water intact, and restricts new development to near where it already exists.

- Development -

The Concept Plan rezones less than four percent of the Plan area for development. Recognizing the needs for certain types of residential and commercial development, the development zones are located close to existing service centers, developed areas, and/or public highways. They include sites for resort development, traditional residential development, and limited commercial and industrial development.

The rezoning of this acreage for development will specify:

- the locations of where development will and will not be allowed;
- the types of development that will and will not be allowed; and
- the maximum number of dwelling units and overnight accommodation units in commercial lodging establishments that will be permitted.

- Recreation -

The Concept Plan includes a myriad of recreational amenities that can expand and diversify outdoor opportunities for local residents and visitors. Guaranteed public access to the 363,000 acres of easement lands will allow for traditional recreational pursuits. In addition, the Concept Plan includes:

- as development occurs, permanent easements will be granted over approximately 57 miles of Plum Creek road networks guaranteeing public vehicular access for recreational purposes;
- a permanent easement across more than 80 miles of snowmobile trails allowing for public use;

- an easement across 12 miles of the northern portion of the Mahoosucs-to-Moosehead trail project to be granted to Maine Huts and Trails;
- in advance of the development under the Plan, trail easements on an aggregate of 121.8 acres will be granted to the Bureau of Parks and Lands for public hiking trails, along with five trailhead parking areas guaranteeing access to the trails from public roads. In addition, Plum Creek will provide funding to the Bureau of Parks and Land for the construction, repair and maintenance of the trails, trailhead parking areas and associated trail amenities;
- a permanent stewardship fee on sales of property in the development zones that will fund additional recreational infrastructure; and
- a donation in the aggregate of 50 acres to the Bureau of Parks and Land for new recreational infrastructure like public boat ramps.

- Affordable Housing -

The Concept Plan includes an Affordable Housing agreement with Coastal Enterprises, Inc. The agreement includes the establishment and funding of affordable housing. Plum Creek has donated 100 acres of land to the organization and will provide it with a loan in the amount of $1.75 million.

- Wildlife -

The Concept Plan ensures significant wildlife habitat protection by placing 363,000 acres under a permanent conservation easement that provides a working forest and protection from development.

The Multi Resource Management Plan of the Moosehead Lake Region Conservation Easement provides for sustainable management, consultations with appropriate state agencies, and protections for Rare, Threatened, and Endangered species, plants and communities, fish, and wildlife, including lynx. Protections are also afforded to Inland Wading and Waterfowl Habitat, vernal pools, nesting loons, and deer wintering habitat. Management Objectives, Performance Standards, Policies, Programs and Practices are specified for each.

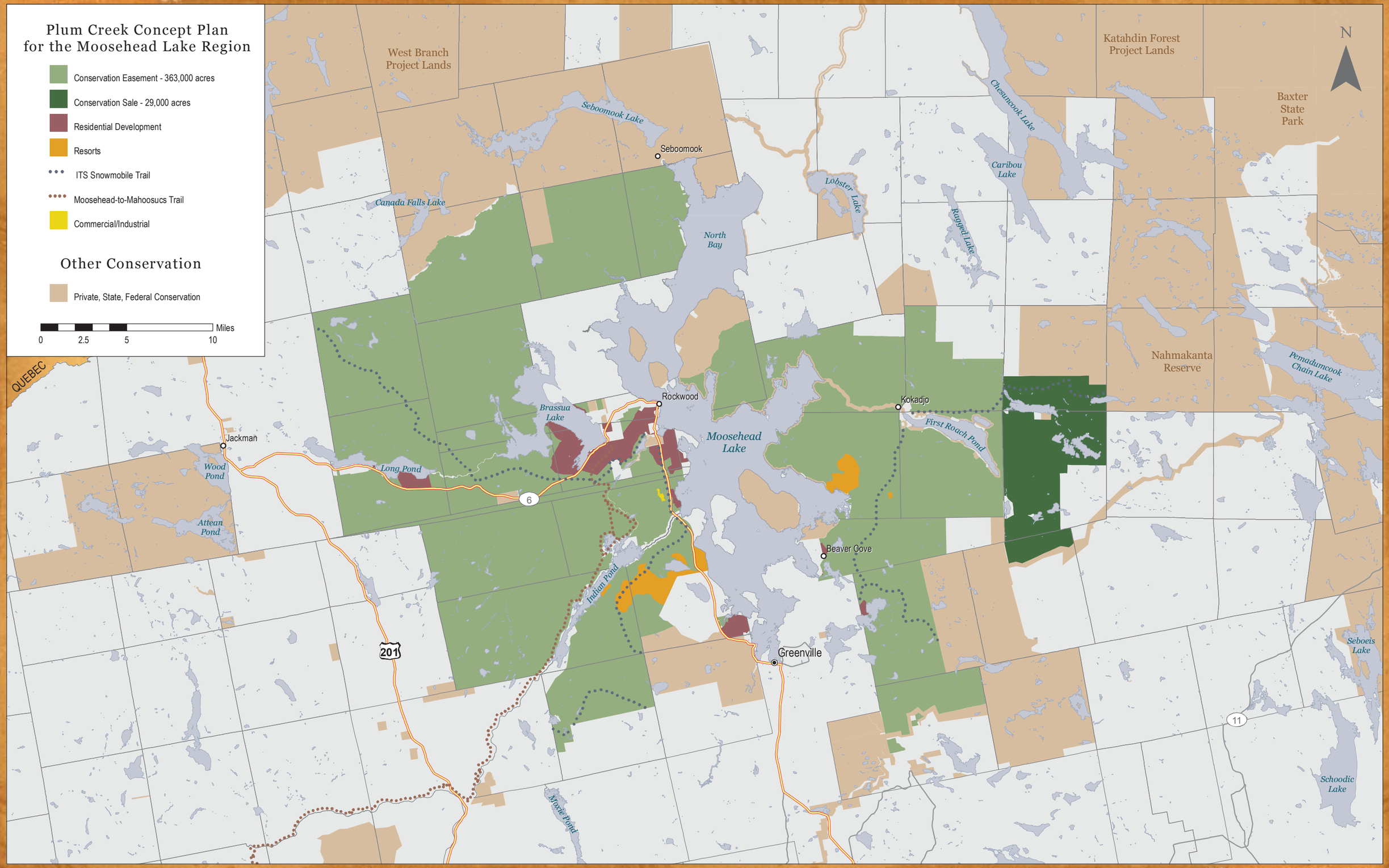
In addition, a Management Advisory Team made up of personnel from state and federal government, fish, wildlife and natural resource agencies, a representative from the University of Maine forestry school, and a silviculturalist, will be established to advise and consult on forest management activities.

PlumCreek

Growing Value from Exceptional Resources

Plum Creek is pleased to have been a part of the Maine community since 1998, and today practices sustainable forestry on all of the approximately 929,000 acres of land it owns in Maine's Somerset, Piscataquis, Franklin and Penobscot counties. For more information, visit www.plumcreek.com/maine.

The paper used to produce this brochure is SFI certified. SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE


Plum Creek Concept Plan
for the Moosehead Lake Region
Conservation Easement - 363,000 acres
Conservation Sale - 29,000 acres
Residential Development
Resorts
ITS Snowmobile Trail
Moosehead-to-Mahoosucs Trail
Commercial/Industrial
Other Conservation
Private, State, Federal Conservation
Miles
0
2.5
5
10
N
West Branch
Project Lands
Katahdin Forest
Project Lands
Baxter
State
Park
Seboomook Lake
Seboomook
Canada Falls Lake
North
Bay
Lobster Lake
Ragged Lake
Caribou
Lake
Chesuncook Lake
Nahmakanta
Reserve
Pemadumcook
Chain Lake
QUEBEC
Jackman
Wood
Pond
Attean
Pond
Brassua
Lake
Rockwood
Long Pond
Moosehead
Lake
Kokadjo
First Roach Pond
Beaver Cove
Indian Pond
Greenville
Seboeis
Lake
Schoodic
Lake
Moxie Pond
6
201
11