SAINT GEORGE TOWN FOREST: FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Created by: Michael Dann and Albert Emery (for the Eagle Scout Project of Albert Emery, Troop 246), 2004

PLAN SUMMARY

The following is a Forest Management Plan for the St. George Town Forest off Kinney Woods Road in St. George. The plan includes town residents' popular opinions on a variety of possible future uses for the land, the general condition of the land, the soils types, the fish and wildlife present, possible recreational uses, presence of hazards, the species of trees that make up various stands on the land and their quality and potential for harvest, and the recommendations of a professional forester, Michael Dann. After the presentation of this plan, it will be the decision of other bodies in the town to consider how to implement the survey choices in a manner consistent with the plan's recommendations of the professional forester.

GENERAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Albert F. Emery P.O. Box 140 Tenants Harbor, ME 04860 207-372-8025

Professional assistance provided by: Michael Dann LPF#285 Seven Islands Land Company 112 Broadway Bangor, ME 04401

Landowner: The Town of St. George

This plan was last prepared: May 16, 2004

Location of Town Forest: Off Kinney Woods Road—Route 131 in St. George. Forest starts approximately 3,200 ft down the road on each side, and ends approximately after 1,500 ft more. The woods can be entered off the road on either side. Various trails exist throughout the woods.

Town, County: St. George, Knox County

Landowner Goals: A survey (see attached exhibit 1) of all town taxpayers (about 1,800)

was mailed to them in the Town's May/June newsletter asking them what they would like to have done with the Town Forest. Approximately 171 households responded. The surveys were tallied by Albert Emery and 6 other Scouts and Scout Leaders. The following are the results of the survey:

- #1 Generally speaking, which of the following management approaches do you favor with regard to the Town Forest? (Check the ONE that comes closest to your opinion.)
- 5% (9 out of 173) The Town should do absolutely nothing with this land. It should be allowed to return to the wild and should be protected from any human intervention other than casual use.
- 13% (22 out of 173) Enlist the Scouts or other groups to remove trash once in a while, but otherwise do nothing to improve the land.
- 58% (100 out of 173) In addition to trash removal, dead or diseased trees and brush should be removed every so often to promote healthy growth and to reduce fire hazards.
- 24% (42 out of 173) If there are trees of commercial value on the land, the trees should be harvested and sold for the benefit of the Town according to a 'Green' forest management plan which would include wetlands and wildlife protection, reforestation and selective cutting.
- #2 Currently, this land is used occasionally for hiking, hunting and fishing. Which of the following possible recreational uses would you FAVOR? (Check YES or NO)
- YES 64% NO 36% Hunting according to existing State law (no change).
- YES 91% NO 9% Fishing according to existing State law (no change).
- YES 99% NO 1% Hiking and bird-watching (no change).
- YES 27% NO 73% Camping/tenting.
- YES 39% NO 61% Use of bicycles or other NON-motorized vehicles.
- YES 10% NO 90% Use of Snowmobiles.
- YES 2% NO 98% Use of Off-Road-Vehicles, All-Terrain Vehicles, dirt bikes, etc.
- #3 Assuming that the following improvements could be made with donations and

volunteer labor at little or no expense to the Town of St. George, which, if any, of the following improvements for recreational purposes would you FAVOR? (Check YES or NO)

YES 29%	NO 71%	Make no improvements of any kind, but allow use as it now exists.
YES 62%	NO 38%	Stock the pond and/or stream with trout.
YES 73%	NO 27%	Build wood-duck boxes and place them in the marsh.
YES 88%	NO 12%	Cut trails for hiking and bird watching.
YES 25%	NO 75%	Create a camping/tenting area (NO motor vehicles allowed).
YES 35%	NO 65%	Build a bicycle path (NO motor vehicles allowed).
YES 6%	NO 94%	Build a trail for snowmobiles and ATVs.

52 of the 171 surveys that were returned (30%) contained comments. New ideas proposed included: 3 people suggested the removal of dead trees in moderation to preserve wildlife habitats; 1 person suggested that proceeds of harvesting timber on the land should be used for future maintenance of the land; 1 person suggested that there be a plan in the future for the land to promote biodiversity; 2 people suggested the construction of sitting areas with picnic tables; 1 person suggested that the proceeds of harvesting timber on the land be used for timber stand improvement; 4 people suggested that trash cans be placed throughout the land and on any trails that are made in the future; 1 person suggested that camping be allowed in designated spots only; 2 people suggested that a designated parking area be added; 5 people said cross-country skiing should be allowed on the land; 2 people noted that their main concerns with allowing camping on the land was fire hazards; 1 person suggested developing a small area reserved for plant/animal study; 2 people said horseback riding should be allowed on the land; 1 person said snowmobiles should only be allowed in winter when the ground is fully frozen, not in spring; 1 person suggested that the town charge for camping on the land; 3 people suggested that camping should only be allowed for certain groups (Scouts, Trekkers, etc) with approval of the town; 2 people suggested the construction of horseback riding trails; 3 people suggested the construction of cross-country skiing trails; 2 people suggested the construction of benches to be placed on any future trails; 2 people said dog walking should be allowed.

ACREAGE OF LAND USE/COVER TYPES

(Refer to Exhibit 3)

Productive Forest Land

S4A - 27 acres SH3A - 7 acres WP3A - 3 acres

Non-forested Area

Old fields - 13 acres Wetland - 7 acres

GENERAL CONDITION OF THE WOODLOT

General Description

This 57 acre lot has about 37 acres of forested land, about 13 acres of old field and 7 acres of marsh or wetland. The forested land is predominantly mature softwood and mixedwood stands. The land slopes gently to the west – southwest. Presence of stone walls and the old fields indicate that the land was once farmed and a good portion of it cleared for pasture. The Town Forest was owned formerly by the Kinney Family and used for open forest/pasture. The town gained the land in the 1960s from the Kinneys from non-payment of state taxes.

Property Lines

Property lines are currently in good condition. The northerly line is well marked by iron pins along an old wall. The adjacent lot has also been recently cut. The easterly line has an old stone wall along most of its' length; it is also cleared on the adjacent lots. The brook forms the westerly line and flows into the marsh. The south line was not visited; its condition is unknown.

Legal Restriction affecting Forestry

The Maine Forest Practices Act with its Notification requirement would apply to any commercial harvest, as would the Town of St. George Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. IF&W should be consulted about any requirements or suggestions about the wetland and Deer Wintering Area adjacent to the south line.

Soils

There are 2 soils series on the lot; the Swanville series makes up the majority of the lot, and the Peru Series occupies the northern central portion.

Swanville – The Swanville series consists of very deep, poorly drained siltly loams formed as deposits on lake and marine plains. These soils have slight erosion hazard (more severe on slopes), severe equipment limitations, and severe windthrow hazard. They are best suited to grow cedar, tamarack, white pine, and red spruce and wetland plants.

The Peru series consist of very deep, moderately well drained fine sandy loams that formed in glacial till. These soils have slight erosion potential, slight equipment limitations, and moderate windthrow hazard. They are best suited to grown White Pine and White Spruce and wild herbaceous plants

Access

One may access the St. George Town Forest by traveling down the Kinney Woods Road, off Route 131 in St. George, for approximately 3,200 ft. The forest may be accessed on either side of the road. The forest boundaries end after approximately 1,500 ft more. Various trails exist throughout the woods.

Property Tax Status

Owned by town— no property taxes assessed and the property is not enrolled in the Growth, Farmland, Open Space, etc.

Field Methods

A general reconnaissance of the lot occurred in March 2004 by Michael Dann and Albert Emery. A timber cruise was performed April 3, 2004 with Michael Dann, Albert Emery, David Emery and Boy Scouts Mike Percy, Alex Hall, and Ryan Cline. Sixteen variable radius plots were taken in a grid pattern across the property. The cruise concentrated on the major forested portions of the lot. No plots were taken in the old field portions of the lot in the Northeast corner and easterly portion south of the road. These plots represent 37 of the 57 total acres on the lot. The cruise predicted total volume of the lot within 15% at 9:1 odds and gives a general indication of species size,

MAPS

(See attached maps)

quality, and quantity.

Exhibit 2) Location Map (Standard Boundary Survey, Nov. 1999)

Exhibit 3) Tax Map

Exhibit 4) Forest Stand Map

Exhibit 5) Soils Map

Exhibit 6) Wildlife Habitat Map

NON-TIMBER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Fish, Wildlife, Water Quality, & Riparian

The wetland is designated as Wading Bird Habitat (#WWH030157) and there is a Deer Wintering Area adjacent to the South line. The National Wetlands Inventory Classification of the land is PEMIE/PSSIE.

The brook along the western edge, flowing into the wetland that occupies the southern portion of the lot are a valuable combination for many wildlife species and should be protected from any chance of erosion from harvesting or recreational trails and should be appropriately buffered during any harvesting activity to maintain shade. The continued presence of dominant white pine should be insured. Pine is used by a number of birds as nest sites. The proximity to the wetland would be especially suited to eagles, ospreys or great blue herons.

The mature softwood forest in itself is valuable to a set of species that prefer it to other forest types.

It would be good to enlist the help of Maine Inland Fish & Wildlife's Regional Biologist to suggest beneficial management activities.

Various stone walls exist throughout the forest. These have been present for over 100 years, and are the only truly "historical" sites.

Recreation

The combination of the mature softwood forest, old fields, the brook and wetland make this lot a unique place. Well-managed, low impact recreation would be a very suitable use. The variety of habitats and natural features make this a very pleasant place for hiking or bird watching. Hunting and fishing are also current uses that can continue.

If recreational use in the form of trails and/or picnic areas are planned for the lot, it should be noted that the Swanville soils do not stand up well to heavy traffic because of their wetness and fine, silty character. Trails that received any amount of use would have to be armored and maintained consistently, especially near the brook and wetland. The Peru soils on the better-drained portions of the lot do hold up a little better to heavy use.

Aesthetic Quality

The lot is currently aesthetically pleasing with the exception of the trash along the Kinney Woods Road. Any activities should strive to maintain the aesthetic quality.

Protection from Fire

The presence of a fair quantity of dead fir presents some fire danger, although most of it has rotted a good deal. If recreational use were increased it would be well to consult with the local Maine Forest Service Ranger about fire safety issues, especially along trails.

INDIVIDUAL STAND DESCRIPTIONS

SPECIES DESCRIPTIONS

Individual species characteristics vary very little across the woodlot with the exception of the White Pine, which is of two distinct origins and will be discussed separately. A general description follows for each important species and is applicable across forest types.

Softwood Species

White Spruce -500 + cords total volume

62 ft2 average BA/acre

18% pulp quality, 82 % log quality

5 - 18" dbh (diameter breast height) with 75% of stems < 12" dbh, and 25% > 12" dbh.

White Spruce is the most prevalent species on the lot, making up fully one third of the total volume. It is generally healthy and growing well. It is a long-lived valuable species and should remain a dominant component of the lot for the foreseeable future.

White Pine - 200+ cords total volume

majority

20 ft2 ave. BA/acre

36% pulp; 50% poles and logs

5 - 22" dbh with 60% of stems < 12" dbh, and 40% > 12" dbh

85% of the volume is in the stems > 12" dbh

White Pine is the 2nd most prevalent species on the lot. The trees on the majority of the lot are dominant and codominant and generally healthy with little evidence of disease. White Pine is also long lived and valuable, from both a timber and wildlife point of view. They should remain a significant

component of the Lot.

White Pine – 100+ cords total volume

Old field

195 ft2 average Basal Area/acre

75% pulp

5 - 12" dbh with 65% < 9"

These pine may have been planted about 25 years ago. Stem form is generally poor due to white pine weevil damage.

Balsam Fir - 150+ cords total volume

20 ft2 average BA/acre

75% pulp

5 - 12" dbh with 95% 5 - 9" dbh

The Balsam Fir is typical of fir this far south. It grows very well until it is about 7-8" dbh and then declines very fast. There are about 3 cords/acre of standing, dead fir on the lot; about 75% of all dead trees are fir.

Cedar - 50 cords total volume

6 ft2 ave. BA/acre 60% pulp; 40% logs

8 - 18" dbh with 50% stems <12" dbh; 50% stems > 12" dbh

The cedar occurs as scattered individuals on the wetter portions of the lot and in several areas nearer the marsh are more prevalent. Stem quality is only average. Deer browsing when the stems were young resulted in poorer stem quality.

Tamarack - 15 + cords total volume

1 ft2 ave. BA/acre

100% pulp 13 - 15" dbh

Tamarack occurs as very scattered individuals on some of the wetter portions of the lot. It is not good quality.

Hardwood Species

Red Maple - 150 cords total volume

20 ft2 ave. BA/acre

95% pulp; 5% log quality

5 - 12" dbh with 90% stems 5 - 9" dbh

The Red Maple is pulp quality. A significant percentage of the volume is stump sprout origin with multiple stems. The lot is generally a little too wet for quality red maple. I also expect the trees were browsed heavily by deer when little, causing poor stem form.

Poplar -

60 cords total volume

5 ft2 ave. BA/acre

100% pulp

5 - 15" dbh with 80% stems 5 - 9" dbh

Poplar is only fair quality. Most of the stems occur north of the road. I have included both quaking aspen and big-toothed aspen in this summary. The big toothed aspen are better quality stems and are longer lived than

the quaking aspen.

White Birch - 40 cords total volume

5 ft2 ave. BA/acre

100% pulp 5 - 11" dbh

The White Birch is not good quality, it seems "off-site" for these soils. Stems probably originate from the last cut and possibly from reversion from pasture.

Red Oak -

35 cords total volume

3 ft2 ave. BA/acre

60% pulp; 40% log quality

11 - 18" dbh with 80% stems >12" dbh

The Red Oak is generally good quality; almost all stems have at least some current or potential log quality in them. A significant percentage of the volume is stump sprout origin with multiple stems. It occurs as scattered individuals throughout the better-drained portions of the lot.

Other

30 cords total volume

Hardwood

4 ft2 ave. BA/acre

100% pulp and undersized

7 - 11" dbh

Yellow Birch and Sugar Maple occur as scattered individuals. Most of the stems are small, but some have potential log quality. These are long-lived species and will contribute to the value of the lot in the long run.

Stand Descriptions

#1 - This S4A 27 acre stand is south of the road and makes up the majority of the forested portion of the lot. It is a mature softwood stand with a minority component of tolerant hardwoods. White Spruce and Balsam Fir are the principal softwood species with White Pine as a significant minor component. Cedar occurs in scattered location on the wetter portions of the stand and Tamarack occurs as very scattered individuals in

wet areas. Red maple is the principal hardwood species, followed by White Birch. The hardwoods are generally smaller, and poorer quality.

Dominant spruce in this stand are up to 70 years old at breast height and 50 - 60 feet tall. The larger White Pine are somewhat taller but about the same age.

#2 – This SH3A 7 acre stand occurs north of the road. It is about equally softwood and hardwood with Balsam Fir and White Spruce making up the vast majority of the softwoods and Red Maple and Poplar making up the majority of the hardwoods. This is a younger stand than south of the road; dominant trees are about 50 years old at breast height and about 45 – 50 feet tall.

#3 – A pure stand of White Pine occupies about 3 acres along the eastern side of the lot south of the road. The stocking and size is so uniform that it suggests it may have been planted. The trees are about 25 years old. A majority of the stems have been injured by the White Pine Weevil, which has produces multiple tops and eliminated any future sawlog potential. There are scattered apple trees in the stand.

There is also a grove of White Pine in the Northeast corner of the lot. These trees appear to be a little older, +/- 40 years old, than the stand south of the road. They are generally of better quality, with less sign of weevil injury. These stems could be pruned to increase their quality.

There are about 5 acres of old field north of the road. These acres are reverting to a mixture of pine, spruce and fir, and hardwood.

There is also about 8 acres of old field south of the road. This area is still in the grass and brush stage with the exception of a fringe of red maple just south of the road.

The marsh and open water make up the rest of the lot, about 7 acres.

Stand History

See Exhibit 7 (attached sheet: "Town Forest History," prepared by St. George Town Manager, John Falla)

PRESCRIPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General Recommendations (prepared by Michael Dann, April, 2004)

The presence of a mature, fully stocked softwood forest in a settled area and adjacent to other forest land that is being harvested commercially is becoming a more unique occurrence. Any forest management activities on this lot should be aimed at preserving the over all health of the forest and maintaining a mature, optimally stocked forest.

I highly recommend that any management activity be under the direction of a licensed forester. Harvesting is an activity that must be done professionally to insure the long term health and productivity of the forest. The landowners' goals are paramount in any management decision. The Maine Forest Service has a community forestry program, Project Canopy that can help communities with management decisions. They also maintain a list of recommended consulting foresters.

Stand #1 S4A 27 acre Mature Softwood Stand south of the road

Left alone, this mature softwood stand would continue to look much as it does now, with the white birch eventually dropping out of the stand in favor of the more tolerant maple, oak and spruce. The Balsam Fir would be replaced over time by spruce. There is already a considerable volume of dead fir. Some of this mortality may go back as far as the spruce budworm outbreak of 1975-86; some of it is just the natural progression of this species. Fir is at the southern end of its natural range in Maine and does not generally live too long or attain high quality. The White Pine would continue to maintain or achieve dominance. In the absence of any harvesting activity, there will not be any appreciable increase in the amount of pine, since it requires almost full sunlight to regenerate. But the individuals present will continue to be there for hundreds of years to come, barring natural catastrophe.

If harvesting were planned, it should occur ONLY in winter due to the wetness of the site. Any harvest in this stand should attempt to mimic the natural patterns of stand development. Harvesting should concentrate on removing balsam fir that is declining in health and light thinning to insure that the best quality spruce and pine have room to grow. The harvest should be conducted under the guidance of a forester and the trees designated for removal should be marked. Due to the wet soils and spruce and firs' tendency to windthrow, harvest removals should be light and only occur under frozen conditions.

Stand #2 SH3A 7 acre Mixedwood Stand north of the road

The stand north of the road will remain a mixedwood stand for quite awhile. Again, as the Balsam Fir matures and dies, it will be replaced by the more shade tolerant spruce and cedar. Eventually, the longer-lived maples and oak will also replace the poplar and white birch. The Big toothed Aspen should remain a viable component of the stand for at least another 50 years.

Harvesting in this stand should also concentrate on removing poorer quality fir, white birch and poplar as they achieve maturity. This stand should also have only light removals to avoid windthrow and be operated only on frozen ground.

Stand #3 WP3A 3 acre pine plantation south of the road

This young white pine stand is suffering the effects of neglect. The white pine weevil has damaged the majority of stems. This insect kills the terminal leader on the tree, which encourages the lateral branches to develop. This leads to a tree with multiple tops. These trees are commonly called "cabbage pine" because their overall shape is like a head of cabbage. Corrective pruning can offset weevil damage by leaving only one lateral branch to develop. Because that did not happen, most of the stems are now only pulpwood quality.

Markets for pine pulpwood could be explored to determine if the stand could be thinned to release trees of log quality. Any trees containing at least 1 eight foot log section should be retained and could also be pruned to increase their value.

Old Fields

The old field north of the road will continue its inevitable transition toward forest.

The old field south of the road is quite wet. It will also slowly revert to forest. The transition will be very slow due to the wet conditions and the heavy cover of grass and brush.

Use Preference Survey

The St. George Town Forest

An Eagle Scout Project

The St. George Town Forest is a 57-acre tract of land located South of Kinney Woods Road which is owned by the town of St. George. The area contains a small pond, a stream, a marsh, at least one deer yard, and wildlife trails. There are currently no formal hiking paths or snowmobile/ATV trails. My Eagle Scout Project is the creation of a Forest Management Plan to provide the Town a means of preserving this area for the benefit of St. George residents. I have enlisted the help of a professional forester from Seven Islands Land Company in Bangor to help me conduct a forest survey of this area, including an inventory of plant and animal species, and to determine what uses of this land are feasible and consistent with sound land and forest conservation practices. The Conservation Commission suggested that a survey of town residents, getting their opinions and input, should be a part of this process. The following questionnaire lists several possibilities and options for the town to consider. The results of this survey are not binding but it will give town officials an understanding of public preferences.

Please take the time to fill out this questionnaire and return it to the St. George Town Office as soon as possible. The Scouts of St. George Troop 246 will then help me tabulate the results which will be included in my Eagle Scout Project Report as well as in a future issue of this newsletter. Many thanks for your help!

1.

—Albert F. Emery Troop 246, St. George

regard	rally speaking, which of the following management approaches do you favor with to the Town Forest? (Check the ONE that comes closest to your opinion.)
	The Town should do absolutely nothing with this land. It should be allowed to return to the wild and should be protected from any human intervention other than low-impact recreational use.
	Enlist the Scouts or other groups to remove trash once in a while, but otherwise do nothing to improve the land.
	In addition to trash removal, dead or diseased trees and brush should be removed every so often to promote healthy growth and to reduce potential fire hazards.
	If there are trees of commercial value on the land, the trees should be harvested and sold for the benefit of the Town according to a 'Green' forest management plan which would include wetlands and wildlife protection, reforestation and selective cutting.
OTHE	R

Curr follo	rently owing	, this land possible re	is used occasionally for hiking, hunting and fishing. Which of the creational uses would you FAVOR? (Check YES or NO)
YES	5	NO	Hunting according to existing State law (no change).
YES	S	NO	Fishing according to existing State law (no change).
YES	S	NO	Hiking and bird-watching (no change).
YES	S	NO	Camping/tenting.
YES	5	NO	Use of bicycles or other NON-motorized vehicles.
YES	5	NO	Use of Snowmobiles.
YES	S	NO	Use of Off-Road-Vehicles, All-Terrain Vehicles, dirt bikes, etc.
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labo	r at Î	ittle or no	ollowing improvements could be made with donations and volunteer expense to the Town of St. George, which, if any, of the following creational purposes would you FAVOR? (Check YES or NO)
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labo impr YES YES YES YES	r at 1 roven	ittle or no onents for reconents for reconen	expense to the Town of St. George, which, if any, of the following creational purposes would you FAVOR? (Check YES or NO) Make no improvements of any kind, but allow use as it now exists. Stock the pond and/or stream with trout. Build wood-duck boxes and place them in the marsh. Create trails for hiking and bird watching. Create a camping/tenting area (NO motor vehicles allowed). Create a bicycle path (NO motor vehicles allowed).

Please complete and return this questionnaire to the Town Office by May 15.

MAIL TO: Town Forest Survey
c/o Town of St. George
PO Box 131
Tenants Harbor, ME 04860

Town Forest History

Deeds

In October of 1870, Thomas Kinney transferred ownership of property in St. George to his son, Zebulon Kinney, and this transfer is recorded at the Knox County Registry of Deeds at Book 26, Page 431. There was another deed between Thomas and Zebulon in 1873, and it was recorded at the Knox County Registry at Book 34, Page 65. This was apparently the end of any formal transfer of ownership on this property, as Zebulon Kinney died October 6, 1904 and his wife, Sarah W., died January 10, 1920, and the assessment of real estate taxes were against the "heirs of Zebulon Kinney".

Other Activity

In reviewing town records, it appears the 1963 real estate taxes on property owned by the "Heirs of Zebblin Kinney" were not paid, and the property became tax-acquired in 1965. At the March 1968 town meeting in St. George, a Planning Board was established, and their first report published in the town report said "Particular attention has been given to the possibility of setting aside some tax acquired property. Land thus set aside could be used as a town forest and be available for future town needs." At the March 1969 Town Meeting, Article 25 asked the voters "to establish as a town forest, the tax acquired property formerly assessed to the heirs of Zebblin Kinney listed on town map No. 15, lot numbers 23 and 23, containing approximately sixty acres. To be administered by the Board of Selectmen in accordance with state laws governing municipal forests. R. D. 1930, Ch. 5, Sec. 126 and 127."

Also in town records is a Timber Sale Agreement dated in 1977, but no record could be found showing the amount of timber or pulpwood removed. The Department of Conservation has records that show approximately 8,000 white pine seedlings were set out in 1979 and 1980. A review of the town forest property was done in 1988 and that report is in the town office "Town Forest" file.

May 21, 2004

John M Falla Town Manager