



Weekly Report

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LANDOWNER RELATIONS

Brownfield Bog Gate Vandalized - *Written by Mark Latti, Landowner Relations Coordinator*

Recent heavy rains forced the closure of the Bog Road in the Brownfield Wildlife Management Area. After water levels submerged portions of the road, the steel gate was closed to protect the 1.3 mile section of the gravel road that was just rebuilt and graded.

Unfortunately, someone didn't care for the gate being closed and locked. Last Sunday, someone went there and removed the swinging arm of the 15' gate, most likely using a chain and a truck. Damage to repair the gate is estimated to be between \$750 and \$1,200. Ironically, this was discovered the day that the regional biologist went there to open the gate.

Vandalism like this illustrates just one of the issues facing landowners when they keep land open to the public but try to protect roads that are vulnerable to damage. Brownfield bog is public land and it will remain open to the public, but had this occurred on private land, public access would have been lost for hunters, anglers, and others.

You can help keep private land open for public access by treating land and the landowner with respect, and reporting vandalism crimes such as these to the Maine Warden Service or other law enforcement agencies. Thank you.



BEGINNING WITH HABITAT

We are pleased to announce that on June 25, 2012, Bill Hancock joined our team as the staff cartographer in Augusta. Bill has most recently been working with Merry to complete a statewide mapping of the distribution of invasive fish for inclusion in Department GIS layers. He has also been assisting Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association and Royal River Conservation Trust with GIS and map making endeavors. Prior to his recent focus on GIS applications for conservation purposes, Bill spent 25 years with Maine Audubon as the Communications Editor and Environmental Centers Department Director. Although Bill's primary focus in the Augusta office will be Beginning with Habitat, he will also serve as the go-to-guy for mapping needs of our acquisition coordinator and lands management team as well as others I'm sure. Bill's knowledge of Maine's natural history, as well as his approachable demeanor and team player attitude will certainly be a welcome addition to our IF&W family.



CASTING FOR RECOVERY

The Annual CFR retreat was held last weekend at Bald Mountain Camps in Oquossoc. There were 14 participants at the retreat this year from several parts of the state. Casting for Recovery is a national non-profit support and educational program for women who have or



have had breast cancer and is coordinated here in Maine by Master Maine Guide Bonnie Holding. The program provides the opportunity for women who have been affected by the disease to get together for a weekend in a natural setting and learn to fly-fish. The weekend retreat also includes counseling and medical information but most importantly a chance to have fun and make new friends. There is no cost for participants to attend and no experience is required. Casting for Recovery has been active in Maine for 14 years and the annual retreat is held at a different sporting camp each year. Emily MacCabe from IF&W serves as one of the fly fishing instructors at the annual retreat and also helps promote and raise funds for the program throughout the year. You can learn more about the program by [clicking here](#). Additional photos from the 2012 retreat can be viewed [here](#).

INFORMATION CENTER

Last week the front office of the Department received and replied to:

- 1,556 Phone calls
- 684 Emails
- 76 Walk-ins



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FISHERIES & HATCHERIES DIVISION

Moosehead Lake Weekly Fishing Report – *Written by Tim Obrey, Regional Fisheries Biologist*

The Fisheries staff in the Moosehead Lake Region is operating the fish trap in the East Outlet Fishway this summer. The trap was set on June 13th and is scheduled for operation through the end of July. The purpose of the work is to evaluate wild landlocked salmon reproduction in the outlet of Moosehead Lake. Salmon will spawn in the outlet and the young typically live for one or two years in the stream environment before moving upstream (sometime in mid-summer) into Maine's largest lake. Peak movements for the younger fish occur as the water temperatures warm above 65°F. The catch is dominated by larger salmon in mid-late June when temperatures are generally still below 65°F. We also capture many brook trout, a few lake trout, round whitefish, and suckers in the trap.

In 1998, IFW and NextEra Energy constructed two specialized side-channels in the river to enhance salmon reproduction. One was designed specifically to supplement spawning habitat, and the other to supplement nursery habitat. Both of these very specific habitat needs were lacking in this big river. The catch of wild salmon increased in the trap in the years following the construction, peaking in 2001 at just over 2,300 wild salmon moving upstream from this 2.8 mile section of the Kennebec River. However, in 2009 we documented a decline with just under 700 fish in our catch. Fish populations do fluctuate naturally over time and that is why it is necessary to continually monitor them especially after a management change has been applied. Data collected this year will help us evaluate the habitat improvement project and other regulation changes recently made on the river.

The public is welcome to look over our shoulder this summer while we work the trap. The trap is usually tended Mon-Wed-Fri around 10:00am. Bring your rod and spend a great summer day on one of Maine's premier river fisheries.



WILDLIFE DIVISION

Bear Report - *Written by Rich Hoppe, Wildlife Biologist*

The last three weeks has brought an inordinate number of bear complaints to the region where wardens and biologists have been working diligently with trailer parks, homes, and municipalities to educate and work with landowners to alleviate possible attractions causing the bears to come in close contact with people.

When called out on bear complaints we note the two most frequent attractions to bears is either bird seed or house hold garbage. This past week Arlen Lovewell and Rich Hoppe dealt with a sow bear that was shot entering the porch of a home where bags of garbage were stored. In questioning the home owner he thought by putting used cat litter in with his garbage would keep bears away due to the smell. Everything about bears starts with reducing possible smells that might attract them. In this case the cat litter may have actually been a lure that brought this bear around. What made this complaint interesting was the sow had three cubs about 10 lbs each, and when we arrived on location all cubs were up a 60 foot white pine tree. We quickly realized these cubs were hungry and by setting three live traps baited with honey we were able to catch them quickly and take them to a wildlife rehabilitator for later release into the wild.

Bird Report - *Written by Cory Stearns, Wildlife Biologist*

Grassland dependent bird species, such as the state endangered grasshopper sparrow, and the state threatened upland sandpiper are on the decline in Maine and elsewhere, primarily due to the reduction in grassland habitat, as it becomes developed, or is allowed to revert into forest. Therefore, ME IF&W RAS and Region A staff collaborate to conduct annual grassland bird surveys at Kennebunk Plains Wildlife Management Area, and the Brunswick Naval Air Station. The survey uses a point count technique to provide an index of the number of birds heard or seen at each site. When the index is compared across years it can indicate trends in the population.

Thirty two listening posts occur at Kennebunk Plains WMA, with eleven at Brunswick Naval Air Station. At each post, the observer records all birds heard or seen within a 100 meter radius plot within a 10 minute time period. Any birds observed outside the plot also are recorded. Surveys are conducted the first three weeks of June, between dawn and 10 am, and each listening station is visited three times during the survey period. This year, the number of grasshopper sparrow observations at Kennebunk Plains was down from last year, but higher than in 2010; whereas observations of upland sandpipers at both sites were up considerably over 2011. Other species observed include: savannah sparrows, eastern meadowlarks, eastern towhees, prairie warblers, field sparrows, and brown thrashers, among others.

MAINE WARDEN SERVICE

Wardens Pomerleau and Milligan encountered an interesting fishing violation in their travels last week. A local Portage resident had been informed how to legally stock his private pond with brook trout a few years ago, but instead of doing things legally, he decided to use a bait trap in a nearby brook to catch small brook trout and stock his pond with the native fish. The wardens caught the bait bucket biologist transporting a live 2 inch brook trout that he had caught in the minnow trap. A summons was issued for illegal transportation of live fish.



Instructor Recognition

Every year, safety instructors reach milestones in their service to the program, and to their community. This year, at the all-day instructor workshops we recognized several instructors who reached significant milestones in service.

We were delighted to have Commissioner Woodcock assist in the presentations.



Gene and Deborah Seymour with Commissioner Woodcock and Mike Sawyer. Gene received an award for 25 years in Hunter Safety and has over 5,000 students. Deb has over 3,000 students to her credit since 1998. Their son, Paul was absent and recognized for 3,000 students in Hunter Safety.

Also recognized this spring were:

Harold Lane of Sherman for 25 years of service in Hunter Safety.

Phil Guimond of Gorham for 25 years of service in Hunter Safety.

Ted Smith of Litchfield for 30 years of service in Hunter Safety.

Tina Richard from Clinton for 1,000 Bow students.



Harold Currier receives his award for 6,000 Hunter Safety students from Commissioner Woodcock. Harold's wife, Marilyn was not in attendance and was also recognized for 6,000 students. Richard McFarland, far right, also received an award for 6,000 students. He has been in the program since 1984 and is from Newport.



Happy 90th birthday to Harland Hitchings. Harland has been the Regional Coordinator for Washington and Hancock Counties since 1973.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

The Commissioner, along with the Department's Chief Planner, Leon Bucher, traveled to the town of Roxbury for a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Ellis Pond Boat Launch.

RESEARCH & ASSESSMENT SECTION

Brewer-Bangor Moose on the Loose - *Written by Lee Kantar, Wildlife Biologist*

Moose in urban areas not only pose a public safety threat, but the stress a moose encounters can be fatal. On Friday June 15th, Warden Fahey was notified that a moose was wandering the streets of Brewer. Because moose can pose a serious hazard to people, the Warden Service (WS) and local police monitored the animal throughout the day. By mid-afternoon, Warden Fahey notified Wildlife Biologists Kantar and Cross, of the Mammal Group at the Bangor Office, that the moose was near the I-395 bridge in Brewer. The IFW staff attempted to locate the moose and were about to "call it a day" when Cross spotted the moose swimming in the Penobscot River towards the Hollywood Casino. It appeared that a civilian boat was hazing the moose onto shore. The moose cruised up the steep rip-rap, crossed South Main Street, and ran through the construction zone of the new Convention Center. Within the hour, Warden Service received a call that the moose had run by the 14th Street School towards Ohio Street. Essentially, over the course of an hour the moose moved from a busy area of Brewer to a busier area of Bangor, at which time the temperature was near 80°F -- very hot for a moose. Biologists were prepared to chemically immobilize the moose if given the opportunity; however, they were not able to get close enough. That evening Warden Fahey received a call that the moose was found dead behind a residence near Ohio Street.

A necropsy and gross examination by biologists consulting with veterinarians revealed that the moose likely died from exertional myopathy, a condition brought on by stress and made worse by heat. This young moose found herself "trapped" in Brewer-Bangor, and at some point was "startled" which initiated the "flight to freedom". Moose cannot withstand running under these conditions for a very long time. Even if biologists were able to chemically immobilize the animal, there is a good chance that the moose wouldn't have survived. Moose behavior in these situations is unpredictable and potentially problematic. The public should notify authorities about urban moose right away and give the moose lots of room!

Resident Canada Goose Banding - *Kelsey M. Sullivan Migratory and Upland Game Bird Biologist*

Game Bird Biologist Kelsey Sullivan coordinated Canada goose capture and banding efforts again this past week. Teamwork is the operative word this year...

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