



BAXTER STATE PARK AUTHORITY



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**BAXTER STATE PARK ADVISORY MEETING MINUTES
UNIVERSITY POLY COM
FEBRUARY 24, 2015
10:00 A.M.**

ATTENDEES:

BSP ADVISORS: **UMO** - Rick Bray (Chair), Rosemary Hastings, Anne Huntington, Erica Kaufmann, Laurie Nale, Dave Buccello
USM – Bob Baribeau, Steve Hutnak, Tom Bradbury
UMFK – Jeff Dubis, Doug Callnan

BSP STAFF: Jensen Bissell, Eben Sypitkowski.

Bray called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Following introductions, Bray thanked everyone for attending.

12/16/14 ADVISORY MEETING MINUTES:

Nale noted several typos. Baribou noted he was not included in the attendance list but that he indeed did attend the meeting. Bissell will make the necessary corrections. It was moved and seconded to accept the minutes. The vote was unanimous.

OLD BUSINESS:

There being no old business.

PARK UPDATE:

Bray asked Bissell to provide an update on Park activities. Bissell summarized current Park conditions and recreational activity as average for this time of year. Bissell remarked on the stress of the recent month long period of very cold temperatures on Park ranger staff and complimented everyone on safe work practices. Bray provided a brief account of his recent volunteer work in the Park and complimented Ranger Mike Winslow on his effective and enjoyable project supervision.

Bissell noted that work on the FY16 Park budget was nearing completion and he provided an update on the reclassification effort underway to modify the law

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“TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT”

enforcement component of the Enforcement Ranger position recently vacated by the resignation of Isaac Needell. Bissell also provided updates on hiring activity for seasonal positions in the reservation office, the change in trail maintenance models from BSP Interns to contracted MCC crews scheduled for 2015, and the hiring effort underway for the Human Resource specialist position that will be vacant with the March 31 retirement of Jeanie Howes.

Bissell also mentioned that the Park had recently purchase a small electric powered GEM car for use by Gatehouse staff in the maintenance of Togue Pond Beach. Bissell stressed that significant solar work will need to be accomplished at the Togue Pond Ranger Camp before the vehicle can be put into regular service.

STREAM RESTORATION IN BSP

Bissell then reviewed provided documents and recent efforts on the part of Park staff to consider options for the review of stream conditions and the potential for restoration activities in the Park. The work was prompted by data provided by Merry Gallagher of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife after a survey of stream geomorphology on Nesowadnehunk Stream from the dam at Nesowadnehunk Lake to the Kidney Pond Bridge. The results indicate the stream morphology has been degraded by previous log driving activities. The general stream bed falls well short of the expected number of pools per bank-full width that would be expected in a pristine stream and also includes at least one section of stream that was bulldozed to straighten the channel. In response to this survey data, Park staff accompanied Gerry to a brook where some restoration work had been done (Intervale Brook). The staff also plans to visit Mule Brook in the spring of 2015 to look at more in-process restoration work. During the summer of 2015, the staff will work with IF&W fisheries biologists to survey and inspect possible restoration streams in the Park.

SPRUCE BUDWORM UPDATE

Sypitkowski provided an overview of materials provided to Advisors regarding the spruce budworm. This small moth lives at low levels in spruce fir forests across Maine and Canada. On a cyclical basis, likely in relation to the landscape growth and maturity of spruce fir forests, the budworm populations explode to epidemic levels and defoliate large areas of softwood forests over a period of years. This defoliation can lead to significant and/or substantial mortality of trees, primarily balsam fir, white and red spruce. Populations are now growing quickly in Quebec and State officials are concerned about the potential for an budworm epidemic in Maine in the coming 3-5 years. Sypitkowski reviewed the specifics of the lifecycle, cycle of epidemic growth and management tools available to address the budworm as well as the likelihood for serious damage in the SFMA and the Park. The most destructive epidemics of the budworm have historically occurred on an approximately 60-70 year cycle with more minor outbreaks on a 30-35 year

cycle. The last serious outbreak was in the 70's so this would be a minor cycle outbreak if the historic pattern continued. The current managed forest in Maine is very different from historic forest structures and this complicates any predictions of budworm development. Some discussion ensued, including some recollections of the 70's and early 80's outbreak.

TRAIL RELOCATION PLANNING

Bissell briefly reviewed a draft trail relocation plan provided to Advisors. The plan identifies more than 10 significant trail relocation projects and presents the projects in prioritized order with ongoing projects overlapping on a three year timeframe to complete each project. The draft plan identifies trail relocation work extending out to 2025. Bissell stressed that the current plan was draft only and field review would take place this summer to add specificity to the plan and to test the prioritization. Bissell hopes to establish the trail relocation work as a regular part of the Park's annual work program. There was general discussion regarding the condition of Park trails and support for this work.

COMMENTS FROM GUESTS

There being no guests, Bray moved to a discussion of summer hikes and volunteer activities for Advisors. Bissell suggested two volunteer projects: a picnic table assembly project early in the season (late April or early May) and a September project (the Tuesday after Labor Day) to begin clean-up of a large dump along the Park Tote Road near Camp Phoenix. In addition to the volunteer events, Bissell suggested an Advisory hike of the Abol Trail to review the relocation work in late July or early August.

Bray reminded everyone that the next Advisory meeting was scheduled for March 24.

Lastly, Bissell announced that the final winter Advisory meeting will be on April 16 at the IF&W conference room in Bangor. The meeting will run from 10 to 2 and will include lunch. He asked for wrap-up comments

There being no further business, Bray thanked everyone for their attendance and adjourned the meeting at 11:35 am.

Rick Bray, Co-Chair BSP Advisory